

FINANCIAL TIMES

“Nancy Lorenz: Luxurious Lacquerware,” February 2015

NANCY LORENZ: LUXURIOUS LACQUERWARE
A MASTER CRAFTER OF SUBLIMELY SHIMMERING

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“I learnt to appreciate transcendent craft while living in Tokyo,” says Nancy Lorenz, a specialist in exquisite lacquer pieces that are embellished with mother-of-pearl inlay and gold leaf. The New York-based artist has worked with renowned interior designers such as David Collins and created limited-edition boxes for Bottega Veneta, while her one-of-a-kind works grace homes from Beverly Hills to Mumbai, as well as Chanel stores from London to Hong Kong.

Lorenz’s commissions – from small decorative boxes (examples in first and third pictures, from \$4,000 for a 10cm x 10 cm x 10cm box) to elaborate floor-to-ceiling installations (second picture) – begin with a consultation about size and scope, colour palettes and textures. Each work is then crafted using layers of gesso and clay, followed by delicate water gilding – a process that allows gossamer-thin gold leaf to be burnished and to appear as liquid gold. A recent creation was a luxurious New York breakfast room in collaboration with decorator Michael Smith, featuring mother-of-pearl inlay and white gold leaf, paired with ethereal hues of ivory and celadon. Indeed, Lorenz often incorporates handmade pigments that range from the monochromatic to the vibrant.

Other popular commissions include multipanel screens (from \$180,000) and sleek coffee tables (\$60,000) in exuberant patterned gold and shimmering silver that mimics rippling water (fourth picture). Regardless of the size, everything is created in the artist’s studio before being installed on-site. “Lacquer work is incredibly labour-intensive,” explains Lorenz, “and most projects require four months to complete. The work needs to be done in the studio where the layers can be applied to flat surfaces and then further sanded. I use old techniques but in a fresh, contemporary way.”

PRIVATE RESIDENCE, NEW YORK | 2006 | SILVER LEAF, MOTHER OF PEARL, CELADON LACQUER, GESSO, ON WOODEN PANELS



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BOTTEGA VENETA: SKIES AND BEYOND (ABOVE) | 2012 | SILVER LEAF, RESIN, AND BRONZE POWDER ON WOODEN PANEL, WASHED LAMBSKIN BOX | 28 X 20 X 10.5 CM

SILVER WATER SCREEN (DETAIL, TOP RIGHT) | 2009 | SILVER LEAF, MOTHER OF PEARL INLAY ON WOODEN PANELS | 104 X 222 IN



UNTITLED BOX (ABOVE) | 2014 | BLUE OXIDIZED SILVER LEAF, CLAY ON PAULOWNIA BOX | 5 X 6 X 4.75 IN