

SIDE GALLERY

JOSÉ ZANINE CALDAS



Easy Chair model "Pilão"

Designed by José Zanine Caldas
Brazil, 1975
Pequi wood

Measurements

61 x 47 x 92h cm
24 x 18,5 x 36,2h in

Provenance

Private collection, Brazil

Certificate

Accompanied by a certificate of authenticity by Zanine Caldas family as well as a certificate of provenance

Edition

Unique piece

About

The Pilão easy chair by José Zanine Caldas exemplifies the designer's sculptural approach to furniture-making in the 1970s. Carved from solid wood, the chair evokes the shape of a traditional wooden mortar (pilão in Portuguese), commonly used in Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous cultures. Its compact, grounded form merges vernacular references with a bold, monolithic aesthetic—hallmarks of Caldas' late production.

Created during his time in Nova Viçosa, Bahia, the chair reflects the ecological ethos and artisanal sensibility that defined his most celebrated work. Zanine's use of reclaimed and locally sourced hardwoods, shaped with minimal intervention, gives the piece a raw physicality and spiritual resonance, bridging nature, craft, and modernist design.

Biography

José Zanine Caldas (1918–2001) was a self-taught Brazilian architect and designer known for his innovative use of native woods and his integration of craftsmanship and environmental values. Starting as a model maker in the 1940s, he collaborated with leading modernist architects and founded Móveis Artísticos Z to produce industrial furniture using plywood. Later, he embraced a more rustic and ecological approach, creating expressive wooden houses and furniture using reclaimed materials. His work bridges industrial design and vernacular tradition, leaving a legacy of sustainability and regional identity. In 1991, he was named an honorary architect by the Institute of Architects of Brazil.