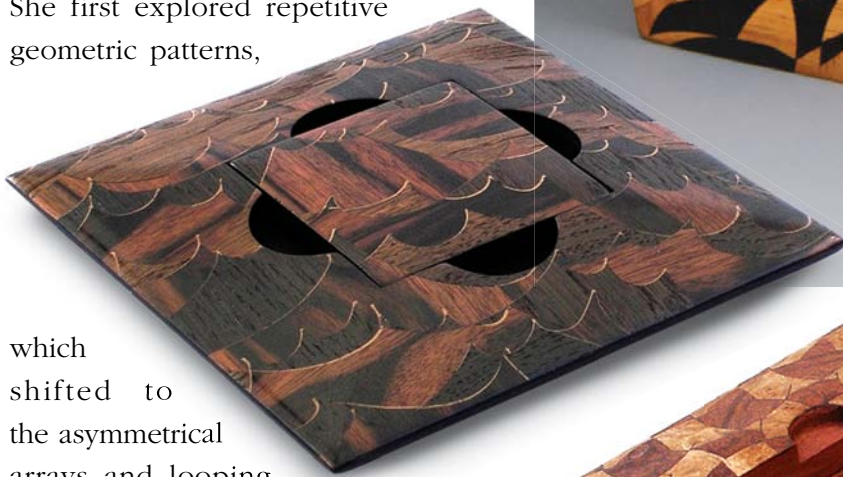


Magical Marquetry

Ulrike Scriba has worked in marquetry for 30 years and has never stopped experimenting. She grew up surrounded by craft and design: Her father was a silversmith, and architects and cabinetmakers fill her family tree. She began making things from wood and metal in her father's workshop when she was 14, but learned marquetry completely on her own. "I learned by making mistakes," she says. "It was the mistakes that spurred me on." Scriba, who lives amid vineyards in a small town in southern Germany, cut veneers with a knife at first and used that method for years before switching to a scrollsaw. Her designs evolved along with her technique. She first explored repetitive geometric patterns,

which shifted to the asymmetrical arrays and looping lines of her current pieces. Scriba reveres the great German marquetry of the 18th century and the Art Nouveau period, but has no interest in replicating those designs. Instead, she continues to innovate, saying recently, "May this old art be granted a future!"

—Jonathan Binzen



Lidded boxes. Scriba's decorative boxes, measuring about 10 in. square, feature ornate marquetry over a solid-wood body.

Photos: Paul Clemens (above), Ulrike Scriba (below, left)