SIDE GALLERY

DAISAKU CHŌ & JUNZŌ SAKAKURA

Pair of Chairs Model 3221
Designed by Junzō Sakakura
Manufactured by Tendo Mokko
Japan, 1953
Solid wood

Measurements (each)
41 × 50 × 78h cm
16,1 × 19,7 × 30,7h in

Provenance
Private Collection, Japan

Biography

Junzō Sakakura (1901–1969) and **Daisaku Chō** (1921–2014) stand as two central figures in the evolution of modern Japanese architecture and furniture design, embodying the dialogue between tradition and modernity that defined postwar Japan.

Born in Gifu Prefecture, Sakakura studied art history at Tokyo Imperial University before moving to Paris in 1929, where he joined Le Corbusier's atelier and rose to become his chief assistant. Immersed in European modernism yet grounded in Japanese sensibility, he sought harmony between rational form and natural materials. His breakthrough came with the Japanese Pavilion at the 1937 Paris International Exposition, a synthesis of lightness, proportion, and restraint that earned the Grand Prix. Returning to a devastated Japan after the war, Sakakura helped rebuild his country through works like the Museum of Modern Art in Kamakura (1951) and the International House of Japan (1955, with Maekawa and Yoshimura). His belief that architecture should serve people extended naturally to furniture, leading to collaborations with Tendō Mokko and designs such as the Lounge Chair Model 5016 and the Teiza Chair, where modern materials met the quiet discipline of Japanese craft.

Daisaku Chō, 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.

Together, Sakakura and Chō exemplified a vision of design as continuous, evolving, and profoundly human — where buildings and chairs alike expressed clarity, balance, and respect for everyday life.

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