SIDE GALLERY

TOKUKICHI KATO



Ring Stool (Yellow Version)
Manufactured by Tendo Mokko
Japan, 1955
Laminated Plywood, Leatherette

Measurements
32 cm diameter × 43,6h cm
12,6 in diameter × 17,2h in

Provenance
Private Collection, Japan

Literature
Good Design Exhibition Catalog, Japan Industrial Design Promotion Organization, 1966.
Tendo Mokko Archives, Modern Japanese Furniture Design 1950–1970.

About
Designed in 1955, the Ring Stool epitomizes **Tokukichi Kato**'s refined approach to form and structure. Its circular seat—formed from laminated plywood—rests lightly on four tapering legs, achieving both strength and visual delicacy. The stool's continuous curves reveal the mastery of bentwood construction for which Tendo Mokko became renowned.
In the red version, the piece gains a distinctly modern presence: vivid yet understated, combining the warmth of wood with the optimism of color. Functional, sculptural, and timeless, the Ring Stool encapsulates postwar Japan's exploration of material innovation and simplicity—where design becomes a quiet expression of balance and grace.

Biography
Tokukichi Kato (Japan, 1915–1996) was a pioneering Japanese designer and a key figure in the development of postwar modern furniture. Trained in woodworking and industrial design, Kato worked closely with Tendo Mokko, where he contributed to the evolution of laminated plywood techniques that defined the company's international reputation. His designs reflect a deep respect for material honesty and craftsmanship, blending the traditions of Japanese carpentry with modernist ideals of simplicity and utility. Through pieces like the Ring Stool, Kato helped shape the visual language of modern Japanese furniture—functional, elegant, and enduringly human.

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