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CLASSIC, COSY AND CONTEMPORARY

A BBJ 787 is always going to be a challenge for a designer, but never more so than when the owner has very specific requirements about the materials and the style. M&R Associates Design faced the challenge and produced a modern interior with a cosy atmosphere.

BY JILL STOCKBRIDGE

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M&R Associates Design, a Swiss design agency specialising in both interiors and exteriors for private jets, is currently working with a Middle Eastern customer developing a unique interior for a brand-new VVIP Boeing Business

Jet 787-900, which will be operating in the Gulf region. The design team has presented a number of designs for discussion and consideration, and hopes to expand the scope of the project to include the overall aircraft design and layout. Florent Magnin, Design Director and Co-owner, reflected on one of the contenders.

He explained: “The customer’s brief was that we should produce a unique design that emphasised a home-from-home atmosphere and comfort on board. Interestingly, he was also really attentive to some of the finer details and specified the use of natural materials for his interior,” he added.

Magnin, who is in charge of the project, believes that a number of different factors contributed to the customer choosing to work with the team from Geneva-based M&R Associates Design.

He said: “We are experienced in designing both interiors and exteriors on single aisle and wide-body aircraft and are referenced officially by both Boeing and Airbus, which is obviously reassuring for the customer. M&R is a design company fully dedicated to business aviation, which has enabled us to gain significant experience and technical knowledge over the years. We use this experience to ensure

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FLORENT MAGNIN, DESIGN DIRECTOR AND CO-OWNER

that we ‘raise any project to excellence’ – which is the credo we all work to.”

One of the strengths of the company is the ability to develop unique materials and prototypes, working closely with their exclusive network of high-end suppliers, which became a very important aspect, in developing the BBJ 787-900 concepts.

SHEER SIZE

In the beginning, the venture faced a few challenges due to the combination of the sheer size of the project and the very specific requests from the customer. The design and development of all the internal monuments required a major creative effort from the design team, as they were all requested to be tailor-made and have distinctly different designs and patterns. M&R had to challenge their suppliers to come up with new concepts for the design of all the materials and prototypes for the project.

The customer insisted that every monument should be unique, as they are in his home, but every one should also contribute to the general cosy and warm atmosphere of the aircraft.

Magnin explained the complications: “Being able to produce unique monuments, which are all very different but integrate perfectly into the overall interior design style, was a serious challenge. However, the final result is outstanding, and each monument brings something unique to this aircraft. This was made possible thanks to a close collaboration with our high-end suppliers and dedicated craftsmen.”

For the client, it was also very important to have a magnificent entrance in order for him to really feel welcomed home when entering the aircraft. To answer this need M&R designed a stunning entrance, with circular wood flooring, highlighted by subtle lighting in the ceiling above.

The French designer came up with a very creative, comfortable and functional lounge. Magnin said: “This lounge was specifically designed for the customer’s family to gather informally and be relaxed together, in a comfy and pleasant environment. However, this open area can also function as the main entertainment area for the passengers on board. It has seating for up to five guests to watch a movie on the huge pop up 65 ▶

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Specialised spaces: the design created a very calm and home-like atmosphere in the jet, with a grand entrance hall and many unique decorative details and motifs.





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Natural elements: all selected fabrics are 100% handcrafted from natural fibres, including silk, linen and cotton, and were specifically created for this project.



► inch monitor integrated inside the credenza.”

The selection of light colours and natural materials creates a warm feeling in this aircraft area. The use of diverse customised fabrics also helps to accentuate the homely feeling.

The different fabrics and patterns for the seats were chosen with the specific aim of creating an elegant and home-like environment. All selected fabrics are 100% handcrafted from natural fibre, including silk, linen and cotton. As per the customer’s brief, they were all specifically created for this special project.

Magnin said: “There is no doubt that the Middle Eastern culture has played a role in the selection of materials, fabrics and the overall interior design. However, the customer was also looking for some contemporary aspects and contrasts, such as the titanium pattern on mother of pearl above all the windows in the lounge. These details offer hints of a more European style.”

The design team would describe the overall style for the cabin as classic and cosy, highlighted with some contemporary accents, including most of the monuments and finer details on board. For instance, the credenza from which the huge TV monitor pops up, is made of a mix of carved wood and metal, with inset patterns resembling waterfalls as a motif on the front of the furniture.

In the master bedroom, the use of a curved wooden panel with an integrated lighting system

offers a peaceful and elegant atmosphere, with the ability to change lighting colour thanks to a mood lighting system. Certain elements of this room are made of patina-oxidised bronze, including the base of the lamps and the door handles, which brings contrast and rhythm and pulls the whole room design together.

FLOORPLAN

Another challenging part of the design was to come up with an innovative floorplan that featured large open spaces, mixed with some specific use private areas, such as the master bedroom and the movie theatre area.

Magnin said: “It was crucial to have a good passage and flow throughout the whole aircraft. That challenge was overcome thanks to M&R’s expert engineering team and also that some key members of the team have experience working at renowned completion centres and major OEMs.”

This link to the experience of completion centres is one that M&R Associates Design intends to explore more widely. The company is growing rapidly and constantly looking for new challenges. In order to strengthen its position in business aviation design, a new cabin concept is about to be launched, in partnership with a well-known completion centre, with more details to be revealed shortly.

Last year M&R was awarded a major contract for the full design and project management of the first new wide-body Airbus A330-200 for a private customer China. The aircraft is currently under completion in a completion centre in Europe and will be delivered at the end of the year to the Chinese principal.

In addition, the Swiss design firm is planning to launch a collection of customised loose equipment specifically designed for business aviation by the end of the year.

Vincent Rey, Co-Owner and Design Director, added: “M&R Associates Design is an exclusive boutique design company, fully dedicated to business aviation, with references worldwide and projects completed on almost every type of aircraft.

“We always adapt our designs to match each customer’s unique lifestyle with a strong focus on details, comfort and wellbeing on board.” ☺

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DESIGN DIRECTOR