

SIDE GALLERY

CARLO HAUNER & MARTIN EISLER



Folding table (coffee and dining table)

Manufactured by Forma Móveis
Brazil, 1955
Rosewood and rosewood veneer

Measurements

Coffee table configuration
150 × 70 × 36h cm
59,1 × 27,6 × 14,2h in

Dining table configuration
150 × 70 × 73h cm
59,1 × 27,6 × 28,7h in

Provenance

Private Collection, Brazil

About

Designed in 1955 by Carlo Hauner and Martin Eisler, this transformable table exemplifies the inventive and functional approach that characterized their contribution to Brazilian modern furniture. Conceived to operate at two different heights, the piece can transition from a low coffee table to a full-height dining table, combining two functions within a single compact design.

The transformation is achieved through an articulated wooden base that folds beneath the tabletop when the table is used in its lower configuration. When extended, the structure raises the top to dining height, revealing the geometry and ingenuity of the supporting framework. Rather than concealing the mechanism, the design incorporates it as an expressive element of the piece.

Executed in rosewood and rosewood veneer, the table balances mechanical sophistication with a refined material presence. The exceptionally thin rectangular top, gently tapered at its edges, contrasts with the sculptural character of the folding base. In both configurations, the design maintains a sense of visual lightness despite the complexity of its construction.

The table reflects the broader experimentation taking place within Brazilian furniture design during the 1950s, when designers increasingly combined traditional materials with new approaches to production, adaptability, and contemporary domestic life. Its ability to shift between coffee and dining heights makes it a particularly sophisticated example of Hauner and Eisler's interest in versatile modern furniture.

Biography

Carlo Hauner (1927–1977) was an Italian-born designer and entrepreneur who played an important role in the development of Brazilian modern furniture during the postwar period. Born in Brescia, Italy, he studied at the Accademia di Brera in Milan before emigrating to Brazil in the late 1940s.

After settling in São Paulo, Hauner established Móveis Artesanal, producing furniture that combined European modernist ideas with Brazilian materials and craftsmanship. In the early 1950s, his collaboration with Martin Eisler contributed to the development of Forma, which became one of the most influential manufacturers of modern furniture in Brazil.

Hauner's designs are characterized by elegant structural solutions, expressive combinations of wood and metal, and an emphasis on comfort and material quality. His work, together with that of Eisler, helped establish a distinctive language for Brazilian postwar furniture and remains an important part of the history of twentieth-century Latin American design.