

Balancing act

The Glenrothes presents a masterwork of design in Philos – a world-first gimbal-mounted whisky decanter for superyachts

◆ This story starts with a conundrum: you are a committed whisky connoisseur and you happen to have one of the world's finest and rarest single malts on board. But it's a rough day at sea, and conditions are far from perfect. So how can you best enjoy the experience without ever spilling a single precious drop?

The Glenrothes, creator of rare aged single malts, has the solution: the stunning Philos, a unique self-pouring gimbal decanter created by skilled master artisans.

As long-time maritime essential equipment, where pitch and roll at sea can present a challenge, gimbals commonly find more prosaic uses on board, such as in galley stoves and binnacle compasses. Philos is the first time this

ingenious engineering has been applied to a whisky decanter, and the result is part sculpture, part exemplar of precision mechanical engineering and part performance.

Philos's creation began – like many a good tale – with the meeting of two similar minds. Anna Lisa Stone, head of creative at The Glenrothes, and interior yacht designer Olga Fox of the award-winning Studio Indigo team were at a whisky tasting in the Scottish Isles when conversation turned to finding the ultimate way to present one of the rarest and most delicious whiskies, The Glenrothes' Demijohn 1969.

In July 1969, a whisky was laid down in cask in a cool, dark corner of the Speyside distiller's cellar. After 44 years, the contents were deemed to be of truly remarkable quality and transferred to six glass demijohns. With notes of summer desserts, a kiss of sweetness on the palate and a complex, potent finish, master whisky maker Laura Rampling describes Demijohn 1969 as a "unicorn whisky" – "One that stops you in your tracks and haunts you with the knowledge you'll never see it again".

Working together, The Glenrothes' creatives, plus Fox and Lyne Arbid, head of Studio Indigo's yacht design team, conceived Philos as an apparatus for honouring Demijohn 1969, not only protecting the liquid in its hand-blown crystal bottle but also elevating the decanter beyond mere practicality, creating an *objet* befitting the most luxurious of superyachts.

Little Halstock, a group of master makers based in Dorset which collaborates with world-class designers to reimagine the familiar and create items of exceptional artisanship, was commissioned to bring the convention-challenging decanter to life. With a gleaming armillary sphere crafted from soft silver metals,

Right: as well as having practical use on board, Philos acts as a stunning centrepiece for a superyacht saloon

“Philos embodies The Glenrothes’ philosophy of unparalleled beauty, attention to detail and storytelling”

a protective shroud hand-painted to match the colours of the ocean and a four-way gimbal that protects the contents from knocks and rough conditions, they engineered Philos with the utmost exactitude, beauty and skill.

To pour, the bottle is inverted by hand and locked in place with a secret key hidden in a compartment within one of the base contour lines that recreate the topography around The Glenrothes distillery. Twisting the bezel of an antique brass compass embedded in the base engages a series of metal cogs, like the gears of a clock. This raises a hidden aluminium and glass “flute” that applies pressure to the bespoke spirit measure fitted to the mouth of the

decanter, charging the chamber with an exact 50ml measure. The liquid then exits the decanter and disappears from view before reappearing into a waiting glass nestled in the stepped curves of the base. A perfect hands-free pour, every time, whatever the conditions.

Inspired by the Greek word *philo*, which goes beyond the simple meaning of “friend” in encapsulating the cherishing and emotive aspects of friendship, the decanter's name represents both precision

and poetry. Philos, says Anna Lisa Stone, is – fittingly – the perfect balance between the two. “Philos also embodies The Glenrothes’ philosophy of unparalleled beauty, attention to detail and storytelling,” she adds, “combining to enrich a moment in time.”

While this first-edition Philos is unique, future editions will respect the commissioner's privacy. Expressions of interest are welcome via concierge@theglenrothes.com theglenrothes.com

PHOTOGRAPHY: JAMES REEVE FOR THE GLENROTHES



The gold standard

The Glenrothes is the creator and curator of rare, small-batch aged single malts. Founded in 1879 by Mr James Stuart & Co, then proprietor of The Macallan, it is one of the few distilleries in the world that still uses its own private water source for every aspect of production. Fresh spring water from the grounds of the estate near Rothes in northeast Scotland is naturally filtered through millions of years of volcanic bedrock as it makes its way to the distillery, resulting in water that is remarkably soft and free from impurities. The qualities of its whiskies truly come of age after 18 years or more, with a remarkable evolution in complexity and sophistication.