

Drawing Humanity at Sea: The Interior Yacht Design as an Expression of a New Humanism

In an era dominated by the digitalization of design processes and the automation of representational techniques, yacht interior design offers a privileged ground for reflecting on the return of the “handmade” as an expression of a new humanism. Through drawing, the interiors of yachts reveal the centrality of human sensitivity within acts of creation and representation. This paper explores how craftsmanship, customization, and the tactile dimension of making are redefining the notion of luxury, shifting it from ostentation toward authenticity. In this context, drawing operates as a mediating act between technology and the hand, between idea and material, reaffirming the ethical and aesthetic significance of the design process. Drawing on Da Empoli’s Contro gli specialisti (“Against the Specialists”), which calls for a revival of humanistic thinking, the research interprets design as a space of resistance to excessive specialization and the loss of meaning in creative work. The nautical field thus emerges as a contemporary laboratory of new humanism: a way of “drawing the sea” that restores centrality to the hand, to memory, and to beauty understood as a form of knowledge.

Keywords: *Drawing, New Humanism, Yacht Design, Embodied Knowledge, Hybrid Representation*

Introduction

In recent years, architectural and design discourse has increasingly highlighted the need to redefine the relationship between humans, technology, and the environment. In a landscape dominated by the digitalization of design processes and the emergence of artificial intelligence as a new creative frontier, there is a growing tension toward the rediscovery of the human factor in design. As noted by Juhani Pallasmaa (2009), the designer’s hand is not merely an execution tool but a form of thought that enables understanding of the world through sensory experience. Similarly, Alberto Pérez-Gómez (2016) interprets drawing as an act of attunement – a harmony between mind, body, and environment – restoring to representation its original meaning as a poetic and relational form of knowledge. Within this theoretical framework, the concept of a new humanism emerges as a response to the crisis of meaning generated by overspecialization and the fragmentation of knowledge. Giuliano Da Empoli (2013)¹ highlights the progressive loss of an integrated worldview typical of technologically advanced societies and advocates for the rediscovery of a culture capable of uniting technical efficacy with the depth of human intuition. This perspective resonates with Ezio Manzini’s (2015) thought, which encourages

¹In *Against the Specialists: The Revenge of Humanism* (2013), Giuliano Da Empoli criticizes the fragmentation of knowledge and advocates for a new humanism capable of reestablishing the connections between technology and culture, thereby restoring a critical, integrated, and human dimension to design. For a more detailed, see Da Empoli (2013, pp. 18-19).

conceiving design as a social practice oriented toward sustainability and the regeneration of human relationships, beyond the purely performative dimension of technology. Likewise, Andrea Bassi (2017) observes that contemporary design operates on a hybrid terrain, where the value of a project lies not merely in technological innovation, but in its capacity to imbue objects and experiences with meaning. In this regard, Donald A. Norman (2004) emphasizes that emotional design is essential for understanding the profound link between form, function, and attachment: designing is not only problem-solving but also the construction of affective and cognitive relationships between humans and artifacts.

Within this context, the field of yacht design represents both a symbolic and, in some respects, unexpected research arena. Traditionally associated with luxury and technological innovation, contemporary yacht design increasingly reflects a return to customization and craftsmanship as expressions of authenticity. As Richard Sennett (2008) reminds us, the value of craftsmanship lies not solely in technical mastery but in the reflective capacity of making: in the ability to “think through material,” learn from the rhythm of gesture, and establish an ongoing dialogue between design and realization. In this scenario, drawing emerges as a mediating act between hand and machine, between analog and digital processes. Far from being obsolete, it assumes a renewed role as a critical and interpretive tool. Mario Carpo (2017) characterizes this condition as post-digital: a context in which technology does not replace human sensibility but amplifies it, enabling a more conscious and poetic engagement with digital tools. In this perspective, drawing becomes a mode of thinking through representation, inhabiting the design process as a space for reflection and aesthetic responsibility.

The interior design of yachts, with its technical and symbolic complexity, thus functions as a laboratory for applied new humanism. Each stage of the design process – from preliminary sketches to digital modeling, from material selection to artisanal construction – becomes an opportunity to explore the relationship between sensitivity and knowledge, mind and hand. As Tim Ingold (2013) suggests, “making is thinking”: the craft gesture and the creative process coincide, through which humans recognize themselves in the world they construct. This study aims to investigate how the rediscovery of manual skills and customization contributes to redefining contemporary design paradigms, outlining a form of humanism rooted in practice and representation. Through the lens of yacht design, it seeks to demonstrate that drawing – in its hybrid dimension, between analog and digital – today represents both an act of resistance and mediation: a way to reaffirm the centrality of the human in creative processes and to “draw the sea,” restoring ethical and aesthetic depth to design.

This paper specifically aims to:

1. Examine the role of drawing as a cognitive and critical tool in contemporary design.

2. Analyze yacht design as a privileged field for trying with a new humanism in design.
3. Highlight the coexistence of manual and digital, artisanal, and technological dimensions as a paradigm of integrated design knowledge.

The study adopts a qualitative, theoretical-interpretative approach, based on literature review, analysis of exemplary yacht design cases, and critical reflection on processes of representation and construction.

Literature Review

Throughout the history of Western architecture, drawing has represented far more than a mere technical tool: it has been a form of thought, a language through which architects have expressed their vision of the world (Evans, 1995). Since the Renaissance, drawing has been conceived as a manifestation of human intellect, a bridge between idea and built reality. Giulio Carlo Argan (1962) notes that Vasarian drawing lays the foundation for all the arts, as it unites conception and execution, overcoming the distinction between theory and practice that will characterize modernity. In this perspective, drawing functions as a cognitive and speculative practice that integrates mind and hand, reason, and imagination. The mark is not only a visual representation but an epistemological act: a way to understand the world through form.

With the advent of modernity and the Industrial Revolution, this balance gradually shifted. Confidence in technology, mass production, and standardized languages often led to a separation between the ideation and execution phases of design. Yet, even in the most radical moments of technological avant-garde, some authors continued to recognize drawing's irreducibly human value. Paul Klee, for example, interpreted drawing as a dynamic process, a free movement of mind and hand capable of exploring the essence of forms (Klee, 1925). In this view, the mark is not mere visual registration but an act of discovery and invention, a way to engage directly with sensory reality.

In the contemporary era, marked by the digital revolution, drawing has dematerialized, becoming code, simulation, and algorithm. Mario Carpo (2017) describes this shift as a "second digital turn," where drawing is no longer the recording of intuition but the output of computational processes. While this has greatly expanded design possibilities, it also raises concerns about the loss of corporeality and sensory experience. Juhani Pallasmaa (2012) emphasizes that, although digital culture enhances design capabilities, it risks distancing designers from tactile engagement, slowness, and the intimacy of manual gestures – essential elements for sensitive spatial knowledge. In response, renewed attention has emerged toward the epistemological value of drawing and its role in maintaining the connection between knowledge and perception. Alberto Pérez-Gómez (2016) interprets drawing as attunement: a practice of resonance between subject and world, mediating between inner experience and external reality. In this sense, drawing is an act of interpretation rather than mere

1 representation: a mode of poetic knowledge opposing the apparent neutrality of
 2 data and algorithms. The reference to humanism, therefore, is not nostalgic but
 3 a theoretical and methodological necessity. Giuliano Da Empoli (2013) calls for
 4 overcoming the contemporary fragmentation of specialized knowledge to
 5 recover a complex, integrated vision of humans and their environment. This
 6 principle resonates with Tim Ingold (2013), for whom “making” is a form of
 7 thought developed over time through engagement with materials, tools, and
 8 others. Knowledge, in this perspective, is not abstract but experiential. Similarly,
 9 authors such as Juhani Pallasmaa (2005) and Peter Zumthor (2006) emphasize
 10 the sensory and phenomenological dimension of architecture. In their
 11 reflections, drawing is not merely a preliminary act but an extension of the body:
 12 a way to perceive, measure, and convey spatial experience.

13 This conception is closely linked to the notion of a new humanism
 14 highlighted in the call for papers: an operative rather than theoretical humanism,
 15 where representation serves as the convergence point between technical
 16 knowledge, aesthetic experience, and ethical responsibility. Recent studies in
 17 contemporary design echo this view. Andrea Bassi (2017) underlines that the
 18 value of design today lies in its capacity to generate meaning, not just form;
 19 Renato De Fusco (2016) describes design taste and sensitivity as “historical
 20 conventions” reflecting the relationship between society and culture; and
 21 Gabriele Bersano (2019) examines the post-design condition as a hybrid space
 22 between design, communication, and artistic practice. These contributions
 23 outline a complex epistemological field in which drawing becomes a critical
 24 device for understanding contemporaneity. In contemporary architectural
 25 theory, several authors have redefined drawing as a cognitive and relational
 26 practice. Hélène Frichot (2018) interprets *drawing as thinking* as a situated
 27 knowledge-building mode, where the graphic process connects material and
 28 immaterial, technique and poetics. Complementarily, Branko Kolarevic (2004)
 29 emphasizes how digital technology has radically transformed the relationship
 30 between representation, production, and corporeality, prompting an
 31 interdisciplinary reassessment of design and paving the way for a post-specialist
 32 vision of architectural practice.

33 In this perspective, architectural and design drawing can be understood as
 34 relational thought. It does not merely describe an object but constructs a
 35 dialogue: between designer and material, between representation and
 36 construction, between humans and their environment. The humanistic value of
 37 drawing lies in its capacity to hold together what technology tends to separate:
 38 body and mind, reason and emotion, vision and making. It is precisely in this
 39 tension – between manual drawing and algorithmic representation – that the
 40 space of contemporary new humanism emerges: a space of balance, slowness,
 41 and reflection, where the hand regains its role as an instrument of knowledge
 42 and responsibility. Considering these reflections, the present study adopts a
 43 qualitative, theoretical, and phenomenological approach. Its aim is not the
 44 quantitative measurement of processes but the understanding of the relationships
 45 among hand, mind, and representation in the context of contemporary yacht
 46 design.

The methodology relies on three main instruments:

1. Critical literature review (from Sennett to Carpo, Pallasmaa, Ingold, Frichot, Manzini) to identify conceptual paradigms of the new humanism in design.
2. Observation of yacht design processes through representative cases (Riva, Benetti, Baglietto, Zuccon International Project), where drawing and manual practice remain central.
3. Interpretation of representational practices – from graphic gestures to digital modeling – as cognitive and symbolic acts.

This reflective method, typical of design-based inquiry, allows the project to be considered as a cultural text and drawing as a device of knowledge, where theory and practice intertwine. In summary, the literature and approach converge in recognizing contemporary drawing as a mediation ground between sensitivity and technique, body and algorithm, representing a privileged field for rethinking humanism in post-digital design.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative, theoretical, and phenomenological approach aimed at investigating the relationship between hand, mind, and representation in the context of contemporary yacht design. The objective is not the quantitative measurement of processes, but the understanding of cognitive, sensory, and cultural relationships that link drawing to design practice, restoring the humanistic and relational dimension of the project.

The methodology is based on three main instruments:

1. Critical literature review, with particular attention to the contributions of Sennett (2008), Ingold (2013), Pallasmaa (2009), Frichot (2018), Carpo (2017), and Manzini (2015), to outline the conceptual paradigms of the new humanism in design and the epistemological value of manual skill in the project. According to Sennett, manual ability is a form of reflective intelligence: making becomes an act of thinking and continuous learning. Ingold (2013) describes making as a process of “correspondence” with the world, where thought and action merge, while Pallasmaa (2009) recognizes the hand as a cognitive and poetic instrument for shaping sensory experience. In this perspective, craftsmanship and design representation are analyzed as embodied knowledge practices, where theoretical reflection intertwines with gesture and material. Frichot (2018) emphasizes the relevance of *drawing as thinking*, while Manzini (2015) stresses the cooperation between manual, cognitive, and social knowledge as the foundation of a new project culture oriented toward sustainability.

2. Observation and interpretation of design processes in the yacht design sector, through the analysis of representative cases (Riva, Benetti, Baglietto, Zuccon International Project, Winch Design, Lobanov Design). These entities were selected for their ability to integrate advanced digital technologies with artisanal knowledge, serving as paradigmatic laboratories for the interaction between industry and tradition. In yacht design, technological complexity and manual sensitivity coexist in a constantly negotiated balance: constructing a yacht requires multisensory knowledge of materials, precision skills, and the ability to mediate between industrial standards and extreme customization. As Adamson (2013) notes, the boundary between industry and craftsmanship is no longer dichotomous, but a continuum of cooperation between hand intelligence and machine intelligence². Yacht design thus becomes an emblematic site of the new humanism in design, where technology does not replace artisanal sensitivity but amplifies its expressive potential.
3. Analysis of representational practices – from hand drawing to digital modeling and prototyping – as cognitive and symbolic acts capable of connecting aesthetic sensitivity with technical knowledge. Polanyi's concept of tacit knowledge (1966) is fundamental here: manual knowledge is largely implicit, embodied in gestures and bodily rhythms, difficult to verbalize but essential for quality outcomes. Drawing thus becomes a relational device, an “epistemological machine” (Musio-Sale, 2009) guiding the translation from concept to construction, maintaining a living connection between design imagination and making experience.

This reflective method, rooted in design-based inquiry, treats the project as a cultural text and drawing as a device of knowledge. Representation is not merely a tool for prediction or control, but an interpretive process in which theory and practice intertwine, restoring human meaning to technology and continuity between craft and innovation. Drawing, understood as a cognitive practice, does not merely visualize a result but activates an embodied thinking process, where the graphic act becomes a form of reflection and dialogue with material and context. In this sense, the adopted methodology is inductive and phenomenological, with direct engagement in the project – through gesture, representation, and material experimentation – as the primary source of knowledge. This approach opposes the neutrality of purely analytical or algorithmic methods, privileging situated knowledge in which the designer is simultaneously observer and actor, author, and interpreter of the creative process. Knowledge, therefore, is not a starting point but the outcome of exploration, adjustment, and resonance with the design context.

²In his book, Adamson explores the relationship between craftsmanship and industry, emphasizing how the distinction between the two realms constitutes a continuum in which manual skills and technological competencies cooperate to generate cultural value and knowledge. For a detailed analysis of the mechanisms of this interaction, see Adamson. (2013, pp. 45-49).

As noted by Alessi (2014) and Vercelloni (2021), the return to manual skill and sensory materiality in contemporary design represents a critical response to hyper-digitalization, a cultural act of resistance reaffirming the centrality of experience and the memory of making. This orientation does not imply a rejection of technology, but rather its humanization: digital tools are reinterpreted as extensions of hand and mind, mediatory instruments rather than substitutes. In this logic, manual skill is not merely a legacy of the past, but a device of contemporary intelligence, capable of reactivating slow, reflective, and qualitative thinking in opposition to the speed and standardization of automated processes.

In yacht design, this attitude assumes both symbolic and operational value. Each project becomes an exercise in balancing industrial standards with poetic attention to detail, algorithmic control with freedom of gesture (Norman, 2004). Yacht interior design constitutes a privileged field for experimenting with this integration, requiring constant dialogue between engineering, ergonomics, perception, and craftsmanship. The complexity of construction techniques, combined with the need to optimize spaces and weights, makes drawing a synthesis tool, a language connecting apparently irreconcilable dimensions: calculation and emotion, precision and poetry, technology, and narrative. The vessel can thus be interpreted as a micro-living sphere, a floating ecosystem where aesthetics, ethics, and technology converge. Drawing on Sloterdijk (2004), every inhabited space is an “immunological sphere,” an environment constructed to negotiate the relationship between protection and openness. The yacht fully embodies this liminal condition: both refuge and machine, poetic space and technical device, symbol of a humanism renewed in the complexity of contemporary design. Beyond metaphor, the “nautical sphere” also represents an epistemological laboratory, where the project becomes a practice of knowledge about the world and oneself.

In this perspective, methodology is not merely a set of instruments, but a critical and poetic attitude toward reality. It is based on observation and listening, attention to sensory processes, and awareness of the relational dimension of design practice. Drawing becomes the locus of this relationship: a resonance field between subject and object, inside and outside, perception and construction. Understood in this way, the reflective method configures itself as a project ecology, capable of integrating different levels of experience – technical, aesthetic, ethical – into a coherent system of meaning. Ultimately, the adopted methodology aims to restore the project’s original humanistic dimension: an embodied knowledge built over time, through gesture and dialogue. Through drawing, the designer not only represents but understands and transforms reality, making visible the profound correspondence between mind, hand, and world that constitutes the core of the new humanism in design.

Results

Observation of the selected cases within the contemporary yacht design context – Riva, Benetti, Baglietto, Zuccon International Project, Winch Design, and Lobanov Design – allows the identification of recurring patterns characterizing the relationship between craftsmanship, technology, and representation, confirming the relevance of this field as a paradigmatic laboratory for a new humanism in design. The analyzed design practices reveal a complex interaction between multisensory skills, advanced technical knowledge, and the capacity to translate abstract concepts into tangible forms, achieving a continuous balance between digital innovation and artisanal expertise.

A first recurring element concerns the epistemic function of hand drawing. In all studied cases, the initial sketch does not serve merely as a technical support but constitutes a genuine cognitive device. Manual gestures enable the exploration of proportions, spatial relationships, and sensory perceptions that cannot be immediately encoded digitally. The hand-drawing phase allows the designer to initiate an embodied reflection process, where bodily experience and material memory guide the mental construction of space. In this sense, drawing acts as a bridge between intuition and analysis, transforming the perception of the sea and the interior space into projective geometries and surfaces.

At the same time, digital practices serve as an indispensable complement, enabling the translation of manual insights into precise and verifiable construction solutions. Three-dimensional modeling, photorealistic renderings, and immersive simulations are employed to anticipate technical constraints, optimize material use, and evaluate interactions among complex components. However, in the observed projects, digital technology does not replace manual skills: rather, it amplifies expressive potential, allowing designers to explore otherwise inaccessible scenarios without diminishing the centrality of artisanal gestures. This complementarity highlights an operational continuum between hand intelligence and machine intelligence, where both contribute to creating design value, confirming the persistence of an integrated approach that transcends the traditional industry-craft dichotomy.

A second emerging element concerns extreme customization and attention to detail. Yacht interior design is not limited to meeting standardized aesthetic or functional criteria but engages an ethical and cultural dimension of making. Every surface, joint, and finish is selected and shaped considering not only technical efficiency but also the users' sensory experience and bodily perception. This attention to proportion as an ethical and relational value enables the modulation of industrial standards according to individual needs, transforming the design process into an act of care and responsibility. Sensory materiality, combined with digital expertise, thus becomes a tool for authenticity and distinction, redefining contemporary luxury as experience rather than ostentation. The relational dimension constitutes a third fundamental aspect. In the observed processes, the continuous dialogue between designer, craftsman, and technology emerges as a laboratory of co-production and cognitive

exchange. Design decisions arise from a dynamic interaction in which technical constraints, creative insights, and material knowledge confront and integrate with each other. Design is not conceived as a solitary or linear act but as a mediation flow in which cognitive responsibility is distributed among the various actors involved. This approach enables simultaneous negotiation of efficiency, aesthetics, and sustainability, translating technological complexity into design solutions coherent with human experience.

Additionally, the cases demonstrate a conscious use of space as a poetic and cognitive device. Yacht interiors are conceived as floating ecosystems where aesthetics, ethics, and technology coexist, generating an intensely meaningful form of micro-living. The yacht thus becomes a “micro-living sphere,” an environment reflecting the tension between protection and openness, stability and movement, embodying a liminal condition in which humans experience complex relationships with space and the surrounding world. This poetic dimension of space reinforces the centrality of sensory experience and material memory, confirming the ability of yacht design to act as a laboratory for new epistemological paradigms. Another observation concerns the role of drawing as a vehicle for knowledge and narrative. In the analyzed cases, drawing does not merely document the project but renders it intelligible, translating technical and sensory complexity into a shared and interpretable language. Representation thus functions as a synthesis tool between practice and theory, between manual gesture and digital calculation, making visible the cognitive processes and ethical relationships implicit in the project. Through this mediation, drawing allows the exploration of future scenarios, the anticipation of user behavior, and the guidance of construction choices, providing the project with a critical and reflective dimension.

Finally, the analysis suggests that contemporary yacht design constitutes a privileged context to observe how design practice can reconcile technical complexity, manual sensitivity, and humanistic values. Observed practices demonstrate that representation – from hand drawing to digital modeling – is not a mere predictive instrument but a cognitive and poetic act capable of generating meaning, memory, and continuity between theory and practice. The studied processes confirm that interior yacht design represents an emblematic laboratory of new humanism, where the return to manual skills, attention to detail, and relational dimension counterbalances the increasing digitalization of design processes.

In summary, the results confirm that the centrality of experience, material memory, and aesthetic sensitivity is essential in producing design value in yacht design. Observation of the selected cases reveals a continuum between manual gestures and digital technology, between industrial standardization and extreme customization, between sensitive intelligence and technical rationality, providing an empirical basis for supporting the centrality of a new design humanism. In this framework, knowledge is embodied, and representation is a cognitive and cultural tool connecting mind, hand, and environment. The results suggest that nautical representation serves as a privileged laboratory to reflect

on the humanistic dimension of design, paving the way for a broader discussion on the symbolic and identity-related role of the sea and interior yacht design.

Discussion

The results find a theoretical synthesis in the symbolic and representational reflection on the sea, understood as a paradigmatic space to investigate the relationship between drawing, knowledge, and identity. In this perspective, the sea constitutes a privileged phenomenological field of observation: fluid, mutable, and elusive, it reflects the contemporary condition of design, suspended between stability and transformation, between body and code, between technique and imagination.

To draw the sea means to confront an intangible, dynamic, and deeply symbolic dimension. In the Western tradition, the sea represents the threshold of the unknown, the space of travel, discovery, and inner transformation. It is the place where the idea of limit manifests, but also that of possibility: a threshold between what is known and what remains to be explored. In this key, the marine environment can be interpreted as a metaphor for the contemporary design condition, where the architect or designer operates in a context of continuous change, required to find a balance between vision and adaptation.

From Marc Augé's anthropological perspective (1992), transient spaces – ports, airports, ships – are the “non-places” of modernity: territories of passage and suspension that reveal, precisely in their transitory nature, the mobile condition of contemporary dwelling³. Within this framework, the yacht becomes both an existential and cultural device: a fragment of architecture moving within the fluid space of the sea, simultaneously a technical and symbolic object, where the search for stability constantly interacts with movement.

Representing the sea, therefore, does not merely mean reproducing its visual image but interpreting its underlying logic: that of change, metamorphosis, and resonance. Drawing assumes the role of mediator between perception and knowledge, experience, and construction. Following Pérez-Gómez (2016), drawing can be understood as an act of attunement with the world: a form of sensitive accord that translates experience into thought and thought into form. It is not a purely technical gesture but a cognitive and aesthetic operation capable of building connections between body, mind, and environment.

In the context of yacht design, this conception of drawing as a form of knowledge manifests in a distinctive way. The design of a yacht does not merely shape an object but engages with a condition of life in motion. To inhabit the sea means to inhabit instability, to measure oneself against an ever-changing horizon of light, wind, and reflections. The designer, therefore, does not only draw spaces but interprets rhythms, perceptions, and environmental dynamics. In this sense, nautical drawing can be understood as an exercise in environmental empathy: a

³In *Non-Lieux. Introduction à une anthropologie de la surmodernité* (1992), Marc Augé redefines the concept of dwelling, associating it with notions such as mobility and threshold. For a more detailed analysis, see Augé. (1992, pp. 92-95)

1 practice that translates sensory qualities into geometries, materials, and
 2 proportions while maintaining a balance between technical precision and poetic
 3 perception. The sea, with its ambiguity and mutability, interrogates the very
 4 identity of the design. As Kenneth Frampton (2002) emphasizes, the humanistic
 5 dimension of architecture emerges from rooting in place, understood as a cultural
 6 and symbolic construct before it is geographic. The yacht, although a mobile
 7 object, creates a form of belonging: its interiority becomes an ordered
 8 microcosm, a small inhabitable world in which humans find measure and
 9 identity within movement. It is precisely within this paradox – between
 10 nomadism and domesticity, between fluidity and structure – that nautical design
 11 expresses its poetics.

12 From an aesthetic standpoint, drawing the sea does not merely aim to
 13 represent visible reality but attempts to convey the perceptual quality of flow.
 14 Pallasmaa (2005) highlights that authentic drawing does not reproduce what is
 15 seen but what is felt: the vibrations, resonances, and perceptual thresholds that
 16 define our bodily relationship with space. Drawing, in this perspective, becomes
 17 a phenomenological gesture: a form of listening and correspondence with the
 18 world. In nautical design, this gesture translates into a visual narrative of life at
 19 sea, where each line contains the memory of movement and the tension toward
 20 equilibrium. Every nautical representation, therefore, is an act of identity.
 21 Formal, material, and chromatic choices are never neutral: they express a precise
 22 conception of the relationship between humans and nature, between technique
 23 and landscape. In a sector often associated with technological excellence and
 24 luxury, craftsmanship and artisanal care reaffirm the value of embodied
 25 experience, countering the depersonalization of industrial production. As Jane
 26 Rendell (2017) notes, design can be interpreted as a critical practice of space,
 27 capable of generating meaning and constructing shared narratives. Drawing, in
 28 this sense, becomes a form of situated reflection, a practice intertwining
 29 aesthetic, ethical, and political dimensions. To draw the sea thus implies a
 30 responsibility: to represent a living relationship between humans and their
 31 environment, between freedom and limit, between control and attentiveness. In
 32 yacht design, this tension manifests in every detail: in material choices, interior
 33 proportions, and the interplay between natural and artificial light. Care for
 34 material, technical precision, and aesthetic sensitivity become complementary
 35 expressions of a single cognitive process. Frichot (2018) invites recognition of
 36 this integration as the affective dimension of contemporary design: an “ecology
 37 of sensing” that unites emotion and technique, memory, and innovation. The
 38 drawing of the sea does not end with the projective representation but continues
 39 in the lived experience of the vessel. Each time a yacht sails, its form is renewed
 40 through movement, light, and interaction with natural elements. The project
 41 becomes a relational organism, continuously redefined through contact with the
 42 environment. In this perspective, as suggested by Tim Ingold (2013), drawing,
 43 building, and inhabiting are expressions of a single gesture of correspondence
 44 with the world.

45 Ultimately, to draw the sea means to draw humanity itself: to give shape to
 46 a thought that acknowledges its own precariousness and transforms it into

method. The sea becomes a symbolic laboratory reflecting the pursuit of a new humanism in design – a humanism capable of integrating technique and sensitivity, knowledge, and imagination, drawing and life. Through drawing, nautical design reaffirms the value of representation as a cultural act, capable of uniting theory and practice, art and technology, ethics, and perception. It renews the connection between hand and mind, idea and matter, freedom of gesture and awareness of limit: a tension that, like the sea itself, never ceases but continually generates new horizons of meaning.

Conclusions

The set of theoretical findings and reflections developed in this study confirms that drawing, craftsmanship, and representation are today fundamental tools for redefining design from a humanistic perspective. Through a qualitative, theoretical, and phenomenological approach, based on a critical review of the literature and observation of design processes in yacht design, this research investigated the relationships between hand, mind, and representation, highlighting how embodied knowledge and sensory experience lie at the core of the new humanism in design as proposed by the call. The analysis demonstrates how drawing, craftsmanship, and representation can constitute instruments of resistance and renewal for contemporary design thinking. Far from being a merely technical or aesthetic act, drawing emerges as a form of embodied knowledge capable of restoring meaning and depth to the creative process in an era marked by speed, digitalization, and the abstraction of production processes.

As Giuliano Da Empoli (2013) observes, the challenge of our time is to overcome the fragmentation of knowledge and restore a unified vision capable of connecting cognitive and emotional dimensions, analysis and vision, technique, and culture. From this perspective, architectural and design projects can become privileged sites for an operative new humanism, where knowledge is expressed through practice and representation becomes an act of cultural responsibility. Yacht design, the focus of this research, demonstrates how technological complexity does not nullify but rather amplifies the need for human sensitivity. Yacht interior design shows how bespoke practice – understood not only as physical measurement but as an ethical measure – provides a concrete response to industrial standardization and digital impersonality. Craftsmanship, the slowness of gesture, material knowledge, and the dialogue between designer and artisan are contemporary forms of reflective intelligence (Sennett, 2008), capable of generating value not through technological accumulation but through relational depth. In this balance between mind and hand, algorithm, and gesture, drawing recovers its primary function: mediating between idea and world, making thought visible and experience shareable. This renewed centrality of drawing and representation fully aligns with the vision of the call for a new humanism in design. The humanism urgently needed today is neither nostalgic nor a return to pre-established models: it is an expanded humanism, capable of inhabiting contemporary complexity and

connecting the technical, aesthetic, and social dimensions of design. In this perspective, the sea – simultaneously symbolic and real – becomes a metaphor for contemporary human and design conditions: fluid, interconnected, and continuously transforming. “Drawing the sea,” therefore, means drawing instability, embracing mutability as a generative principle, and transforming uncertainty into method. It is an invitation to navigate between technology and humanity, efficiency and beauty, memory, and future. These reflections also carry significant implications for design education, as well as for research on contemporary drawing. Recovering the reflective and embodied dimension of design requires rethinking teaching methods, restoring centrality to direct experience, studio practice, material experimentation, and drawing as a form of critical inquiry. Similarly, design research can derive a new epistemological paradigm from these practices, where representation is not merely a means of communication but a tool for knowledge, interpretation, and construction of thought.

In this sense, yacht design provides a concrete model of integration between technical knowledge, aesthetic sensitivity, and ethical awareness, serving as a reference for a renewed humanistic education in design. As Emanuele Coccia (2021)⁴ suggests, dwelling means establishing relationships with the world, making space a projection of being. Design – particularly nautical design – can be interpreted as a form of dwelling in motion: a practice that generates identity, recognition, and meaning even in a liquid and technologically mediated environment. In this context, representation is not only a descriptive tool but also a political and poetic act: a practice that restores to design its critical power and ethical dimension. It allows for the recognition of the value of sensory experience, the reformulation of the relationship between knowledge and perception, and the reaffirmation of humans as interpreters – not mere executors – of the design process. The new humanism emerging from this reflection is therefore based on a principle of reciprocity between artificial intelligence and sensitive intelligence, between gesture and thought, between technique and spirit. It is a humanism of drawing – and of drawing itself – which reaffirms the designer’s responsibility as a mediator between complexity and meaning. Like the sea, the course is never definitively traced but continuously reshaped by wind, hand, and the desire to go beyond the horizon: a gesture that, through the intertwining of knowledge and freedom, perhaps represents the most authentic definition of contemporary humanism.

⁴In *Philosophy of the Home: Domestic Space and Happiness* (2021), Emanuele Coccia reflects on living spaces as a vital extension of the human being, a place where continuity between body, environment, and world is manifested. Dwelling is not merely a functional act, but a process of co-creation between subject and space, in which the home becomes an ethical and aesthetic device for relational engagement. For a detailed analysis, see Coccia (2021, pp. 45-52)

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