

SIDE GALLERY

RIKI WATANABE



Riki Rocker (Rocking Chair)

Manufactured by Condé House
Japan, 1984
Elm wood, Fabric

Measurements

69 x 76,5 x 101h cm
27,2 x 30,1 x 39,8h in

Provenance

Private Collection, Japan

Literature

Japanese Wooden Chairs, Sueyoshi Murakami, Shotenkenchiku-Sha Co., 1995 – Reference to an earlier non-rocking version (Windsor), p. 116.

Japanese Chairs, Shimazaki Makoto, Seibundo Shinkosha Publishing, 2006 – Reference to an earlier non-rocking version (Windsor), pp. 48-49.

About

The Riki Rocker, designed by Riki Watanabe in 1984 and produced by Condé House, is an evolution of his earlier Windsor-style chair designs. This piece showcases Watanabe's ability to reinterpret traditional forms through modern materials and ergonomic refinements. The solid elm wood frame provides a sturdy yet elegant structure, while the fabric upholstery enhances comfort. The chair exemplifies the fusion of Japanese craftsmanship with Western influences, characteristic of Watanabe's design philosophy.

Biography

Riki Watanabe (1911–2013) was one of Japan's pioneering modern designers, known for bridging traditional craftsmanship with the emerging ideals of postwar modernism. Trained in woodworking and architecture, he established his studio in the late 1940s and became instrumental in shaping Japan's design identity through furniture, interior projects, and industrial design.

Watanabe's work embodies a restrained elegance — combining natural materials, rational forms, and a profound respect for everyday use. Through collaborations with manufacturers such as Tendo Mokko and with leading architects of his generation, he helped define the humanist approach that came to characterize Japanese modern design.