

TEAM PORTRAIT #03 – CREATIVITY

THOMAS GAILLARD – Interior Designer

*He joined the Nantes-based agency just a year ago, but already had solid experience and impressive references. So, naturally, he quickly found his place at the heart of the team, combining his designer's eye, his experience in product marketing and a lifelong passion for sailing. Meet **Thomas Gaillard**, a creative by vocation who has made yacht interior design his passion.*

A childhood on the water

Born far from the sea, in Vichy, Thomas nevertheless grew up partly on the deck of a sailing boat. "My father put me on a First 24 when I was three years old, before owning several successive Océanis. Every summer we would set off between La Rochelle and Brest, spending seven weeks on board. " For his father, a former Fireball champion, a year without a boat is a depressing year. He passed on his passion for sailing to his son, who lives it intensely: Les Glénan sailing school, instructor training, family cruises... For a long time, he sailed extensively, both personally and professionally. Today, he mainly sails in the summer on a dinghy. "I should rent a catamaran, I'm quite tempted," he smiles.



60-foot custom boat currently under design (Copyright: Darnet Design)

From the factory to the design office

After obtaining a Degree in Product Design, Thomas joined Beneteau in 2003 via the most practical route: the factory. "I had to earn a living, so I went into production. I was a deck fitter,

then worked in shipping. I learned a lot." Very quickly, his profile attracted attention. Recruited to the after-sales department as a technical writer, he drafted recall campaigns and designed technical diagrams to facilitate their international distribution. "Since I could draw, they found it practical: no need to translate into 25 languages, a good diagram is enough!" Three years later, he joined the design office as an interior designer. It was there that he made his first contributions to units such as the Oceanis 58, alongside Bruno Belmont and Nauta Design, and then to the Sense range.

As the projects progressed, Thomas evolved and became sailing marketing product manager, in charge of the sailing ranges, of course, and then the Trawlers. A skills assessment confirmed what he already felt inside: his place was in interior design. He then resumed his interior design training in Nantes. "It gave me confidence; I understood that this was really my path."

From drawing to creation

A talented jack-of-all-trades, he tried his hand at children's comics before coming across a job offer at Darnet Design. "I applied and it was a perfect match." Armed with his experience and his pencil, he started out by entering competitions, drawing everything by hand. He quickly developed his skills and took part in large-scale projects: a 70-foot catamaran for a private client, then a range of power catamarans (35 to 45 feet). "In these projects, we have a lot of creative freedom. We draw up the general plan with Franck, then we have carte blanche for the preliminary designs, as long as we stay true to the agency's DNA: timeless, neat, effective design, combining ergonomics and style. For me, that's what design is all about."



60-foot custom yacht currently under study (Copyright: Darnet Design)

Intelligent, refined design

What thrills him about interior design? "I like things that are practical and ergonomic, but also sleek. A comfortable seat, a piece of furniture that transforms, a desk that hides a screen... I love inventing things like that. For example, on the Sense, there was a central piece of furniture that separated the kitchen from the saloon: it could be unfolded to become a bench seat to accommodate more guests. It's exactly this kind of intelligent solution that fascinates me."

With a rich background, a wealth of experience and creativity fueled by a passion for the sea, Thomas Gaillard perfectly embodies the spirit of Darnet Design, where innovation and elegance come together to enhance life on board.