

AT THE DOCK



Doug Zurn and the Inland Sound 48



The Inland Sound 48 is a sedan trawler with a “fair-weather flybridge.” While the design is East Coast influenced, it also includes traditional West Coast touches such as the break in the sheer.

One of the highlights of the recent Boats Afloat Show in Seattle was the brand-new 2012 Inland Sound 48. This sedan-style cruiser is built in Port Townsend and successfully infuses a design that’s more common along the eastern seaboard with a genuine Pacific Northwest character. According to Douglas Zurn, the designer of the IS48, “people are commenting that this boat is where east meets west, and I think that’s a good description.”

Nor’westing had an opportunity to meet with Douglas Zurn at the show, and he graciously agreed to an interview. This issue’s “At the Dock” will feature our conversation with Mr. Zurn, and the subsequent guided tour of this important new boat.

Nor’westing: *Doug, your business card reads, “Marblehead, Massachusetts.” How did you manage to get involved with a project in the Pacific Northwest?*

Doug Zurn: Matt [Elder, of Sea Marine in Port Townsend] approached us back in 2005. Matt is originally from the area around Portland, Maine. We met at the Maine Boat Builder’s Show. Matt was interested in developing a new line of



The lower helm is considered the primary steering station, and features plenty of space for instrumentation.

Northwest-style powerboats, something in the range of 34-38 feet. I loved the opportunity to work with him.

NW: What were some of the driving principles kept in mind as you were developing this boat? Would you be able to say there's a "product mission" for the IS48?

DZ: The boat was built for a specific owner, with the idea that it would be used in marketing and taking orders for additional builds. We needed to provide quarters for a family of four, plus guests, so accommodations for six were a high priority. That ultimately resulted in the boat growing from the 34-38 foot concept Matt originally discussed to the size it is today. We were charged with creating a boat with a Pacific Northwest feel, both interior and exterior. At the same time, the owner and builder were obviously looking toward what we have done on the east coast, at least in terms of bringing balance to styling and design. One of the ways we created a Pacific Northwest theme is that we used local woods [straight grained fir and yew for joinery and wall panels, maple for cabin soles] for the interior.

Another big issue was performance. My clients knew my firm's reputation for designing boats that efficiently push through the water and operate at fairly low fuel consumption. That was definitely a driving force in the design.

NW: How would you characterize the results? Are you pleased with how the boat came together?

DZ: Absolutely. There are a couple of things I always say: One is that I am just

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a liaison between people who have a dream or a vision of a boat — either to bring to market or for themselves — and the shipwrights and craftsmen who actually put the boat together. The people at Sea Marine in Port Townsend did an incredible job. Stuart Archer helped organize the crew, Matt oversaw every aspect of production, and certainly the actual crew who did the joinery, the electrical, the systems work and so on were really super. Townsend Bay Marine did all the fiberglass work, following our engineering drawings to a tee. It all came together just fantastically.

***"The boat is engineered to be as light as it can be.
At the same time, the hull has to be robust —
there's a lot of stuff to hit in the waters out here."***

People are commenting that this boat is "where east meets west" and I think that's a good description. This isn't a raised pilothouse trawler — it's a sedan with an enclosed main cabin. We included what I call a "fair-weather flybridge," and I suspect that in the Northwest people will want to enclose that with canvas.

The break in the sheer is probably the most prominent Northwest feature of the boat. That's where the sheer line comes forward, takes a break, and then proceeds pretty flat on up to the bow. That break in the sheer, along with the high bow with pronounced flare, are west coast commercial fish boat features that aren't as common back east. The east coast fishing fleet uses fairly low topsides in the aft sections, in order to make it easier to haul a lobster pot.

We combine that high bow and the low topsides with a little tumblehome aft. The bow actually curves in slightly in the aft sections. With the tumblehome, the step in the sheer, the flare, and the high bow there isn't another boat like this anywhere on the market.



The interior is light and bright, with cabin windows that roll down for ventilation.

NW: You certainly seem to have hit the mark with the interior styling. The boat is built in Port Townsend, so it really is a Northwest boat — yet the interior seems more localized than some of the boats we tend to think of as especially popular in the Pacific Northwest.

DZ: Absolutely. The choice of local woods was important. We used fir, but inlaid yew on the edges to provide a harder surface. We kept the Northwest in mind right down to the dark green theme of the fabric and the marble countertops.

“This is an amazing thing to do on a 48-foot boat — everybody has their own private space aboard, and the staterooms aren’t stacked up on top of one another.”

NW: We notice that several of the large windows in the main cabin can be electrically lowered to bring in fresh air. It’s almost like rolling down a window in a car. Do you use this feature in many of the boats you build, or is it a new concept for the Inland Sound 48?

DZ: The roll-down windows are beginning to take hold in the industry. Companies like Taylor Made are developing these products and making them more readily available to boat builders. You will find this feature more often on larger boats than on anything of this size. We always try to design a boat that gives a very open feeling; we want people to feel connected to the water. There are a lot of boats that are built, marketed, and sold where you are really just sort of insulated or isolated as much as possible from the water. That’s not us.

NW: Our readers are often interested in learning how a boat is constructed. What can you tell us about the layup schedule on so on?

DZ: We spent over 1,600 hours in the design and engineering of this boat, and the laminate is obviously a very important part of the vessel. We used a Vinylester resin, stitched e-glass, and Corecell closed-cell foam core throughout the boat, topsides and bottom. The combination of these materials makes an incredibly strong but lighter weight product.

We use the resin infusion process, where everything is laid up dry in the mold and then resin is pulled through the fabric. This eliminates any air pockets and ensures good adhesion between the fabric and the core. The boat is engineered to be as light as it can be, as well as stiff as it can be. At the same time, the hull has to be robust — there’s a lot of stuff to hit in the waters out here.

There are five major bulkheads, and each one is tabbed to the hull. There are also four longitudinal girders running lengthwise in the boat, and 10 transverse frames to reinforce the hull. There is a tremendous amount of structure and reinforcement aft, around the IPS drives.

There is no structural wood in the boat, it’s all composite.

NW: This boat features the IPS drive system. Was the hull designed exclusively for use with IPS drives, or could somebody order the boat in a conventional inboard configuration if desired?

DZ: That’s a good question. We fine-tuned this design to maximize the capabilities of IPS, but there is no reason that we couldn’t build the boat with conventional inboards for somebody who preferred the more traditional approach. We could also do another type of pod drive, like Zeus. This is a planing hull, and the bottom is configured so the boat will run comfortably between 28 and 40 knots with a pair of pretty large engines. There is a moderate deadrise aft, transitioning to a fairly sharp deadrise forward. The flat sections aft provide plenty of lift, and the boat will track straight in a following sea, a head sea, or at low speeds.



The port forequarter of the cabin features a settee dinette.



A propane stove and oven eliminates much of the need to run a genset at anchor.

NW: Are there one or two features or attributes of the IS48 that you like to point out as particularly cutting edge or avant garde?

DZ: To be honest with you, we're a fairly conservative design firm. We don't go out on behalf of our clients and do some experimental thing that might risk the integrity of the boat. We try to design boats that do incorporate modern amenities, but we don't like to risk too much in that process. I would have to say there is no one specific thing that is cutting edge, but it's very important to look at the boat as a whole and from that perspective the whole project is pretty

advanced. There is excellent access to all the systems and machinery. We can even monitor the boat from our phones, checking remotely on how many times the bilge pump is operating or whether the heating or air conditioning is operating.

So while there is no one item that we can say is exclusive to the IS48, I can tell you that this boat is built to a higher standard than many of the competitors here at this same show. The integrity of the hull is second to none, and owner can feel safe going anywhere in this vessel. It's the total, combined result that really makes this boat stand out, above and beyond most of the rest.

WALKING THROUGH THE INLAND SOUND 48

With our interview questions all answered, Doug suggested that we take a guided tour of the boat, starting up forward.

We entered the master stateroom, the most forward compartment on the lower deck. Here there's an island queen berth on centerline, with very easy access to either side. The fir interior is used to notable effect here, and there are built-in "his and hers" vanities concealed on the port and starboard sides of the compartment. At Doug's suggestion we closed the door, and despite the fact that there were several conversations taking place in the salon (among people just as excited to view the IS48 as we were), there was very little noise in the master stateroom. That seemed to be Doug's point.

"The owner's head is here on the starboard side, with a Headhunter marine toilet, shower stall with Grohe faucet, LED lighting, and marble countertop," Doug pointed

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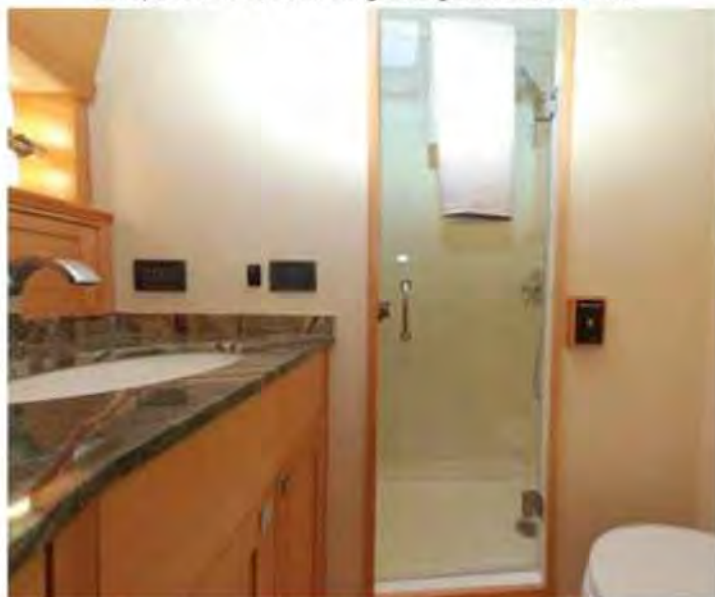
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The master stateroom features a queen berth on centerline.



Regional woods and remarkable joinery are evident in all compartments, including this guest stateroom.



Green marble countertops reflect the forest-green upholstery, and are repeated throughout the interior.

out. "The guest and day head is immediately opposite to port. You usually have two heads on a 48-foot boat, but each head doesn't always have its own stall shower. The heads help create a buffer zone between the master stateroom and the rest of the boat."

We opened the stateroom door, and now could clearly hear the other conversations going on aboard the IS48. We stepped into the guest stateroom on the port side, configured with a double bed set against the aft bulkhead. Doug closed the cabin door, and once again the difference in noise level was dramatic.

"This stateroom is insulated by the guest head forward, as well as by this hanging locker that backs onto the companionway," said Doug. "The stateroom on the starboard side, with a pair of twin bunks, has the same insulating spaces around it. This is an amazing thing to do on a 48-foot boat — everybody has their own private space aboard, and the staterooms aren't stacked up on top of one another."

Doug began pulling open drawers and lockers in the stateroom. We noted that the interior surfaces were finished to a "maple furniture" standard, and stowage seemed to be absolutely everywhere. We learned that was not by accident, but definitely by design. "We wanted every cabin to have ample stowage for clothes, books and miscellaneous personal things," explained Doug. Lighting and ventilation are critical too, so there are port lights in every stateroom. Three hatches atop the trunk cabin allow plenty of airflow on the lower deck.

We moved up to the main cabin to examine the main helm station, the salon and the galley. "This area is sort of the great room of the boat," remarked Doug. "It's where everybody wants to hang out. Here's where we get together to eat, relax, listen to music, have a drink and just do all the things that boaters like to do."

We noted a highly adjustable seat for the lower helm that is designed to be “flipped” to face aft and expand a settee on the starboard side of the main cabin. The entertainment center is aft of the settee on the starboard side. Countertops in the main cabin consist of drop-dead-gorgeous green marble. We learned that as a Pacific Northwest boat, the IS48 was built with hydronic diesel heat as well as a reverse-cycle heater and air conditioner. The primary engine access is through a pair of hatches in the cabin sole — the forward hatch opens in front of the engines and the rear hatch opens immediately aft.

The galley is equipped with a propane stove, so there’s no need to start the generator just to make coffee in the morning. A six cubic foot refrigerator and a Frigoboat dedicated freezer handle the cold storage requirements. An 18-inch trash compactor is standard, and a drawer-style dishwasher is optional.

“There are more lockers for the galley,” remarked Doug. “We finished the rest of the boat just in time to bring it to Seattle for the show, and we have a few things to complete. One of those is installing the upper cabinets in the galley.”

We stepped onto the spacious cockpit, and Doug opened a locker just to port of the aft bulkhead door. “We put the washer and dryer in here,” he said. “It keeps the noise, the vibration, and the humidity out of the main cabin, but the washer and dryer are still protected from the weather.” Doug also pointed out an ice maker, as well as dedicated stowage for a propane barbecue grill (connected to the main propane supply for maximum convenience).



Doug Zurn aboard the Inland Sound 48.

Among the many unique features of the Inland Sound 48 is the “tailgate” style transom: When stern tied at the dock (or when boarding or disembarking the dinghy), the transom lowers to create unencumbered access to the cockpit. Cantilevered davit brackets automatically extend to launch the dinghy when the transom is lowered.

Doug lifted some hatches in the cockpit to demonstrate the ease of access when servicing the IPS drives, the generator, the water maker, the Kabola diesel furnace, and other systems concealed below. We scaled the ladder to the flybridge (our only gripe worthy of note with the vessel is that the flybridge ladder could be more user-friendly) and found it easy to imagine piloting from this elevated perch on a warm, sunny afternoon.

Everywhere we looked, we saw thoughtful design that had been executed as a quality product. Doug Zurn was justifiably excited about this boat, as was everyone from Salish Sea Yachts and Sea Marine in Port Townsend. It blends the best characteristics of east and west coast design into a truly exceptional cruiser.

For additional information regarding the Inland Sound 48, please contact Sea Marine in Port Townsend at 360-385-4000 or visit the web site seamaineco.com ⚓



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