



AT MY CHATEAU
VILLETTE NEAR PARIS

“DURING THE RECESSION, IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO NETWORK WITH COLLEAGUES, COMPETITORS, CLIENTS, CONTACTS, AND FRIENDS TO KEEP UP WITH OPPORTUNITIES.”

Olivia Hsu Decker reports from the front lines of the world's most exclusive gatherings. During the recession, it is extremely important to network with colleagues, competitors, clients, contacts and friends for reasons both business and social in order to keep up with current events and opportunities.



SUPERYACHT
MALTESE FALCON

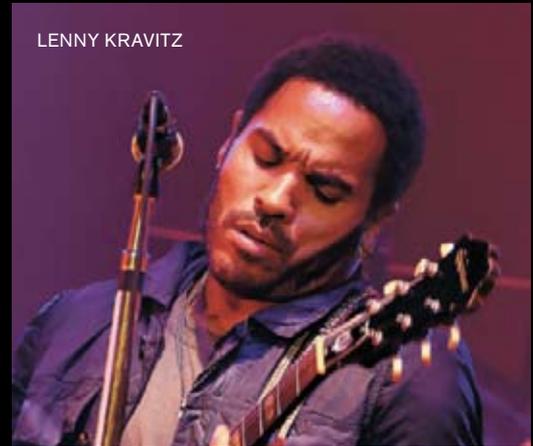
Superyacht Design Symposium
NEW YORK CITY

www.superyachtdesignsymposium.com

In October, Boat International Media hosted an exciting two-day program at Harold Pratt House in New York for the Superyacht Design Symposium. This was a rare event for superyacht owners, designers, naval architects, project managers, and captains alike.

The symposium offered an exclusive opportunity to learn from the unrivalled speakers and provided ample opportunity for networking during the extensive, first-class social program, for which Boat International Media is renowned. The high-profile speakers included Tom Perkins, the legendary Silicon Valley venture capitalist and the designer/owner of the world's largest privately owned sailing yacht, the *Maltese Falcon*; Kim Vibe-Petersen, a successful charter yachts owner/operator; and megayacht designers/builders Ron Holland, Wim Koersvelt, Lamberto Tacoli, Martin Francis, Philippe Briand, Michael Eaglen, Jay Miner, Andrew Winch, and Ed Dubois.

Following the two-day event, a VIP dinner, hosted by Tony Harris, CEO of *Boat International*, and Emmanuelle Verstraeten, CEO of Rouge Tomate Group, was held at the dramatic new Rouge Tomate restaurant for the guests of *Boat International*. I attended this exclusive dinner, which Tom Perkins “boycotted,” as he was under the impression that I was invited on the merit of being his next-door neighbor in San Francisco. He didn't know I have been a guest of numerous *Boat International* VIP events in the past and for this dinner, my guest was yachting enthusiast Prince Michel of Yugoslavia, who had to cancel at the last minute due to an emergency meeting at his assets-management company, Access International Advisors. The company suffered a \$1.4 billion loss to Bernard Madoff. Tom's presence was very much missed.



LENNY KRAVITZ



KRAVITZ-DESIGNED
RESIDENCE IN PARIS

An Evening with Lenny Kravitz
PARIS, FRANCE

www.KravitzDesign.com

One of my recent visits to Lenny's Paris home was not about music but about design. I brought friends Missy Sternlicht (her hubby Russell and his brother Barry founded Starwood Capital Group and hotels) and Emin Iskenderov, Russian developer of Hermitage Plaza in Paris (a project of 93 story twin towers plus buildings for commercial, retail, and a Four Seasons hotel and residences). We viewed photos of Lenny's design projects and discussed working opportunities. The atmosphere around Lenny was so warm, relaxing, and comfortable that we felt as if we were just hanging out with an old friend.

In 2005, Lenny called me out of blue to purchase my Paris château when I was not interested in selling. I was embarrassed to say I had never heard his name before he called, and I asked “Lenny who?” He got a kick out that. But we bonded when he and his design team came to visit me at the château. While I am an opera fan, I acquired a taste for his music, but I was most impressed by his amazing sense of style in design. His Paris home is a magnificent mixture of ultra modern and classic French. Lenny founded Kravitz Design, Inc. in 2003, which specializes in commercial and residential design, product development, and branding. In New York, he assembled a diverse team of interior designers, architects, and creative professionals to transform his eclectic global lifestyle into innovative and dynamic design solutions. Recent projects include a state-of-the-art recording studio in the deluxe Setai Hotel, the Florida Room lounge in the Delano Hotel, both in Miami, and Swarovski Crystal Palace Collection.



DINING ROOM OF COCO CHANEL'S APARTMENT



COCO CHANEL'S SITTING ROOM

An Afternoon at Coco Chanel's Apartment

PARIS, FRANCE

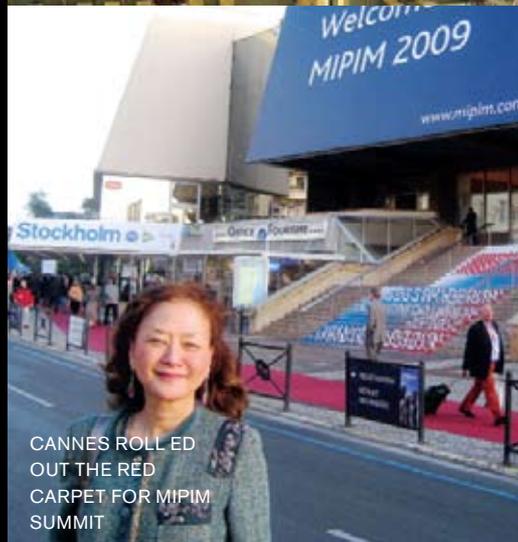
www.chanelusa.com

Thanks to Chanel USA, during a recent Paris Fashion week, I was treated to a Chanel runway show at Le Grand Palais, a lunch at the fashionable l'Avenue, a cocktail reception at the magnificent Chanel Jewelry Boutique on Place Vendome, and a rare tour of Coco Chanel's apartment at 31 Rue Cambon, where she entertained while living at the nearby Ritz.

The apartment filled with a beautiful mixture of Coco's Oriental and European collections. A mirrored spiral staircase, which cleverly provided Coco a way to watch editor's reactions at fashion shows on the floor below, leads upstairs to the top-floor atelier where Karl Lagerfeld works, and down to haute couture fitting rooms and the ground-floor boutique. At one end of a sitting room paneled with Chinoiserie lacquer screens hangs a mirror in the same shape as the Chanel No. 5 bottle and Place Vendôme. Lined with books and decorated with chic objects, the living room is where Coco would greet guests. There are quilted pillows, and the "5"s and interlocking "C"s hidden in the chandelier are made from semi-precious stones of distinctive Chanel style. My favorite parts of the apartment are the dining room, where a pair of stunning 18th century mirrors flank the antique marble fireplace, and the seven Baccarat crystal chandeliers on the ground floor that were added after Coco's death in 1971. Coco was a revolutionary figure in her time, and her persona remains a powerful force in the fashion world to this day, so to get a glimpse into her private apartment was a real treat.



CANNES, FRANCE



CANNES ROLLED OUT THE RED CARPET FOR MIPIM SUMMIT

MIPIM 2009

CANNES, FRANCE

www.MIPIM.com

Celebrating its 20th anniversary, the world's premier real estate trade fair, MIPIM 2009, drew upon its unique international coverage and reputation to bring together the most influential decision-makers in the real estate market, offering them access to the largest available showcase of development projects and providing an exclusive networking platform for international partners and prospects. This year, the fair was attended by more than 18,000 participants from 80 countries, including 3,500 investors, 477 journalists, property end-users, and hotel groups who gathered in the 200,000-square-foot exhibition halls of Palais des Festivals in Cannes, France.

Many high-powered political leaders were in attendance, including Deputy Prime Minister of Russia Dmitry Kozak; London Mayor Boris Johnson; French Minister for Economic Reflation Patrick Devedjian; and Mayor of Nice Christian Estrosi. Special events included the Mayors' Think-Tank, the Investor's Summit, Asian Lunch, Tourism Lunch, and the MIPIM Awards.



DUBAI INTERNATIONAL PROPERTY SHOW

Dubai International Property Show

DUBAI, UAE

www.internationalpropertyshow.ae

Dubai International Property Show is the biggest transactional property exhibition in the region. The show was first organized in 2004 and has since grown into the definitive event for companies seeking to establish strong personal relationships with worldwide players in property and investment industries. The event showcases exceptional development projects from more than 150 exhibitors from across the globe that are seeking to leverage the high attendance of international and regional investors at this annual industry event held at the Dubai International Convention and Exhibition Centre. I shared an exhibition booth at the show and presented California properties to the visitors, and I visited other exhibitions to learn firsthand about the amazing real estate developments in this tiny desert city by the Gulf.

Of course, while in town, I had to check out the only seven-star hotel in the world, Burj Al Arab, which is over-the-top glitzy. Security is extremely tight and securing reservations for the bar and restaurants is nearly impossible, and there is typically no sight-seeing allowed in the lobby or any part of the hotel. I had a drink at the Sky Bar and toured the elaborate lobby and restaurants.

Happy Travels,

Olivia Decker

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