

SIDE GALLERY

KATSUHEI TOYOGUCHI



Lounge chair model “Spoke”

Manufactured by Tendo Mokko
Japan, 1963
Japanese oak, Loro Piana fabric

Measurements

79 x 80 x 67h cm (32 cm seat height)
31,2 x 31,5 x 26,4h in (12,6 in seat height)

Provenance

Private collection, Tokyo

Literature

Japanese Design from 1945. Published by Thames & Hudson. By Naomi Pollock. London, 2020. Page 157
Japanese Wooden Chairs. Published by Shotenkenchi-ku-Sha. Japan, 1005. Page 73

Eight decades of masterful designs from leading Japanese furniture maker Tendo Mokko. Published by Tendo Mokko. Japan, 2020. Pages 171

Eight decades of masterful designs from leading Japanese furniture maker Tendo Mokko. Published by Tendo Mokko. Japan, 2020. Pages 246

Details

This chair is also known as an “akagura chair” because of its low seat and the ability to sit on a tatami mat. It is a very Japanese chair, and its thick legs do not damage tatami mats when placed on them. The chair has an interesting shape seen from the back. The seat frame is made of an ellipse, in contrast to the ellipse of the seat surface. It is very costly to make the frame that supports the seat out of molded plywood. For this reason, Tendo Mokko discontinued production of this chair for a while. The back of the chair is made of round bars of the same thickness and is high backed, so it is very comfortable to sit cross-legged and lean back.

Biography

Katsuhei Toyoguchi was born in Kemanai of Kazuno city, Akita, Japan. After graduating from the Department of Machinery at Akita Prefectural Industrial School, he became an assistant at the Secondary Industrial School in Yokohama. He was one of the most promising future engineers, but he suffered through the Great Kanto Earthquake. Luckily, he was not killed by it, so returned back to Akita. While working as a substitute teacher, he took the entrance examinations and was admitted to the Tokyo Advanced Crafts School, Department of Craft Design. At this school, he studied under Kurata Munetaka who was strongly drawn to German furniture and architecture. Kurata had just returned from studying at Bauhaus. Toyoguchi became a member of the Keiji kobo which was led by Kurata. Instead of the original idea of metaphysics, they put more emphasis on design and shape. After working with the Keiji Kobo, he started to work at the Crafts Institute (later called Industrial Arts Institute) with a recommendation from Kunii Kitaro. He then became an independent designer as well as a professor at Musashino Art University, Department of Industrial Design.