

SIDE GALLERY

SABURO INUI



Coffee Table model “Zataku”

Manufactured by Tendo Mokko
Japan, 1960s
Laminated and bent rosewood plywood

Measurements

121 × 76 × 34h cm
47,7 × 29,9 × 13,5h in

Details

Manufacturer's Label

Literature

Hiesinger, Kathryn B., and Mio Wakita-Elis.
Japanese Design Since 1945: A Complete
Sourcebook. Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1990.
Tendo Mokko Co., Ltd. Furniture Catalogue,
Yamagata, c. 1960.
Japanese Design: A Survey Since 1950.
The Japan Foundation, Tokyo, 1991.

About

Designed by **Saburo Inui** and manufactured by Tendo Mokko around 1960, this coffee table exemplifies the synthesis of technology and craftsmanship in postwar Japanese modernism. Its sculptural form, defined by gently curved surfaces and molded plywood, highlights the material's structural possibilities and creates a sense of visual lightness. The rich rosewood grain adds warmth and refinement, while the table's clean lines and understated presence reflect Tendo Mokko's approach to functional, architecturally informed furniture design.

Biography

Saburo Inui (1911–1991) was a Japanese industrial designer and craftsman who pioneered the use of molded plywood in modern furniture. Joining Japan's Industrial Arts Institute around 1936, he explored the material's structural and aesthetic possibilities, collaborating with designers such as Isamu Kenmochi. He played a key role in developing the production of Sōri Yanagi's iconic Butterfly Stool, manufactured by Tendo Mokko in 1956, and joined the company in 1958.

At Tendo Mokko, Inui designed influential pieces including the Zataku low table, the Ply Chair and the Teiza chair, combining technical innovation, clean lines and understated elegance. His work demonstrated how industrial manufacturing could complement traditional Japanese craftsmanship, transforming plywood into a refined and versatile material. Recognized with several design awards, Inui made a lasting contribution to postwar Japanese modernism, bridging functional design, material innovation and enduring aesthetic simplicity.