

# SIDE GALLERY

JOSÉ ZANINE CALDAS



## Round Dining Table

Brazil, 1970s  
Solid raw wood, sculptural wooden base

## Measurements

165 × 165 × 77h cm  
65 × 65 × 30,3h in

## Provenance

Private collection, Nova Viçosa

## About

This round dining table by José Zanine Caldas exemplifies the designer's mature exploration of raw wood as both a structural and expressive material. Carved from solid timber and defined by a monumental sculptural base, the piece reflects Zanine's belief that furniture should preserve the vitality and natural character of the tree from which it originates.

The circular top rests on a tubular pedestal formed by large organic cut-outs, creating a dynamic interplay between mass and void. Despite the substantial scale of the material, the table maintains a remarkable sense of balance and rhythm, achieved through the fluid geometry of the base and the clarity of the overall composition.

Unlike the refined lightness associated with earlier Brazilian modernism, Zanine's work embraces the physical presence and irregularity of raw wood. His furniture rejects excessive industrialization in favor of direct engagement with nature, craftsmanship, and the expressive qualities of native Brazilian timber. The visible grain, tonal variation, and sculptural cuts transform the table into an architectural object as much as a functional one.

Created during a period in which Zanine increasingly focused on ecological awareness and artisanal production, this table embodies his unique contribution to Brazilian design: a synthesis of modernist spatial thinking and a profound respect for natural materials. Both primitive and sophisticated, the piece stands as a powerful example of organic modernism in late 20th-century Brazil.

## Biography

**José Zanine Caldas** (1918–2001) was a self-taught Brazilian architect and designer known for his innovative use of native woods and his integration of craftsmanship and environmental values. Starting as a model maker in the 1940s, he collaborated with leading modernist architects and founded *Móveis Artísticos Z* to produce industrial furniture using plywood. Later, he embraced a more rustic and ecological approach, creating expressive wooden houses and furniture using reclaimed materials. His work bridges industrial design and vernacular tradition, leaving a legacy of sustainability and regional identity. In 1991, he was named an honorary architect by the Institute of Architects of Brazil.