

DEMISCH DANANT

Maria Pergay

NOMAD, Chesa Planta, St. Moritz
February 8–11, 2018

I learned that one can live,
create, and transform materials
into poetry and that when they
speak, they tell things that are
secret, useful, desirable or
mysterious.

-Maria Pergay



Maria Pergay

b. 1930 Lives and works in Béziers, France

“Stainless steel does not forgive. It has authority, and it helps me not to make errors. But it also shines and glows; it hints at greater things.”

Maria Pergay established her characteristic style and became an icon of taste by daring to work beyond accepted fashion. A woman who thrives when experimenting with material, Pergay foraged a place in a world of design where trends did not reflect her instincts. Drawing from a multitude of influences, Pergay links the natural and fantastical to the industrious material of stainless steel. With each piece, her imagined world comes to life inside ours. She has designed for fashion houses including Christian Dior and Jacques Heim, undertaken commissions for fashion designer Pierre Cardin, collaborated with Fendi and designed for The World Trade Center in Brussels. She redefined the use of stainless steel, earning it status as a central design material. At eighty-seven, Pergay continues to work according to her whims creating new and surprising pieces.

A product of political turmoil in Europe in the early 20th century, Pergay was born in Moldavia, and forced to escape to France at age seven. Here, Pergay found sanctuary from the tragedies surrounding her by drawing. Though today Pergay shies away from referring to herself as an artist, her creativity and curiosity nurtured her through childhood. In 1947, Pergay began her studies at Paris's Institut des Hautes Études Cinématographiques (IDHEC) specializing in costume and set design. At the same time, she attended the Académie de la Grande Chaumière in the Montparnasse neighborhood of Paris, an area known as a haven for creatives. Ossip Zadkine, a well-known painter and sculptor, taught Pergay during this time. This education primed Pergay to pursue creative invention.

Pergay's career began when producing ornate metal elements for window displays in Paris's fashionable boutiques. Her creativity piqued, she experimented

with silver to produce a complete collection of distinct, contemporary pieces in the late 1950s. After the Salon Bijorhca of 1957, Hermès and Christian Dior both embraced her designs. Pergay opened her own shop on Paris's Place des Vosges in 1960 to promote her works. Within the first month of opening, she sold everything. In the same year, she was hired by Maison Jansen to design a master bath for the president of Tunisia and his wife.

As Pergay gained momentum, she became bolder in her experimentation. Elaborating upon a request by France's foremost steel manufacturer to fabricate her small objects in their steel, her creative impulse erupted. In 1967, Pergay began to design full pieces of steel furniture, proving that an industrious, harsh material could be persuaded into supple and flexible forms. By 1968, she had designed her now iconic *Flying Carpet Daybed*. This piece challenged the divide between industry, nature, and fantasy, hybridizing an organic wave form, on a geometric rectangular base with whimsical narrative. In a bold move, Pergay brought steel to the forefront of French design, leaving its technical reputation in the past. Every steel work from the larger series was displayed by Galerie Maison et Jardin, subsequently shown at the Biennale des Antiquaires at the Grand Palais in October 1968, then purchased by Pierre Cardin. By the 1970s, steel was not only a defining factor of Pergay's work, but enlivened as a significant feature of French decoration, due to the influence of Pergay.

Pergay has earned increasingly impressive private commissions, creating for names such as Givenchy, figures as significant as the Shah of Iran, and artists like Salvador Dalí. In the 1970s, Pergay designed various royal spaces including four villas for the Saudi royal family. Pergay's work can be found in the permanent collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and is displayed in private collections around the world.



Demisch Danant is pleased to present Maria Pergay in the first edition of NOMAD St. Moritz. To celebrate Pergay's 60-year career and many contributions to the fields of decorative arts and design, this presentation is the first of a yearlong series of global exhibitions dedicated to Pergay's work from the past decade. Always pursuing her core artistic vision, these pieces are the culmination of her pathbreaking work in stainless steel, combined to striking effect with mother of pearl, lacquer and precious woods.

NOMAD is a travelling event for collectable design. Set in historic architectural locations, it revisits the classic idea of fairs and exhibitions. NOMAD St. Moritz will take place in Chesa Planta. Built in 1595, it is an impressive example of an Engadin aristocrat's mansion and of domestic culture in the 18th and 19th centuries. Given Pergay's strong references to the forms of 18th century, like *Caviar Cabinet* (2005) and *Ribbon Pouf* (2010), Chesa Planta provides a perfect setting for these works.

Given the capacity and security limitations, access to the event is by invitation only. Registration is available on the NOMAD website.



Maria Pergay

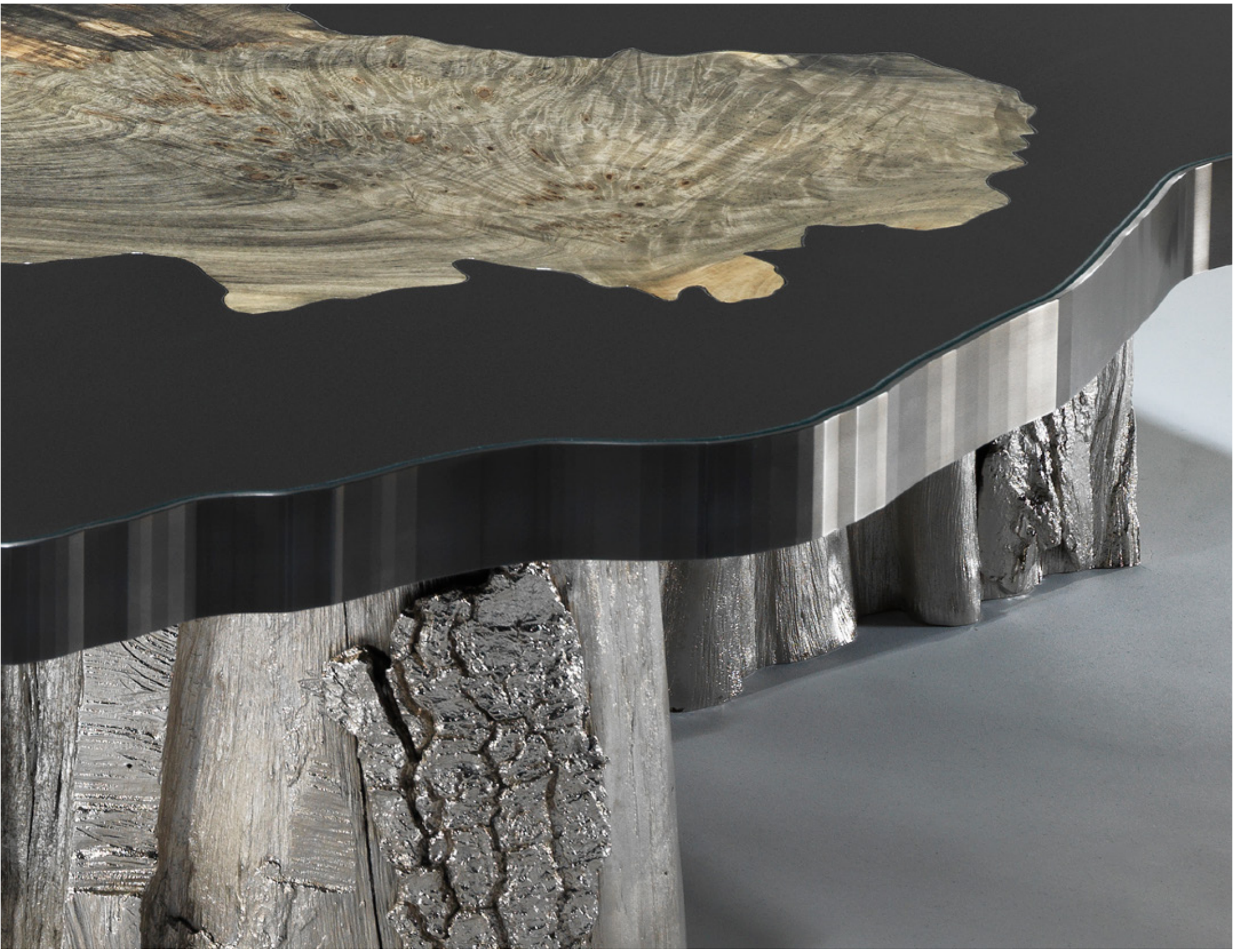
Table Marronnier, 2015

Organic shaped top in stainless steel
with inlaid chestnut wood, hand sculpted
bronze base interpreting tree forms

14.96 H x 50.79 x 47.24 inches

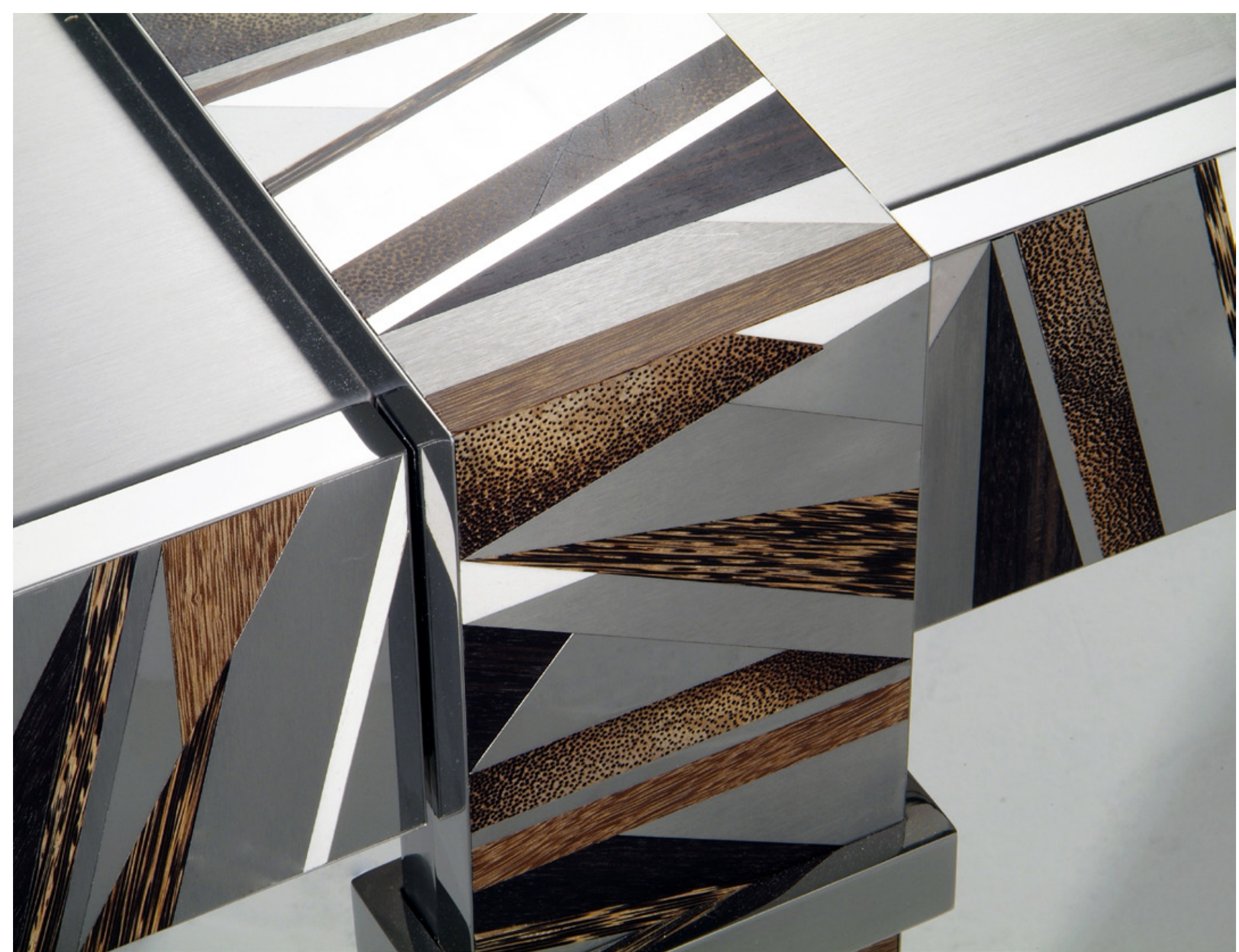
38 H x 129 x 120 cm

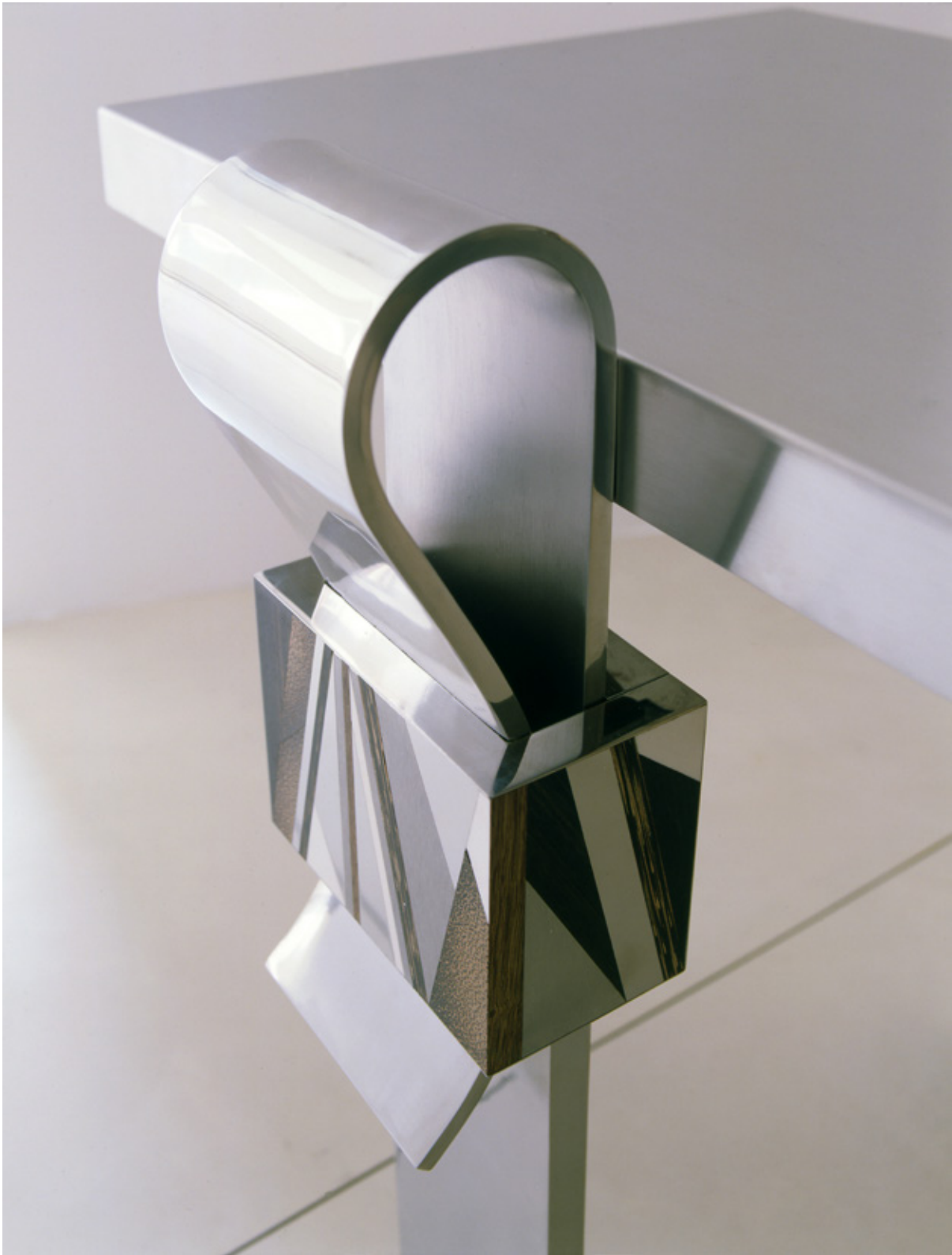
Edition of 8, with 4 APs





Maria Pergay
Bureau Marqueterie/Marquetry Desk,
2005
Stainless steel, brushed steel,
macassar, bone, ebony, palm wood
28.5 H x 82.68 x 23.62 inches
72.4 H x 210 x 60 cm
Edition of 8







Maria Pergay

Secret Cube, 2013

Stainless steel, copper and bronze
leaves, LED lighting

20.63 H x 21.75 x 20.88 inches

52.4 H x 55.2 x 53 cm

Edition of 8





Maria Pergay

Table Gelé/Frozen Table, 2008

Nickel-plated cast bronze, engraved glass

28.25 H x 53.25 inches

71.8 H x 135.3 cm

Edition of 8



Maria Pergay
Pouf Ruban/Ribbon Pouf, Steel, 2007
Stainless steel
21.46 H x 42.13 x 17.72 inches
54.5 H x 107 x 45 cm
Edition of 12





Maria Pergay

Bracelet Pouf Steel, 2007

Stainless steel

16.3 H x 21.65 x 11.81 inches

41.4 H x 55 x 30 cm

Edition of 20



Maria Pergay

Pouf Colonne/Column Seat, 2012

Stainless steel, oak

18.6 H x 19.5 x 19.5 inches

47.2 H x 49.5 x 49.5 cm

Seat height: 13 inches (33 cm)

Edition of 12





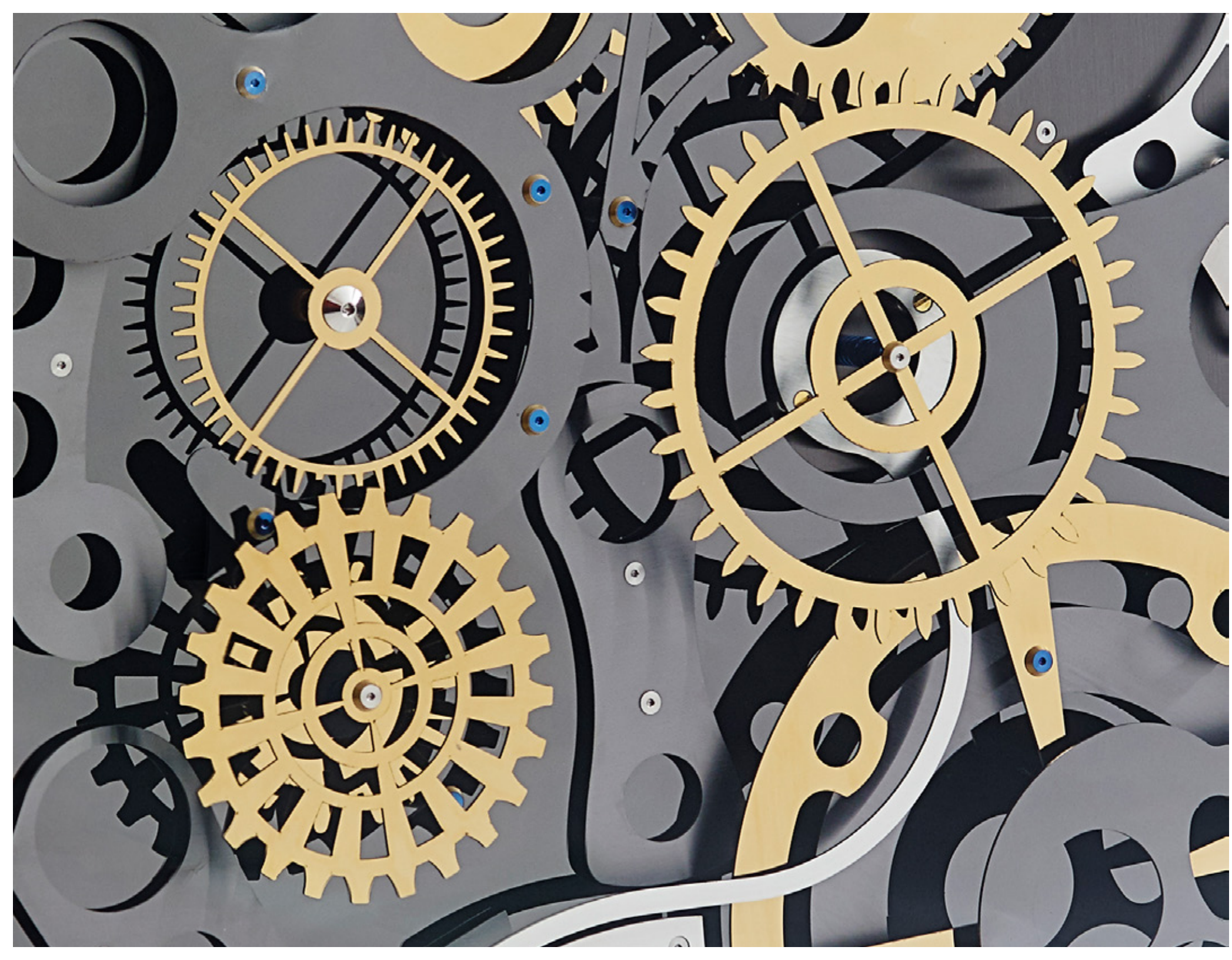
Maria Pergay
Meuble Galuchat/Caviar Cabinet,
2005
Stainless steel, shagreen, black
mother of pearl inlay
43.7 H x 33.86 x 17.72 inches
111 H x 86 x 45 cm
Edition of 8





Maria Pergay

Cabinet Engrenage, 2016
Brushed stainless steel façade;
cabinet and interior drawers in
lemon wood; base in brushed and
polished brass; gears in Ti-black,
Ti-blue and mirrored stainless steel
55.2 H x 44.09 x 19.69 inches
140.2 H x 112 x 50 cm
Edition of 8, with 4 APs





Maria Pergay
Chaise X, c. 1975
Stainless steel, foam, fabric
32 H x 15.5 x 20 inches
81.3 H x 39.4 x 50.8 cm



Maria Pergay
Chaise X/Chairs with Arms, 2017
Nicked stainless steel, foam, fabric
33.75 H x 20.125 x 20.5 inches
85.7 H x 51.1 x 52.1 cm
Seat height: 19.5 inches (49.53 cm)
On Commission

Maria Pergay

Lampe Totem/Totem Lamp, c. 1974

Stainless steel, polished bronze

79.875 H x 17 x 15.375 inches

202.9 H x 43.2 x 39.1 cm





Maria Pergay

Lampe Feuille/Leaf Lamp, c. 1960

Silver-plated brass

36.25 H x 22.25 x 11.25 inches

92.1 x 56.5 x 28.6 cm

Shade: 19.69 H x 17.72 inches

50 H x 45 cm

ABOUT DEMISCH DANANT

Demisch Danant was founded in 2005 by Suzanne Demisch and Stephane Danant. The gallery specializes in twentieth century French design with an emphasis on the late 1950s through the 1970s and represents the work of Maria Pergay, Pierre Paulin, Joseph-André Motte, Pierre Guariche, Michel Boyer, Philippon & Lecoq and René-Jean Caillette. Curated exhibitions on historical work are presented within environments that reference architecture and interiors of the era.

The gallery also features exhibitions concerning the intersection of architecture, design and art, including the work of Sheila Hicks, Felice Varini, Krijn de Koning, and César.

Demisch Danant is dedicated to research and scholarship on French design and has published and authored monographs including *Antoine Philippon and Jacqueline Lecoq*, *Maria Pergay: Complete Works 1957–2010* and *Maria Pergay: Sketch Book*. Current projects include a comprehensive monograph on seminal designer Joseph-André Motte and a new book about the architectural commission works of artist Sheila Hicks.

www.demischdanant.com



DEMISCH DANANT

30 W 12TH ST NEW YORK

+1 212 989 5750

INFO@DEMISCHDANANT.COM