# SIDE GALLERY

**ISAMU KENMOCHI**



Rattan Sofa
Manufactured by Yamakawa Rattan
Japan, 1967
Rattan over bamboo frame, Upholstery

Measurements
140 × 89 × 70h cm
55,1 × 35 × 27,6h in

Provenance
Private collection, Tokyo

Literature
Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak et al., ppg. 20, 116-119
Japanese Wooden Chairs, published by Shotenkenchiku-Sha, Tokyo, 1995. Page 68
Japanese Modern. Retrospective Isamu Kenmochi. Published by Asao Sato. Hitoshi Mori (Matsudo City Board of Education), Tokyo 2005. Cover and pages 85, 186, 93, 92, 91,
Design Japonais 1950-1995. Editions Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, 1996. Page 69

Details
Stamped with manufacturer's label

About Yamakawa
Yamakawa Rattan is a Japanese company renowned for its high-quality rattan furniture and long tradition of craftsmanship. Throughout the mid-20th century, it gained recognition not only for its refined weaving techniques but also for its collaborations with influential modern designers. Figures like Isamu Kenmochi and Riki Watanabe worked with Yamakawa to explore new forms, bringing together traditional rattan craftsmanship with innovative, modernist design principles. These collaborations helped elevate rattan furniture from everyday use to celebrated design objects, emphasizing simplicity, comfort, and natural beauty. The company's lightweight and flexible pieces embodied the harmony between material and form that both designers championed. As a result, Yamakawa Rattan became an essential part of Japan's design evolution, earning international admiration for merging traditional techniques with contemporary creativity. Today, it remains a symbol of timeless design rooted in collaboration and artisanal skill.

Biography
Isamu Kenmochi (1912–1971) was a pioneering Japanese designer who helped shape postwar Japanese modernism. He combined traditional craftsmanship with modern materials and industrial production, drawing inspiration from both Japanese artisanal techniques and international design. In 1955, he founded Kenmochi Design Associates, developing furniture that balanced organic forms, functionality and modern manufacturing. His work on the Japanese Pavilion at Expo 58 in Brussels established his international recognition, while his later teaching at Tama Art University influenced a new generation of designers.

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