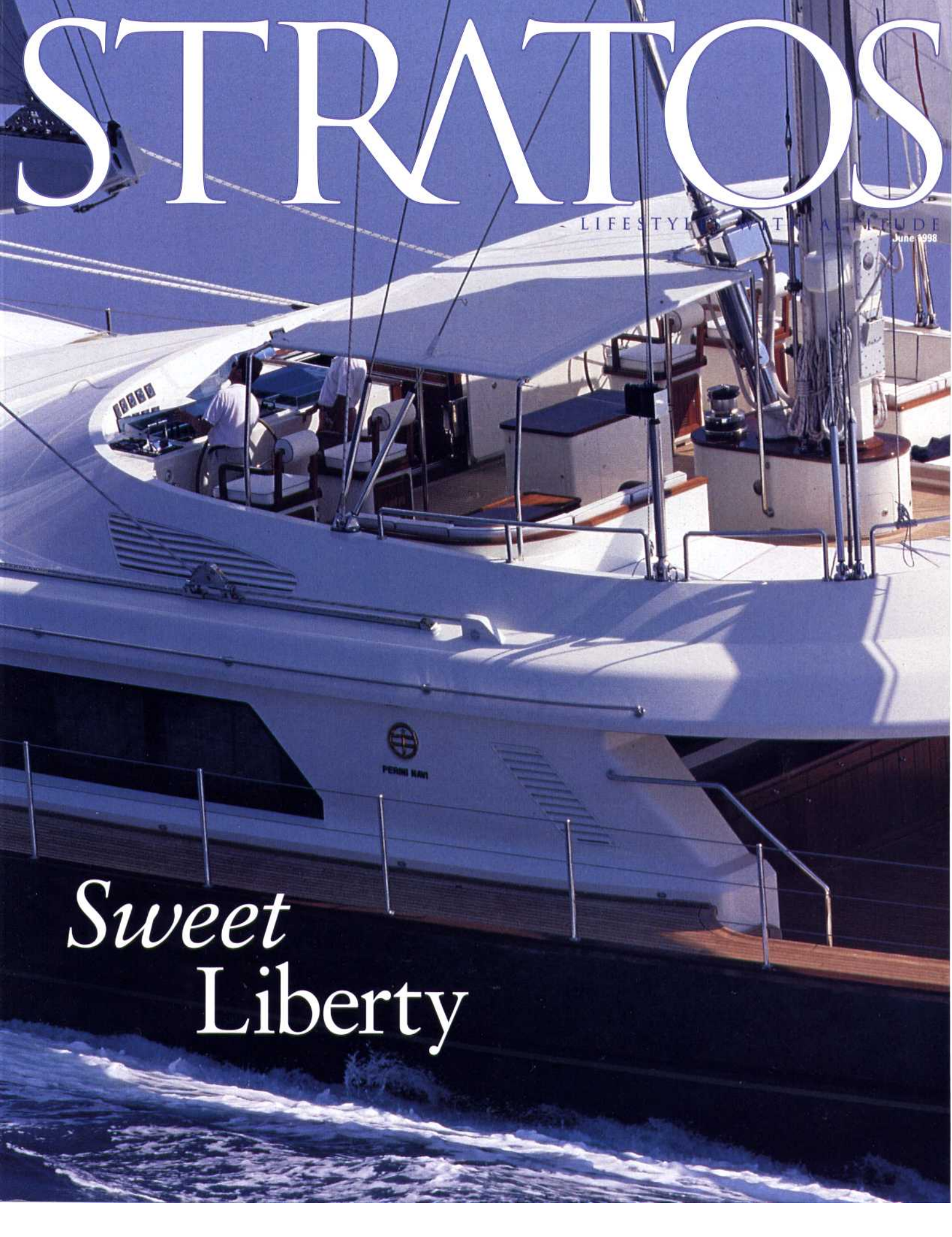


STRATOS

LIFESTYLE AT SEA
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*Sweet
Liberty*



Sweet Liberty



STORY BY MARK T MASCIAROTTE

PHOTOS COURTESY OF PERINI NAVI

Under full sail (above) off Sardinia. *Liberty's* comfortable sea lounge (left), abaft the pilot house.



South Beach. ALONG THE BROAD, PALM-FRINGED BEACHFRONT, GLITTERING BOUTIQUES AND FASHIONABLE BISTROS VIE FOR ATTENTION WITH TONEY ART DECO HOTELS, RESPLENDENT IN THEIR PASTEL FINERY. THIS MOST TRENDY OF MIAMI'S NEIGHBORHOODS IS A PLACE OF BOUNDLESS ENERGY, OF CONSTANT CHANGE. WITH EACH DAWN IT EMERGES EVER MORE RADIANT AS, SEEMINGLY OVERNIGHT, DEVELOPERS TRANSFORM THE SHABBY INTO THE CHICHL.

NEARBY, THE CITY'S NEWLY RENOVATED MARINA IS FILLED TO CAPACITY. AT THE END OF A CENTRAL DOCK, AMIDST ACRES OF MONOCHROMATIC FIBERGLASS, ONE BOAT STANDS APART, HER MASSIVE BLUE HULL AN ISLAND, HER TOWERING RIG A MOUNTAIN, DWARFING ALL OTHERS. IN HER SIMPLE NAME ONE CAN READ VOLUMES ABOUT HER OWNER'S BOUNDLESS APPRECIATION OF HER CAPABILITY, HER POWER. SHE IS CALLED LIBERTY.

ACROSS HER FLAWLESS TEAK DECKS on this clear, warm evening, a sea of blue blazers ebbs and flows, its waves broken now and then by the white blouses and jackets of the wait staff that, like sea foam, drift among the swells, appearing here and there before moving on. Looking at the scene—the well-dressed crowd, the soft lighting, the *bors d'oeuvres* and fine wine—it is difficult to imagine that less than twenty-four hours ago, this boat battled twenty-foot seas in the relentless assault of a steady Force Eight on the last leg of a nearly five thousand mile transoceanic voyage.

But such an extraordinary performance is expected by the management at Perini Navi, *Liberty's* builder, and by their clients. Known for its innovative design, the Perini shipyard has outdone even itself with this remarkable yacht. Beginning with a novel arrangement, the builder has carefully ensured that every space and system is well planned, engineered and executed.

A perfect example of this is the "sky lounge," a rather sizable exterior space that is immediately forward of the wheelhouse. This circular area has been provided with a pair of comfortable settees and tables to port and starboard and, along the after perimeter, with a large dining table that has both fixed and movable seating. The lounge is sunken below the foredeck and side decks, and, because of its location, is subject to the weather at all times. However, by the simple use of electro-hydraulic controls, the elements can be tamed by surrounding the area with glass and by deploying a huge awning that stows in the central column of teak and stainless steel. For

safety underway, sliding watertight doors seal off the joiner doors to the wheelhouse and the lounge can be quickly freed of seawater by voluminous scuppers hidden under the aft stairs.

As in most successful yachts, *Liberty* was designed from the inside out. At the heart of this particular design is a multi-level arrangement that maximizes space for the owner and his guests while providing isolated machinery spaces and unfettered access to all areas of the boat by the crew. Yet despite her many unique features, there is a commonality of design that this boat shares with others launched previously from the Perini yard.

Among these is the magnificent joinery, a Perini hallmark since the very first hull was fitted out at the company's facility in Viareggio, Italy. The woodwork that one finds aboard *Liberty* is beautifully executed with classic details reminiscent of a country manor. For the most part, the featured wood throughout the accommodation is cherry, its warm hue and pleasing grain providing a soft, sensuous backdrop for the colorful fabrics.

Another of the builder's trademarks is the manner in which the company designs equipment to be hidden away, leaving spaces clean and uncluttered and increasing safety for passengers and crew. The deck spaces aboard *Liberty* are no

exception. On the foredeck, for example, one sees only a long expanse of smooth teak decking. Residing under the deck in watertight, lighted garages, are a pair of 5.1 meter Novurania diesel/waterjet RIBs that are handled with ease by a pair of cranes that also stow under the deck. Farther forward, a seating area for the crew also rests under a pair of hatches as do various storage lockers, peaks and the 80 kW emergency generator.

It is not often that one gets a close look at a modern sailing vessel of this size. There are simply not many of them in service. What is most striking at first glance is the immense scale of the rig and its attendant hardware. *Liberty* has been fitted with Perini Navi's signature sail handling system, a complex arrangement that makes use of hydraulic furling gear and Fabio Perini's patented captive winches for trimming and setting. A computer, running proprietary software developed by the shipyard's staff, permits all winches to be preset, ensuring that design loads cannot be exceeded. Although hard for even the most experienced offshore mariners to imagine, this 548-tonne yacht, with her 1,304 square meters of sail, could, with little difficulty, be sailed by one person.

As mentioned above, the arrangement is unique. Forward on the lowest deck, is the bow thruster compartment, followed by a pair of

Although hard for even the most experienced offshore mariners to imagine, this 548-tonne yacht, with her 1,304 square meters of sail, could, with little difficulty, be sailed by just one person.



walk-in cold rooms, the engineer's cabin, the dry store and the laundry. The machinery space itself is divided along centerline by the trunk for the 48-tonne swing keel. In addition to housing the switchgear and a backup engineering station, there are separate engine and generator rooms outboard to port and starboard that can be accessed by watertight doors and by removable, noise-attenuating, glazed panels that allow inspection from the central companionways.

Farther aft, a watertight door leads to an area that serves several purposes. Fitted with an electric stair machine, treadmill and head, it can be used as an exercise room. At the same time, it serves as a garage for the crew tender, provides additional stowage and, at the touch of a button,

Seen from her port stern quarter (left), *Liberty* presents her lovely lines and towering sail plan to good effect. Also seen are the after sundeck and the flying bridge. A good view of the sky lounge and bridge (right) as seen from the spreader bar aloft the main mast.

SWEET LIBERTY





Liberty's signature "sky lounge" (above and left) is located immediately forward of the wheelhouse. The elements can be tamed by raising glass weather shields and by deploying a huge awning that stows in the central column of teak and stainless steel.

becomes the yacht's rendezvous point for boarding the tenders and for swimming. This is accomplished by means of an enormous teak-clad watertight door in the hull that swings down to become a landing platform, complete with mooring hardware for the tenders and a ladder to the water. The space also provides access to the steering gear room and boatswain's store and to a spacious double cabin that can be used to house additional personnel, such as pilots or security.

The accommodation deck also provides unhindered access from stem to stern. Way forward is the crew accommodation, comprising four double cabins, each with heads, the crew mess and the galley. Companionways from this area lead to the main deck and to the machinery deck. Another companionway provides discreet access



to the luxury accommodation via a doorway that opens onto a small lobby between the two forward guest cabins.

There are four guest cabins in all. The forward two are fitted with twin berths, whilst the after pair have been provided with doubles. Each cabin has a head ensuite and other amenities that have come to be expected aboard large luxury yachts: vanities, entertainment centers, spacious hanging lockers and bureaus. The finish in the cabins is identical in execution: custom carpets, cherry joinery and high quality fixtures. Superb detailing is evident everywhere, from fiddled bookshelves to lockers that open to reveal a stack of clear-fronted drawers that can be secured by a unique hinged guard installed along one edge.

Between the sets of guest cabins is the main saloon, which doubles as a dining saloon by simply expanding the central table. The furniture here and in the other interior lounge areas is comfortable and low key, more in keeping with a cozy house in the Hamptons than with a yacht.

Moving beyond the aftermost guest cabins,

one enters the owner's area, which comprises several spaces. As can be seen in the photographs, the stateroom is of pleasing size, and its adjoining sitting area is furnished with a sofa and table as well as a stately antique desk with its matching chair and side cabinet. Across the hall is a nicely proportioned head, followed by a dressing room, sauna and shower as well as a private door leading to the exercise room. The joinery in the owner's area is slightly more elaborate than in the guest suites, just enough to add a subtle hint of importance without detracting from the finish in the other spaces.

In each of the spaces within the luxury accommodation, there are many details that, at first glance, go unnoticed. For example, each cabin has an alcove behind the entrance door in which coat hooks are mounted. These recessed areas make it simple to leave the door latched in an open position without struggling against the bulk of coats wedged behind the door. On closer inspection, it can be seen that the panel on which the coat hooks are mounted is itself a door



Oversized ports in the main saloon and throughout the luxury accommodation (top) provide a nearly unobstructed view of the world outside. The port aft guest bedroom (above) features a luxurious double bed.



that opens to reveal a linen closet designated for that cabin.

Between the after guest cabins and the main saloon are a pair of staircases that lead up to the main deck lounge. At the head of each stairway is a seating area with a sofa that faces an easy chair and ottoman. An entertainment center is built in along the aft bulkhead between a pair of large windows that face the aft deck lounge, that can be accessed by doors to port and starboard.

Forward of the stairways are two distinct areas. Inboard to starboard is the owner's office

area, with its built-in desk and bookcase. Outboard is the navigation desk and its attendant electronics console. Inboard to port is a bar that is used to serve all three main deck lounges. The ship's communication desk is opposite. An interesting feature in these areas is that the bulkheads can be kept open during the day, a design that provides remarkable space and light. For night operations, however, hidden bulkhead panels can be deployed to separate the navigation and communications desks from the lounge area and integrate them into the wheelhouse.

The wheelhouse spans the forward end of the deckhouse. Its central console is divided into three discreet sections, one for operations, one for systems monitoring and one for sail handling. A pair of leather settees are arranged along the aft bulkhead.

Abaft the main deck lounge is a second exterior lounge, furnished in movable wicker furniture and covered by a hard top. Stairs nearby access an open aft deck from which other stairways lead below to the exercise room and above to the full beam flying



Under the right wind conditions and full sail (top), *Liberty* can achieve speeds in the 18-knot range. The 52m yacht can be operated under sail or power by one person from the wheelhouse (above). One of two 5.1m RIBs (left) stowed in its watertight on-deck hangar.



bridge, which has a pair of steering consoles, settees and tables.

As previously noted, *Liberty* makes use of a complex, automated sail handling system developed by Perini Navi over a decade ago and refined continuously year after year. To receive her certification for operation with an unmanned engine room, the yacht also had to be fitted with a sophisticated system that allows all mechanical



and electrical functions to be monitored and controlled from the wheelhouse. Such tasks as fuel transfer, electrical power management and the like can all be handled by use of a computer on the starboard side of the wheelhouse console, backed up by an identical console in the engine room.

Her impressive onboard systems aside, *Liberty's* construction is equally distinctive. She has been built to meet stringent requirements for offshore yachts set down by the American Bureau of Shipping, and, to add a further measure of safety, complies with the latest regulations issued by Britain's Marine Safety Agency. These rules are designed to provide protection in the event of fire and are similar in many respects to the regulations that govern large passenger ships.

Indeed, in most respects, this remarkable yacht would be the envy of even the most ardent aficionado of the great ocean liners. In addition to her flawless fit and finish, she has the ability to cruise anywhere in the world under sail at speeds in the 18-knot range, and with her pair of 1,250 horsepower engines has the added capability of cruising for 3,500 miles under power at an impressive 13 knots. ■

Mark Masciarotte is a regular contributor to Stratos and just returned from an assignment in New Zealand.

Perini Navi

MASTER SHIPBUILDER

THE STORY OF PERINI NAVI is one of the most successful in the history of Italian yachtbuilding. By simplifying the process needed to handle large sailing yachts, the company has brought what was for decades a small niche market into the forefront, greatly increasing demand.

The driving force behind the shipyard and its products is the inventive and gregarious toilet tissue paper tycoon, Fabio Perini. His company, Fabio Perini SpA, builds specialized conversion machines that process sanitary tissue, perforating it, winding it on rolls and packaging the final product. It is on this machinery that much of the world's supply of toilet tissue and related paper products is produced. As one can imagine, it is an extremely lucrative business, and its success has allowed Perini, the man, to turn his attention to building spectacular yachts and yacht equipment.

With his first boat, Perini made a conscious decision to blend timeless interior design with distinctive exterior styling. Equally important was the boat's ability to be easily handled without a large, expensive crew. The appeal for the product was instantaneous, and along the way, Perini Navi garnered worldwide attention by winning prestigious design awards from industry associations and yachting publications.

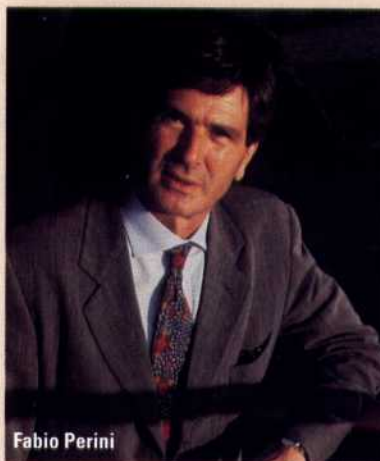
This acclamation notwithstanding, it is, in fact, Fabio Perini's genius that has contributed greatly to the company's success. As noted in the story, much of what makes a Perini yacht unique is the fact that even the largest boat can be sailed by a very small number of peo-

ple. This ability is a direct result of Perini's patented winches, which are now being produced, in slightly modified forms, by winch manufacturers around the globe. The captive winch allows complete control of a line in either direction without tending. The winch can operate at high speeds or low, but at all times, the line is kept under tension. By linking two or more winches, a system can be

devised that will permit any given sail to be furled, set, trimmed and eased by using a single jog lever. It is this innovation, along with others, that continue to increase the public's acceptance of Perini yachts.

Today, the company builds its hulls in a Perini-owned and managed shipyard in Turkey. The reason is one of economics. The workforce in Turkey is highly competent in the shipbuilding trades, and the labor rates are extremely favorable as compared to those in Italy. After the hulls are completed, they are transported to Italy where they are fitted out in the company's main facility at Viareggio, the center of Italy's yachtbuilding industry. It is in this yard that each yacht built by Perini Navi begins and ends. It is here that the original design and engineering are done, and it is here that the company's most exacting work is performed.

And so it is that this remarkable yachtbuilding company has derived great benefit from the automation systems for which its owner is famous. Indeed, the staff at Perini Navi is encouraged to be much like their employer: inventive and relentless in their pursuit of quality. It is, to say the least, a fitting mandate. — MARK MASCIAROTTE



Fabio Perini