

SIDE GALLERY

JEAN GILLON



Armchair model "Amazonas"
Manufactured by Italma Wood Art
Brazil, 1960s
Wood, Rope

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

Provenance
Private Collection, Brazil

Details
Manufacturer's label

Literature
Jean Gillon Designer. Published by Lovemolo, Sao Paulo. by Enock Sacramento, Graça Bueno and Giancarlo Latorroca

About

The structure of the Amazonas armchair, designed by Jean Gillon, is defined by a tensioned rope system that operates as the primary load-bearing element. Rather than acting as a secondary support, the rope network constitutes the core structural logic of the piece, determining both its form and its performance. The ropes are arranged in a continuous woven pattern, anchored at specific points along the wooden frame. This creates a flexible surface that works entirely in tension, distributing weight evenly while allowing for controlled deformation. The structure adapts under load without compromising its integrity.

The wooden frame functions as a perimeter structure, providing the necessary anchor points and defining the overall geometry. The wooden arms extend this frame, guiding the direction and rhythm of the rope layout while maintaining structural coherence.

In this configuration, the chair is not a rigid assembly but a dynamic system in which stability emerges from the balance between tensile forces in the rope and the containment provided by the frame. The result is a lightweight yet resilient structure, where form is a direct expression of material behavior.

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.