

## DEMISCH DANANT

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### Evoking a Secret Garden in Copper and Bronze, Celebrated French Designer Maria Pergay Unveils New Work in U.S. Exhibition

#### **Maria Pergay: Secret Garden**

May 1, 2013 – July 13, 2013

Demisch Danant

542 West 22nd Street

New York City



Detail of *Bronze Tree*, 2013.

**New York, NY...Demisch Danant** is pleased to announce the exhibition **Maria Pergay: Secret Garden**. Inspired by her recent exploration of arboreal themes and leaf forms as decorative elements in furniture and accessories, Pergay has created a group of new works that display meticulous, jewelry-like handwork in bronze and patinated copper. These materials represent an exciting departure for the celebrated Paris-based designer, who has long been admired for her pioneering use of stainless steel and ability to bring to it an unprecedented level of sensuality.

On view through July 13th, **Maria Pergay: Secret Garden** revels in the designer's preoccupation with fantasy and "a colorful imaginary realm where arbitrary standards dissolve and pleasure of the senses takes over." Comprising a dozen major new pieces, the exhibition celebrates the 45th anniversary of Pergay's now-legendary May 1968 breakthrough exhibition of stainless steel furniture at Galerie Maison et Jardin. At 82 years of age, Pergay continues to surprise by bringing innovation and fantasy to her bravura works in metal.

Among the objects on view in **Maria Pergay: Secret Garden** is *Bronze Tree*, a sculptural fixture more than six feet tall. This whimsical interpretation of a perfect tree in full leaf boasts branches articulated in hand-hammered cast bronze; its leaves have been executed in red patinated copper and bronze. Pergay gives this signature work near-magical qualities. Its vivacity of color and the detailed articulation of its fronds and branches, achieve degrees of delicacy and liveliness not generally associated with bronze and copper. Similarly, the *Frozen Table* in nicked bronze and glass is made of sinuous, firmly planted roots that twist and torque upward into a glass tabletop engraved with the veined patterns of fine roots. Inspired by the dreams of a friend's daughter, *Siena's Coiffeuse*, is a precious vanity for a young girl, adorned with a variety of dancing metal flowers and leaves that evoke the miraculous images viewers will associate with fairytales and the lapidary forest settings found in great animated films. Just as Maria Pergay's earlier work defied stainless steel's image as hard-edged and purely industrial, her latest explorations in bronze and copper ambush expectation and transcend the supposed limits of her materials.

## About the Designer

Born in Romania to Russian parents, Maria Pergay arrived in Paris in 1937 as a six year-old émigré. Having studied costume and set design at the Institute des Hautes Etudes Cinématographiques, and having attended sculpture classes in Montparnasse, she made her first forays into design in the late 1950s by creating retail window displays. Her design career began in earnest when Pergay conceived a collection of modern silver objects fabricated by artisans in small specialized workshops, antecedents of the increasingly rare French ateliers with which she still collaborates today. After opening her first shop in the Place des Vosges in 1960, Pergay designed such small objects as lighting, desk accessories, and boxes to be sold there. She also made special pieces on commission for fashion houses, including Christian Dior and Jacques Heim. As her career progressed, Pergay attracted an international following and received private commissions in Belgium, Russia, the United States, and Saudi Arabia, where she has designed for the Saudi royal family. Pergay's work has never been mass-produced. Each object is a singular piece or part of a limited edition produced in small quantities. Her recent works, featured in *Maria Pergay: Secret Garden* were inspired by private commissions Pergay's clientele is international, with institutions and individuals alike drawn to her work's distinctive combination of precision and expression, radicality and tradition, refinement and fantasy.

## Exhibition Information

**Maria Pergay: Secret Garden** will be on view May 1, 2013 – July 13, 2013 and is curated by gallery owners Suzanne Demisch and Stephane Danant.

## About Demisch Danant

Founded in 2005 by Suzanne Demisch and Stephane Danant, Demisch Danant specializes in twentieth century French design with an emphasis on the late 1950s through the 1970s. The gallery features the work of Maria Pergay, Pierre Paulin, Philippon & Lecoq, René Jean Caillette, Joseph André Motte, Pierre Guariche and Pentagon. The gallery also engages in a series of exhibitions concerning the intersection between architecture, design and art

Demisch Danant is open to the public Monday through Friday, 10 am to 5:30 pm, and on Saturday from 12 pm to 6pm. Additional information about the gallery and its programs is available online at [www.demischdanant.com](http://www.demischdanant.com).

For additional information or to request images for publication, please contact Andrea Schwan at [info@andreaschwan.com](mailto:info@andreaschwan.com)

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