SIDE GALLERY

SABURO INUI



Side Table Model “Zataku”
Manufactured by Tendo Mokko
Japan, 1960s
Keyaki veneer plywood

Measurements
60 x 36 x 45h cm
23,7 x 14,2 x 17,8h in

Provenance
Private collection, Tokyo

Literature
Design Japonais 1950-1995, exhibition catalogue, Editions du Centre Pompidou, Paris, 1996, p. 76
Tendo in Japanese Modern, edited by Tendo Mokko, Tokyo, 2020, p. 215
Tendo. Eight decades of masterful designs from leading Japanese furniture maker Tendo Mokko. Published by Tendo Mokko. Japan, 2020. Pages 248

About
The Zataku Side Table, designed by Saburo Inui, reflects the understated elegance of Japanese modernism and the aesthetic principle of *shibui*. Crafted with keyaki veneer, it features a square tabletop supported by subtly curved, splayed legs. Its restrained geometry highlights the natural grain and warmth of the wood, while the carefully sculpted structure balances functionality with organic form. Rooted in traditional Japanese woodworking, the design expresses Inui’s sensitivity to materials, craftsmanship and simplicity.

About Tendo Mokko
Founded in Yamagata in 1942, Tendo Mokko became a leading Japanese furniture manufacturer through its pioneering use of molded plywood. From the 1950s onwards, the company collaborated with influential architects and designers, including Kenzo Tange, Sori Yanagi, Isamu Kenmochi and Riki Watanabe, exploring new possibilities in modern furniture design. Awarded the Mainichi Industrial Design Award in 1964, Tendo Mokko helped shape Japanese modernism by combining technological innovation with traditional woodworking craftsmanship.

Biography
Saburo Inui (1920–1982) was a Japanese designer and architect who contributed to the development of postwar Japanese modern furniture by combining traditional craftsmanship with industrial materials. Best known for the Ply Chair, designed in 1959 and manufactured by Tendo Mokko, he explored the possibilities of molded plywood and innovative materials, including a rare transparent acrylic version produced in 1970. His collaborations with Tendo Mokko helped shape a refined approach to furniture design, balancing technical innovation, functionality and simplicity.

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