



The Art of the Yacht

Italian design firm Nuvolari-Lenard continues to set trends 30 years after its founding. By Cornelia Marioglou

Any conversation on the major influences in yacht design over the past three decades will prominently feature Nuvolari-Lenard. Founded in 1992, it fittingly celebrated its 30th anniversary at last year's Venice Boat Show, as La Serenissima is home to the company founded by Carlo Nuvolari, a naval engineer and architect, and designer Dan Lenard. It is now responsible for some of the most identifiable yachts on the oceans – with some 100 custom-built vessels and around 900 series models on the water.

Yet as much as Nuvolari-Lenard creates very recognisable yachts, in a world where owners have ever more outlandish requests, the designers come from a very pragmatic base, as Carlo Nuvolari explains: "Our role is to listen to what the customer wants and then we possibly design what he asked for, but only proposing things that can be done realistically. If there is something that is not possible, we try to propose something slightly different, to satisfy their

request, but which [the yard] are still able to build."

Their focus on the customer carries through to the very end. "We measure the success of each of our projects not by evaluating how much it is celebrated, considered beautiful, but by the degree of happiness and satisfaction of its owner," he continues. But celebrated the projects certainly are, in particular two recent additions to it the Nuvolari-Lenard portfolio, the 115m M/Y *Ahpo* and 142m M/Y *Nord*, both built at Lürssen in northern Germany ("If you want something big [built], this is the definitive yard you should look at," says Nuvolari).

Below: Dan Lenard, front, and Carlo Nuvolari; M/Y *Ahpo*; left: M/Y *Nord*



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– Carlo Nuvolari

It's a seemingly simple solution to a problem, and one that comes from the heart of Nuvolari's philosophy. "The design is all about proportions. From any angle you see the boat, nothing should stick out of the boat. Look at nature. Look at big trees. A big tree has its own line and proportion. There is never one branch sticking out. From every angle you see a tree, the proportions are very well defined."

Nature, ancient buildings, the car industry – Nuvolari takes his inspiration from many areas but sticks to certain principles. "We try not to break the fundamental rules of architecture. Because those rules are important for our eyes. It is not a conscious thing to see something that you like, to say yes, this is nice – but you don't know why you like it."

It's a philosophy that continues to bear fruit. A partnership that had its roots in a meeting between two idealistic students with an interest in yacht-building at a boat show has blossomed into a hugely successful company, with three junior partners, including Valentina Zannier, who leads the interior design department. Future business planned includes another superyacht with Lürssen, and projects with the Italian yards CRN and ISA. Nuvolari-Lenard has also branched out into interior design for houses, adding another string to its bow.

"We are committed to creating style, designing ever more beautiful boats and ever more luxurious interiors," says Nuvolari. After 30 years, some values never change. nuvolari-lenard.com

Both are remarkable builds that stand out on the water, yet feature a very distinctive mark of a Nuvolari-Lenard design. "*Ahpo* has this long line, a sheer line that's coming from the bow continuously down to the stern. This long line is the signature of all our designs," Nuvolari says. "You can also recognise it on *Nord*, in all the Palmer Johnsons, and many other yachts that we designed – there is this falling line."

Other signature features of Nuvolari-Lenard designs that have become the industry norm include the aft-deck infinity pool, created for the 2006 Oceanco build *Alfa Nero*, and the black mast. Nuvolari describes the reason behind the latter innovation: "All yachts are top heavy because they are getting higher and higher. Customers are asking for more room, more space and so there are so many decks. A big white mast on top makes it visually even more heavy for your eyes. The perspective of the yacht is wrong, and we need to take away the visual weight. A black mast shortens this height."