

# SIDE GALLERY

PAUL T. FRANKL



## Coffee Table

Manufactured by Johnson Furniture Company  
USA, c. 1948  
Lacquered cork, Lacquered mahogany

## Measurements

213 × 53 × 30 h cm  
83,9 × 20,9 × 11,8 h in

## Details

Manufacturer's label

## About

Designed by Paul T. Frankl during his late-1940s collaboration with the Johnson Furniture Company, this coffee table exemplifies his characteristic fusion of luxurious materials and streamlined modern American design. The use of lacquered cork—a material Frankl helped popularize—creates a subtly textured, light-reflective surface that contrasts elegantly with the deep tones of lacquered mahogany.

Its elongated proportions and low, architectural stance reflect Frankl's interest in developing a distinctly American mode of modernism: bold, functional, and rooted in sophisticated material experimentation. The piece embodies his transition from the energetic "Skyscraper" aesthetic of the 1920s to the quieter, more refined organic modernism that defined his postwar work.

## Biography

**Paul T. Frankl** (1886–1958) was an Austrian-born American designer and architect known for shaping the visual language of American modernism in the early to mid-20th century. After moving to the United States in 1914, he became a key figure in New York's design scene, earning acclaim for his innovative "Skyscraper" furniture of the 1920s—works that translated the vertical dynamism of the modern city into functional objects.

Throughout his career, Frankl balanced architectural clarity with a sensitivity to materiality, experimenting with cork, lacquer, metals, and richly grained woods. His collaborations with Johnson Furniture Company in the 1940s and 1950s marked a pivotal phase, during which he developed a softer, more organic modernism suited to postwar American interiors.