

# INTERVIEW: MY YACHT GROUP CO-FOUNDER NICHOLAS FRANKL

by: [Celina Lafuente de Lavotha](#)

22/05/2024



The demand for one-of-a-kind experiences, bucket list adventures, and exclusive in the flesh gatherings with like-minded people seem to be at an all-time high, especially among HNW and (U)WNW individuals, whose exacting standards require expertise honed over many years by those who understand this breed of clientele.

My Yacht Group (MYG) brings that kind of savvy know-how, finely tuned over multiple decades in a broad swath of interests ranging from automotive racing and concours to art fairs and Hollywood academies, international yacht shows to curated astronaut dinners. MYG creates turnkey hospitality and experiences – primarily aboard superyachts, naturally – for luxury brand partners and their top clients, plus a hand-picked global selection of discerning guests; these events provide a unique setting for networking and socialising at some of the most prestigious annual global gatherings.

*Monaco Life* sat down with Nicholas Frankl, MYG Founder, CEO, and three-time Olympian, to get the inside scoop on the secret sauce to “Connecting the World’s Most Interesting People”, a phrase that defines their mission.

Nicholas Frankl’s love of Formula 1 began when he was a child. He participated in the 1994, 1998, and 2002 Olympic games as both driver and Captain of the Hungarian bobsled team, and his passion for fast cars and sport continues through his luxury MYG’s events.



*Nicholas Frankl competing at the Salt Lake City Olympics*

**Monaco Life: What personal convictions and interests do you carry through your life and by extension into your business?**

Nicholas Frankl: I grew up respecting my elders, working hard, giving back, and not simply expecting things to be handed to me, or feeling entitled to a particular lifestyle without working hard to attain it. We started from zero and qualified for the Olympics in one year. That took hard work and dedication, and I am incredibly proud to be part of the Olympic community and to have earned the right to include the designation OLY after my name.

A charitable element is always an essential component of our events. We have helped raise hundreds of thousands of dollars for our charity partners over the years, both through onboard auctions and pledging, by donating our experiences to charity galas, and so on. We raise awareness – to a unique audience – for their missions, whether it’s ecological efforts by the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation, deploying superyachts as a first line of humanitarian aid to hard-hit coastal areas as with YachtAid Global, or Blue Angels Foundation providing essential help to veterans.

I always strive to add value to everything I do, by under-promising and overdelivering. Formula 1 has been a large part of my life, attending from a young age with my automotive journalist father, then later as a photographer and writer myself, as well as part of the Ferrari Team in 1996-1999 with Michael Schumacher and Eddie Irvine driving. For the past 16+ years, I have produced an extraordinary superyacht experience at the Monaco Grand Prix. So, my love of speed is in my DNA! I’m also lucky enough to test drive some incredible cars – Lamborghinis, Ferraris, Paganis – and I’m a VFR-rated private pilot. (VFR stands for Visual Flight Rules)



*Aerialist performing for a MYG event at the Miami GP*

**Your events are global, tying into elite gatherings everywhere, from yacht shows and art fairs in Miami to the Cannes Film Festival, Concours d'Elégance in Monterey, CA, and the Grand Prix and Monaco Yacht Show. What sets your events apart?**

Our events have always been a direct reflection of demand. We started in Monaco at the Grand Prix and we are celebrating our 17<sup>th</sup> year this May. That formula of bringing like-minded individuals together in a relaxed yet exclusive setting has proven itself whether we're in Monaco, Miami, St. Bart's, or Hong Kong. We continue to expand on our (U)HNW summits that provide a unique platform for companies and brands to present to an eminently qualified, highly curated, and hand-selected collection of guests. Equally, our non-yacht event, My Yacht<sup>®</sup> Club, our pop-up VIP nightlife experience in Austin during the Grand Prix, brought a Monaco level of sophistication to a new audience and proved highly successful for over a decade, which was very gratifying.

We – my twin sister, Annabelle, who is COO, and I – just hosted another curated 'night before' investor dinner in Miami during the Grand Prix weekend, followed by the only – so we're told – superyacht party on the Saturday night aboard the 185ft research vessel Gene Chaser, which makes for a unique setting. I mean, where else can you sip Whispering Angel rosé or Enchanted Rock vodka cocktails, enjoy incredible food, watch our aerialist perform from the yacht's crane with the Miami skyline in the background, and then go and get a brain or retina scan in the onboard, fully working lab? Our guests loved it!

**You have close ties to the space industry and space tourism. Tell us more, and would you go to space?**

I would go in a heartbeat! My love of aviation and space has been present throughout my life. Being an investor in the space sector, and closely aligned with both a significant space company – Axiom Space – and a newer start-up – Radian Aerospace – who are set to revolutionise the industry with their single-stage-to-orbit spaceplane and are currently raising a \$100m 'A' round, it's a fascinating time. I can't wait to see where the next decade will take us.

**When you're in the presence of exceptional people like Astronauts, what are the burning questions you ask them about their experience?**

I am privileged to call a six-time astronaut my friend – Commander Michael Lopez-Alegria; he is an exceptional human being. Even our first meeting – introduced through Buzz Aldrin – was terrific! Learning about the experience of being thrust into space is riveting. Interestingly, though, from having spoken and spent time with several astronauts, primarily Commander Michael-Lopez Alegria, the overarching theme is one of connectivity: the bonds and friendships formed by training for and completing missions, spending often extended periods with your fellow adventurers in a metal can that's hurtling around the globe at 17,500mph! It seems this is very similar to what we all seek and strive to attain at all our events, whether a dinner for 20 people or a yacht party for 200+.



*Astronaut Commander Michael Lopez-Alegria, Astronaut Nicole Stott, and Nicholas Frankl*



*Ulyssia model*

### **What's next for you?**

We're always excited to do something fresh, whether a new event location or brand partner. Both evenings in Miami, we showcased a 12-foot scale model of 'Ulyssia', the new 1,000+ foot luxury residence ship with which I'm involved. It's an incredible project: designed by Espen Øino, who is, of course, legendary in super and mega-yacht design and brings those same lines to Ulyssia. She will boast 140 luxury residences ranging from 1,400 to 15,000 sq. ft. and will circumnavigate the globe. The amenities are out of this world; Chenot spa, full medical facilities, a vast marina, two submarines, two large helicopters, five restaurants, guest chefs, renowned guest speakers, flying simulator, Padel tennis, incredible expeditions, you name it. We are taking applications and reservations now and will cut steel in approximately nine months.

And, of course, we are currently prepping for our 17<sup>th</sup> My Yacht at the 81<sup>st</sup> Monaco Grand Prix, with our trackside yacht and entire weekend program. It's our signature event of the year, and it's been gratifying to host so many incredible guests, including His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco, and partners aboard over the years. I've been going to that race in many capacities – spectator, photographer, journalist, host – for over 35 years, so it's a special weekend from a commercial and personal standpoint.