

SIDE GALLERY

DAISAKU CHŌ



Dining chairs (set of 4)

Manufactured by Tendo Mokko
Japan, 1965
Veneered plywood

Measurements (each)

50 x 47 x 76h cm (44 cm seat height)
20 x 19 x 30h in (17,5 in seat height)

Provenance

Private collection, Tokyo

Details

Stamped with the label of the manufacturer (Tendo)

Literature

Creators: Daisaku Choh / Gan Hosoya / Novhiko Yabuki.
Published by Setagaya Art Museum, Tokyo, 2006

About Tendo Mokko

In northwest Japan, in Yamagata Prefecture, a group of carpenters and joiners created a cooperative that primarily produced wooden objects, ammunition and supply crates for the army. Incorporated in 1942, the cooperative worked with the Sendai Institute of Industrial Arts and used the new molded plywood technology to make decoy aircraft. After the war, Tendo opened an office in Tokyo (1947). It produced furniture for the occupying troops, then turned, in the early 1950s, to furniture for the domestic market. One of his first commissions came from the architect Kenzo Tange, who designed plywood seats for the Ehime Prefecture, built in 1953. Plywood was then a new material for designers, and Tendo was one of the first manufacturers to use it for its furniture, notably for the Butterfly stool, created in 1956 by Sori Yanagi. Tendo's policy of paying royalties for design projects attracted many other designers, so much so that, in the sixties, Tendo could boast among its ranks the leading furniture designers Isamu Kenmochi, Daisaku Choh, Riki Watanabe, whose creations are still produced. In addition, Tendo encouraged young designers by funding an annual competition from 1960 to 1967 and by manufacturing some of the winning designs itself, such as Reiko Tanabe's plywood chair. In 1964, Tendo received the Mainichi Prize for Industrial Design for its pivotal role in furniture manufacturing.

Biography

Daisaku Chō (1921–2014), born in Manchuria and trained in architecture at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, joined Sakakura's office in the 1940s and became one of his most trusted collaborators. Deeply influenced by Sakakura's human-centered approach, Chō focused on furniture design, creating pieces that combined technical precision with emotional warmth. His Low Seat Chair (1958), developed from Sakakura's Bamboo Chair, translated the act of sitting close to the floor — central to Japanese life — into a modern form of molded plywood. Presented at the 1960 Milan Triennale, it won the Gold Award, affirming Japan's emerging modern identity.