

SIDE GALLERY

JEAN GILLON



Armchair and Ottoman Model "Amazonas" (Metal Arm Version)

Manufactured by Italma Wood Art
Brazil, 1960s
Wood, Metal, Leather

Measurements

Armchair
79 × 95 × 73h cm
31,1 × 37,4 × 28,7h in
Seat height: 38 cm / 15 in

Ottoman
50 × 62 × 37,5h cm
19,7 × 24,4 × 14,8h in

Provenance
Private Collection, Brazil

Details
Manufacturer's label

About

This Amazonas armchair and ottoman represent a distinctive variation within Jean Gillon's celebrated seating series, notable for the incorporation of metal arm supports alongside the traditional wooden structure. Produced by Italma Wood Art in the 1960s, this version highlights the designer's willingness to experiment with material contrasts while maintaining the core identity of the model.

The combination of wood and metal introduces a subtle industrial note to the otherwise warm and organic composition. The leather seating, supported within the frame, retains the relaxed and ergonomic qualities characteristic of the Amazonas line, while the metal arms add a sharper linear definition and visual tension.

As in other designs by Gillon, the balance between structure and comfort is central. The materials work in dialogue: the solidity of the frame, the resilience of the leather, and the refined presence of the metal elements together create a piece that is both functional and sculptural.

This variant reflects the broader evolution of Brazilian modernism during the mid-20th century, where designers explored new material combinations while remaining deeply connected to craftsmanship and the sensorial qualities of natural materials.

Biography

Jean Gillon (1919–2007) was a designer and architect born in Iași, Romania, and later active in Brazil. Trained within European modernist principles, he emigrated to São Paulo in 1956, where he developed a distinctive body of work combining functional design with organic forms and artisanal techniques.

Gillon became a key figure in Brazilian modern design, known for his innovative use of materials such as wood, leather, and woven fibers, and for merging industrial production with craftsmanship through companies like Cidam and WoodArt. His most iconic piece, the Jangada armchair (1968), exemplifies his approach—light, structural, and ergonomically refined, inspired by traditional Brazilian fishing rafts.

Throughout his career, he gained international recognition for furniture that integrates architecture, landscape, and human comfort, leaving a lasting legacy in modern design.