

# HITTING THE HIGH NOTES

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Music is the theme of KONINGSDAM both in terms of interior design and new partnerships including Lincoln Center Stage, BB Kings Blue's Club and Billboard Onboard.

**O**n May 20, the first of Holland America Line's Pinnacle class, KONINGSDAM, was christened in Rotterdam. At 99,500gt and carrying 2,650 passengers she will be joined by sistership NIEUW STATENDAM in autumn 2018.

Stepping on board, it is easy to see the shift that has taken place in the

design of this new class. CFI caught up with **Adam Tihany** and **Björn Storbraaten** to find out more about what was the thinking and concept behind the spaces.

## LISTENING TO ADAM TIHANY

Tihany Design was responsible for many of the public spaces concerning

food and beverage and entertainment. These included Lincoln Center Stage, Notes, Dinner at the Culinary Center, Blend, Grand Dutch Cafe and the Lido Market.

Principal Adam Tihany said: "The philosophy behind the design is more architectural than decoration. I think architecture has the ability to move the



soul. There is the opportunity to do 3D architecture on a ship. I was quite fortunate to have areas on this ship which are open [more than one deck high], for example the atrium, the Queen's Lounge [BB Kings Blue's Club] and The Dining Room."

"I think the most interesting part of the design is the atrium, the heart. The ▶





***“I like interiors that whisper, don’t shout”***

**Adam Tihany**

► overall theme of the ship which I created is the architecture of music which has been adopted by myself and Björn. I would like to place the people inside a musical instrument and let the space sing for them.”

With his guidance I stood at the bottom of the atrium looking up at the steel string structure to see what it might feel like to be inside a harp. He points out that as the ship moves and vibrates it will resonate with the music. Equally the Queen’s Lounge is designed as though inside a violin and in the restaurant Sel de Mer, one of the walls is modelled on an accordion.

Tihany believes in the art of discovery. “I don’t like things that are in your face. I think people are smarter than that. I like interiors that whisper, don’t shout. Being an optimist I think

that at any given time people discover and take away something personal. It is like travel, it is what you discover that becomes your own.”

Meanwhile The Dining Room, which shows some similarity to that on CELEBRITY SOLSTICE, alludes to the belly of a whale. This one also has a “whimsical wine cellar which is exposed and hidden by a sheet of undulating gold which once again becomes a “discovery process”. Tihany commented: “It is important to me that you give some space for people to find something that they consider special and different. An aspect they can tell their friends about.”

Being two decks and having 1,200 seats with relatively low ceilings on the upper deck, it is important for passengers not to feel that they are in a “cav-

ernous” area. Tihany commented: “To create intimacy in such a space is not easy and at the same time we wanted to create a sense of grandeur when they walk in. It is all about architecture. The space has to be compelling enough to stand on its own and not be unexciting wherever you sit.” He also pointed out that there are no paintings on the walls: “The art is the people. There are so many interesting people and characters showing up here.”

### **ART THROUGHOUT THE SHIP**

In other parts of the ship however there is plenty of art. ArtLink, which has a 20-year history, embarked on its first cruiseship project on KONINGS DAM and is now working on NIEUW STATENDAM. The company provided all the art on the walls and the sculptures within the Tihany spaces. Founder and ceo Tal Danai, who is clearly passionate about bringing today’s art to a wider audience, told Shippax: “Most of the art on board is by young emerging artists around the world including the atrium design. Some of it is commissioned and some is bought.” ►

## KONINGSDAM

Length o.a. (m)	299.65
Beam (m)	35.00
Draft (m)	7.95
GT	99.836
Passengers (lower berth)	2,659
Passengers (max)	3,138
Crew	1,035
Engines	4 MAK 12V43C 4X 12,600kW
Yard	Fincantieri
Naval architect	Fincantieri
Interior designers	Tihany Design YSA Design

SHIPPAXDATABASE 



► The three-deck atrium sculpture was made in China, arriving in eight pieces of marine grade stainless steel weighing a total 7.5t. The structure was welded, polished and finished on board and measure 30ft (9.1m) in diameter by 20ft (6m) height. “From design to completion took a year. It had to be installed at a specific time when the ship was in a certain condition. The window of opportunity was only days.”

Two other pieces come to mind, both spanning two decks. The first is a handmade paper and bamboo structure reaching 18ft (5.5m) in height. Fabricated in two parts it was erected through a limited opening between decks in The Dining Room with the artist creating a single unified piece. A tight cable runs through the artwork corresponding to precalculated distortions and vibrations from the ship.

The other is a light sculpture in the Queen’s Lounge which includes almost 200 handcrafted pixel light features. Again the artist and a team of professional installers were on board during the two-week installation process.

Danai said: “I hope this ship is a milestone in what is happening with the industry. I think everyone will have to follow suit to adjust to the new world. It seems totally unbelievable that we are not buying art by people who are living now just because the market mechanism will not allow it” which is why Artlink is providing the infrastructure which allows art to travel.

He sees luxury hotels as replacing the experience we have in a cathedral, the human ability to transcend. He made reference to the silence of the desert where there are more stars than anywhere else in the world. “If

we can translate even a hint of what it is like to lie on your back in the desert, for example being in the centre of the harp sculpture, that is the whole idea. We only buy narratives, if there are no words we cannot think. What we do is that we deliver stories but art is made as a story-telling provider.” ►

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***“Architecture is frozen music”***

**Bjørn Storbraaten**

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► **THE VIEW OF BJÖRN STORBRAATEN**

Bjorn Storbraaten and the team from Petter Yran & Bjorn Storbraaten (YSA Design) were responsible for a number of spaces including the World Stage, outdoor decks, Tamarind restaurant, the Crow’s Nest, The Retreat, the Greenhouse spa & salon and the children’s area. Storbraaten said: “When I was a young and naive architect student I learnt that architecture was ‘frozen music’. On KONINGS DAM the theme, music, was for us more rhythm and melody of the spaces than literal notes/ decorative elements.

“Design is a many-layered cake and on top you have the more literal/visual elements of music. For us as professionals I think the deeper layers where rhythm and melody pulses is more enriching as inspiration but a frosting on the cake is also nice.”

The company also worked on the general layout of the ship at an early stage to improve flow and how the different areas fitted in with each other. The funnel was a particular design special of Storbraaten’s. Another example of behind the scenes improvement took place in the passage from the lift lobby

into the Crow’s Nest where YSA got portholes and a door out to The Retreat which had practical and visual implications.

He talked of the “invisible” work that goes on behind the scenes in order to create the vision that HAL has. “When you work with professional clients they have the ownership of their vision, their goal, and we help make it come to the surface in the different areas, improve and also further develop together when they see what we can give them in the space. It is about enabling and understanding more than creating but also the pure joy of design.”

The Tweens in the children’s area is a space that designer Anna Storbraaten is happy with. “With HAL needing an open space as well as smaller spaces, a solution was found to use the structural pillars as tree trunks with coloured crowns, under which children can sit and create an oasis within a bigger space.”

Tamarind has been a joyful cooperation of creation with HAL. “Our creative ideas have become a ‘brand’ onboard albeit that each one is tweaked,” explained

Storbraaten.

Fun is an element that the company likes to include in its spaces, for example a green rabbit in The Retreat. “One of the joyful elements of designing a cruiseship is that it is meant for fun, for vacation. People come to the ships to get away from everyday life. They need and expect to meet something different.”

Y&S Art has supplied the art. Storbraaten said: “Here the musical theme became more visual. We also mix it with what’s happening in the different spaces, for example the jazzy explosion of the light fixtures in the lobby aft of the World Stage. Also a local Seattle theme - Jimi Hendrix in the mid stairs to deck A - can be noticed and, of course, some Dutch inspiration plays into the mix, for example the aft stairs which feature the Dutch “masters” on pins, deconstructed into small pieces.”

During her inaugural season in Europe, KONINGS DAM has been sailing roundtrip Amsterdam itineraries to Norway, the Baltic and Iceland. She will then homeport Port Everglades in Florida for the winter season sailing a series of Caribbean voyages. ■