

# ZANINE CALDAS DENUNCIA

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CARPENTERSWORKSHOP GALLERY

INSTITUTO  
JOSÉ ZANINE CALDAS





“We must bring the forest indoors, turn the roots of dead trees into ceilings, live with all the living and fictional animals – like the Great Amazon Snake, govern ourselves to better understand life, be the head of our country. We have to grow up to be worthy of the nature of Brazil.”

– José Zanine Caldas, 1988

## NAMORADEIRA

1980s

Pequi Wood

73 x 107 x 78 cm

28 3/4 x 42 1/8 x 30 3/4 in

The Namoradeira is the most iconic sculpture by Caldas, a typical example of how he used traditional canoe-building know-how. The making of the Namoradeira chair requires extremely skilled craftsmen who can feel the amount of material present, creating balance in the piece.





**1** 1970s  
Pequi Wood  
60 x 79 x 82 cm  
23 5/8 x 31 1/8 x 32 1/4 in



**2** 1970  
Pequi Wood  
63 x 97 x 90 cm  
24 3/4 x 38 1/4 x 35 3/8 in



**3** 1980s  
Pequi Wood  
78 x 111 x 107 cm  
30 3/4 x 43 3/4 x 42 1/8 in



**4** 1980  
Pequi Wood  
79.5 x 107 x 79 cm  
31 1/4 x 42 1/8 x 31 1/8 in



Jose Zanine Caldas (1919-2001) was a self-taught artist, designer and architect from Belmonte, Bahia, Brazil.

For over 10 years, he had an architectural scale model workshop, where he developed over 500 models for the main Brazilian architects, including Oscar Niemeyer and Lucio Costa. In 1949 with two associates, he created the Fábrica Moveis Artísticos Z to produce rationalised plywood furniture for a wider public.

Tired of the capitalist approach of the company, he put an end to the adventure and moved to the outskirts of the forest, in Nova Viçosa. There he created a factory of house structures and produced the furniture that later was called Móveis Denúncia – protest furniture. Inspired by both the local craftsmanship and the natural resources of the area, his large pieces of furniture were mainly made from one slog. Caldas was gathering evidence for future generations of the variety and magnificence of the forest.

Caldas also developed landscape projects and gardens, as well as private houses and hotels. He was invited to teach at several universities in Brazil, created a scale model of a laboratory for the University of Brasília and gave lectures throughout Europe in the late 80s. He gained professional recognition in 1992 after receiving from Lucio Costa the Diploma of Honorary Architect of the Instituto dos Arquitetos do Brasil – Institute of Architects of Brazil. Prior to that, several exhibitions dedicated to his work had been organised, including an exhibition at Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris in 1989.

Caldas was a radical creator. His work always aimed to find the essence at the root of each of his projects – whether it was the exploration of the natural environment or his conceptualisation of indoor space as a synergy of the senses. His engagement with Brazilian craftsmanship and natural materials underlies the character of his works.



Zanine had a unique training: he developed his knowledge through careful research in all areas that interested him. His gaze was multidisciplinary. He greatly influenced Brazilian architecture and landscape, with a variety of forms and textures, with a specific take on nature and light. Around him gathered the pioneers of modern Brazilian architecture, but also artists and craftsmen. Wood was the primary medium of his work and has remained the common denominator of his oeuvre.

Zanine developed his knowledge through extensive research in all disciplines he was interested in. His vision was global: he saw the close relationship between the fields of design, scenography, architecture, landscape, urban planning, research and teaching. In all these fields, he developed a profound and valuable body of work.

This exhibition is based on extensive research on José Zanine Caldas' work and highlights the Carpenters Workshop Gallery's unique collection and the contribution of the Instituto José Zanine Caldas - revealing the technological, typological, aesthetic, and global importance of the design he created. It also seeks to highlight both his handmade and industrial production practices, his cross-referencing between Brazilian traditional culture and popular imagination.



## DINING TABLE

1960s

Pequi Wood

77 x 300 x 105 cm

30 1/4 x 118 1/8 x 41 3/8 in

This table reveals Zanine's natural affinity with wood and his artistic talent presents in the sculptured legs, carved in geometric shapes and detailed with great perfection.









**DENUNCIA CHAISE LONGUE**

1978

Pequi Wood  
70 x 49 x 132 cm  
27 1/2 x 19 1/4 x 52 in

The trunk of the pequi wood allowed Zanine to achieve exactly what he intended in this lounge chair for resting, talking, playing.





## BOOKCASE

1970s

Pequi Wood, Amaranth Wood

179.5 x 171 x 30.5 cm

70 5/8 x 67 3/8 x 12 in

A solid handmade bookcase carved in wood. Zanine plays with the formal balance of the piece, creating fills, voids, and overhangs.







## COFFEE TABLE

1970s

Pequi Wood

41 x 113 x 113 cm

16 1/8 x 44 1/2 x 44 1/2 in

Sturdy and stable table, executed with a single piece of wood that has been carved to create the three legs of the piece.









**DENUNCIA TRUNK LOUNGE SET**  
1970

Pequi Wood, Upholstery  
81.5 x 222 x 36.5 cm  
32 1/8 x 87 3/8 x 14 3/8 in

Zanine employed natural materials in his furniture from the 1960s onwards, using fabric and leather for upholstery. This ensemble is simple and elegant, made with carved tree trunk and fabric seats.









## DINING TABLE

circa 1960

Pequi Wood, Amaranth Wood, Ceramic

75 x 307 x 95 cm

29 1/2 x 120 7/8 x 37 3/8 in

Solid wood table with a ceramic top made of recycled tiles salvaged from demolition sites. Zanine used this model in the houses he designed, as we can currently see in the dining room table of the Leite Barbosa residence, located in Joatinga, Rio de Janeiro.



## DINING TABLE

1970

Juerana Wood

79 x 301 x 112 cm

31 1/8 x 118 1/2 x 44 1/8 in

Made from solid wood, this table displays a playful undulation of shapes. Its organic curves creating a visual juxtaposition between density and space.



## SOFA COWHIDE

1970

Pequi Wood, Cowhide

78.7 x 170.2 x 94 cm

31 x 67 x 37 in

This sofa demonstrates the sheer size of the trees found in the Brazilian forest, as well as the skill of the craftsmen who built canoes and worked for Caldas. The trunk was completely carved out, leaving three points of support for the leather seat.





**DENUNCIA SCULPTURAL BENCH**

1975

Pequi Wood  
71 x 176 x 81 cm  
28 x 69 1/4 x 31 7/8 in

The free forms of this sculptural bench, have been carved from a solid piece of wood. Only a small quantity of these were produced.



**DENUNCIA DINING TABLE**

1978

Pequi Wood  
75 x 301 x 98 cm  
29 1/2 x 118 1/2 x 38 5/8 in



**SIMPLY WOOD**

In Nova Viçosa, a city in the south of the state of Bahia, Zanine witnessed the beginning of an endless process of deforestation. For him, the mystique of wood, of this living fiber, couldn't be wasted.

Zanine started making furniture with the remains of the trees that were taken from the Atlantic Forest and worked with these trunks. As labour, he used the local population, skilled craftsmen, who used to build canoes from a single tree trunk.

He drove insparation fro this material. Gigantic forest wastes from the deforestation, intended to be burnt, became his raw material. He preserved the exceptional dimensions of the trunks, gathering evidences of the magnif-icance of the Forest for future generations. Each furnitire from this period in the forest is a denunciation - Denuncia - of the deforestation of something that took centuries to grow. In her book Modern Furniture in Brazil, Maria Cecilia Loschiavo analysed these works, establishing the concept of protest furniture, in the sense of criticism of environmental destruction, based on an interview with the designer in 1979.

Another important point of this work is Zanine's ability to create from discarded materials: *“The end of the Atlantic Forest. The use of scrap, which I used to say, look, if we can get wonderful things out of scrap, it is healthier, more balanced. To be able to survive and get out of the deformation. Then I would take advantage of it. From the original side of the thing.”* (Interview by José Zanine Caldas to Irene Black. August 1990).

Zanine's furniture drew great attention because it was sculptural, hand-crafted from large pieces of wood. Many were unique because they came from found material, others were made in small quantities, based on 1:10 scale models. With all these exceptional characteristics, this furniture marked an important moment of renewal for design.

According to Zanine, this furniture represents:*“(...) a new thought in the making of utilitarian objects, since they were produced outside of any industrial sense, stopping more in the aspect of the utilitarian, without anything decorative. A way to reactivate the culture of the canoe maker, in its artisanal sense, because, in Brazil, there is no reason not to use the hand.”* (Jornal do Brasil, Rio de Janeiro. April 20, 1975).

**ZANINE: ARTIST AND DESIGNER**

The complex relationship between design and art gained a striking chapter in Zanine's work. From the already sculptural language of his furniture, he bought aesthetics to the design of sculptures, which were exhibited in several museums and galleries. He made sculptures from various woods from every part of the tree including the roots, fallen trees, burnt wood, and mobile sculptures.





**DINING TABLE**  
1977

Solid Wood  
76.5 x 221 x 107 cm  
30 1/8 x 87 x 42 1/8 in

Made of solid wood, the piece has carved legs creating a unique shape. A sculpture in itself.



**TRONCOS SOFA**  
1977

Pequi Wood  
80 x 220 x 96 cm  
31 1/2 x 86 5/8 x 37 3/4 in

A robust and solid piece of furniture, carved from a thick trunk using the enxó tool, the same tool used to build canoes, which gives it a rounded shape.



**DENUNCIA ARMCHAIRS (PAIR)**

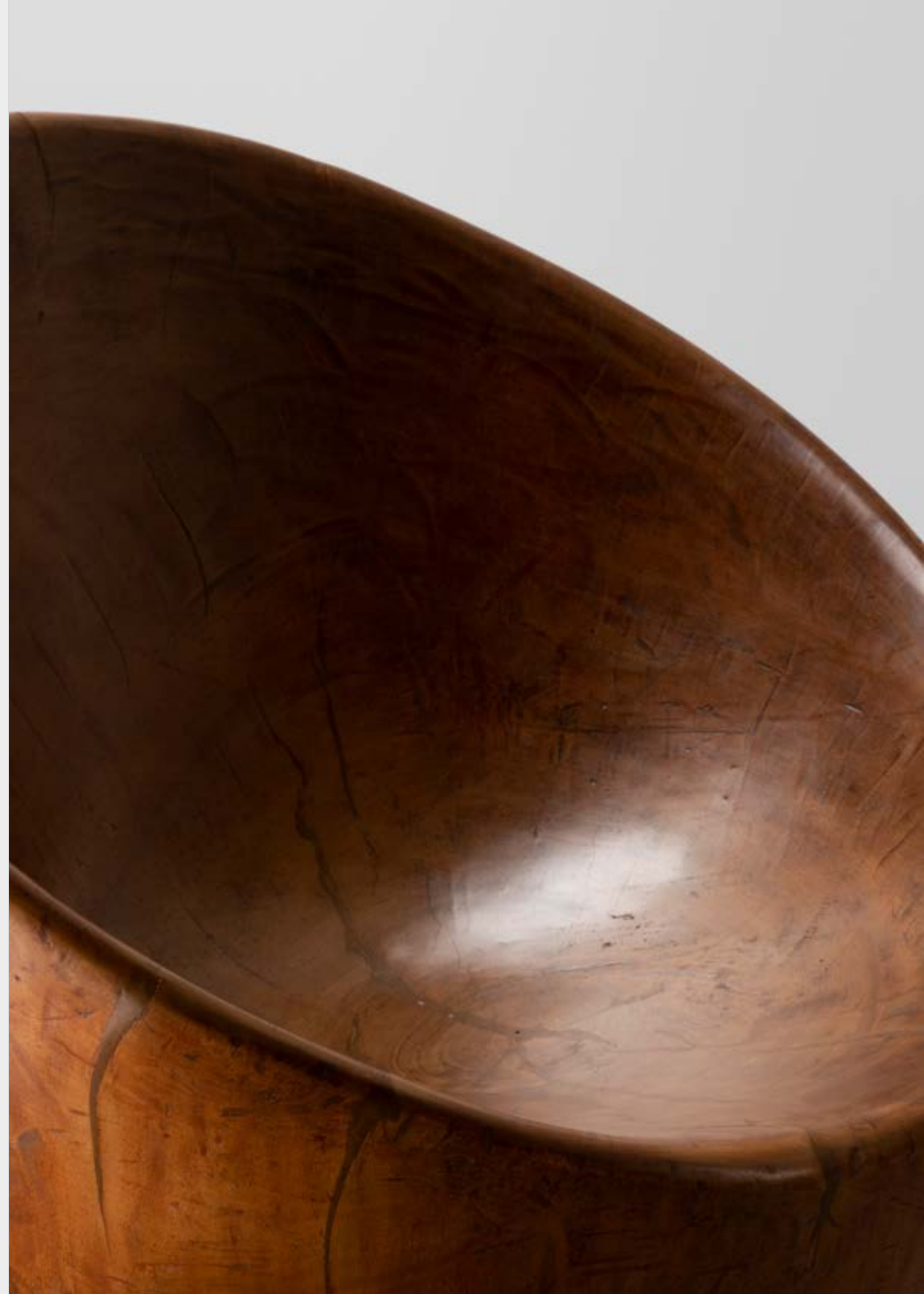
1980s

Pequi Wood

72 x 62 x 62 cm

28 3/8 x 24 3/8 x 24 3/8 in

A sturdy piece of furniture made in small quantities. The backrest and seat are hand carved from wood trunks. Zanine would adjust the proportions by sitting on the pieces, working to make them more ergonomic and comfortable.







## DENUNCIA ARM & DINING CHAIRS

- 1** 1980s  
Juerana Wood  
79 x 63 x 63 cm  
31 1/8 x 24 3/4 x 24 3/4 in
- 2** (Pair) circa 1977  
Solid Wood  
79 x 60 x 60 cm  
31 1/8 x 23 5/8 x 23 5/8 in
- 3** 1970 - 1980  
Pequi Wood  
81 x 58 x 53 cm  
31 7/8 x 22 7/8 x 20 7/8 in
- 4** (Pair) 1970 - 1980  
Pequi Wood  
83 x 52 x 57 cm  
32 5/8 x 20 1/2 x 22 1/2 in
- 5** (Pair) 1980  
Pequi Wood  
72 x 62 x 62 cm  
28 3/8 x 24 3/8 x 24 3/8 in



## **BENCH**

circa 1980

Imbuia Wood

36 x 341 x 74 cm

14 1/8 x 134 1/4 x 29 1/8 in

The base of this bench is a reflection of Zanine's design thinking and environmental activism. Drawing on these roots, the bench uses simple forms, creating a contrast between straight and organic lines.







HOUSES IN JOATINGA

Zanine became known as an architect by making houses for himself. Due to a lack of economic resources, to the will to use traditional know-how, and to being opposed to material waste, Zanine used demolition materials from the Portuguese houses in downtown Rio de Janeiro.

Zanine had an absolute respect for the place, the first architecture, the one that comes with the land, he saw nature as something to be integrated into his projects. On Joatinga hill he created a house completely integrated to the environment, the first house built on top of the hill at the time. And it was from this construction that Zanine’s work as an architect became much admired, and that other constructions were built, by him, on this site.

Zanine’s houses combine time, thoughts, and techniques. Like the mod-erns, he made large glass spans and brought the landscape into the house. And like Brazilian colonial architecture, he used clay tiles, stone, and wood.

With this, his houses dialogued with the local culture and nature. They mixed the construction with the horizon, the sky, the plants and the sea. Thus, his house became the setting for many meetings of artists of the time, as told by a poem from Vinicius de Moraes.

For a poet who builds his poetry word by word, or his music note by note, the link between project and construction is something clear, understand-able. Zanine, like a musician, had the general idea of his project in Joatinga and used demolition waste as music notes.

And these houses were great inspirations for the artists of the time, as well as a meeting place. When Tom Jobim heard that they were going to make a film about Zanine, he immediately asked to see the movie and made the soundtrack for it.

Zanine’s relationship with musicians, artists, poets, and intellectuals continued. Milton Nascimento asked Zanine to design the set of his show. The show and the record released at the time was named, by Nascimento, Clube da Esquina. It took place at the Fonte da Saudade Theater in 1972 and was directed by Ruy Guerra.

POPULAR HOUSES

The popular houses were part of the foundation of the Centro de Desenvolvimento das Aplicações das Madeiras do Brasil – DAM (Center for the Development of Brazilian Wood Applications), which operated from 1983-1990.

DAM’s proposal was to form a new generation of Brazilian builders inside and outside the university, able to know wood, to use the material and to con-tinue the development of a fair use of Brazilian wood.

During this period, he developed projects for two important books: the book Taipa em Painéis Modulados (Taipa in Modulated Panels), 1988, which describes and illustrates the construction of a popular house based on the know-how and materials found in the region but prefabricating the main structure of the house in a carpentry shop with the intention of speeding up the construction.

After being prefabricated, the elements would be taken to the construc-tion site, where they would be assembled by carpenters. The fence was made of taipa, a construction method known to the local population and inherited from the family self-construction system.

URBANISTIC PROJECT FOR PIAUÍ

Zanine was invited to do the urbanistic project for Piauí, in the northeast of Brazil. For this, he developed an in-depth study together with a multidisciplinary team, to understand the place, its fauna, flora, and the customs of the popula-tion, to then propose tourist poles and development vectors for the city.

The project was published as a small book under the name Projeto de polos turísticos para a faixa litorânea do Piauí e parque das sete cidades (Project of tourist poles for the coastal strip of Piauí and the park of the seven cities), authored by Zanini and Landri – Projetos e administração LTDA, with the stamp of Embratur – Empresa Brasileira de Turismo do Ministério da Indústria e do Comércio, undated.

One of the principles of the project is the preservation of the natural wealth of the region. “If tourism planning were to destroy or override that which gave rise to it, it would only serve to devalue the region, with a product that violates the environment.” And the project considers both the fluent population of tourists and the local population.

As a conclusion, they highlight the need to preserve the green areas already existing and to encourage the planting of more seedlings. In addition, to restrict the use of motorboats within five kilometres from the edge of the la-goons, to forbid hunting, and to allow fishing in a disciplined way: “Man is only able to fully express a culture when he maintains a balanced relationship with his environment, modifying it without ceasing to be part of it.” (– Zanini and Landri – Projetos e administração LTDA, with the stamp of Embratur – Empresa Brasileira de Turismo do Ministério da Indústria e do Comércio, undated. P. 20)..







# COFFEE TABLES

- 1 1970  
Pequi Wood  
31.5 x 95 x 95 cm  
12 3/8 x 37 3/8 x 37 3/8 in
- 2 1980  
Pequi Wood, Glass  
51 x 107 x 107 cm  
20 1/8 x 42 1/8 x 42 1/8 in
- 3 circa 1970  
Pequi Wood  
48 x 111 x 93 cm  
18 7/8 x 43 3/4 x 36 5/8 in
- 4 1970  
Pequi Wood, Glass  
34 x 104 x 104 cm  
13 3/8 x 41 x 41 in

Caldas treated raw wooden materials in such a way as to preserve organic shapes and textures. These coffee tables are an example of his experiments with forestry waste such as felled trees and roots. The pieces present some organic cracks imposed by time and the dynamic texture of wooden material.

## COFFEE TABLES

- 1** 1990  
Viñhatico Wood, Glass  
46 x 170 x 139 cm  
18 1/8 x 66 7/8 x 54 3/4 in
- 2** 1970  
Pequi Wood  
49 x 140 x 48 cm  
19 1/4 x 55 1/8 x 18 7/8 in
- 3** 1970  
Pequi Wood  
37 x 83 x 83 cm  
14 5/8 x 32 5/8 x 32 5/8 in

**2**



**1**



**3**







# TABLES

- 1 1970  
Juerana Wood  
73 x 111 x 74 cm  
28 3/4 x 43 3/4 x 29 1/8 in
- 2 1970s  
Pequi Wood  
105 x 105 x 80 cm  
41 3/8 x 41 3/8 x 31 1/2 in
- 3 1970  
Angelim Pedra Wood, Viñhatico Wood, Pequi Wood, Glass  
76 x 220 x 100 cm  
29 7/8 x 86 5/8 x 39 3/8 in
- 4 1970  
Pequi Wood  
79 x 167 x 79 cm  
31 1/8 x 65 3/4 x 31 1/8 in



- 1

KIDS ARMCHAIR (PAIR)

1950

Solid Wood

73 x 111 x 74 cm

28 3/4 x 43 3/4 x 29 1/8 in
- 2

SCISSORS CHAIR (PAIR)

1950

Pequi Wood, Upholstery

80 x 66 x 51 cm

31 1/2 x 26 x 20 1/8 in
- 3

ZECA ARMCHAIR

1950

Naval Plywood, Upholstery

77 x 59 x 85 cm

30 1/4 x 23 1/4 x 33 1/2 in
- 4

CUCA ARMCHAIR

1950

Peroba Wood, Upholstery

77 x 85 x 72 cm

30 1/4 x 33 1/2 x 28 3/8 in
- 5

LOUNGE CHAIR (4 AVAILABLE)

1950s

Plywood, Leather

91 x 56 x 97 cm

35 7/8 x 22 1/8 x 38 1/4 in





**ARMCHAIR (PAIR)**

circa 1950

Naval Plywood, Upholstery

102 x 69 x 84 cm

40 1/8 x 27 1/8 x 33 1/8 in

Armchair made of marine plywood and upholstery. A beautifully modern armchair with clean lines and a form inspired by function.

Upholstered with Loro Piana Connemara Indaco Oxus.



**FÁBRICA MÓVEIS ARTÍSTICOS Z – Z ARTISTIC FURNITURE FACTORY**

In 1949, Zanine founded the Fábrica Móveis Artísticos Z – Z Artistic Furniture Factory. The goal, very much linked to the spirit of the time, was to propose new forms for domestic life, rationalize the production of furniture, making it more accessible to the different contexts of the Brazilian home. To do this he set up a mass production line and used plywood a lot, designing the sides of the pieces on the board, to minimize material loss. The upholstery was placed with tacks and the labour used in the production was unskilled.

In addition, the shape of the furniture was fully in line with the spirit of the time and reflected Zanine's goals of designing for all social classes. The furniture was light, with organic shapes. The factory had enormous success in Brazil and Zanine designed approximately 80 furniture models.

The company was involved with every detail, from the production of the materials - like plywood or fabric, to the displays in the stores or the advertisement used to promote the collections.

**IRON FURNITURE - INFA IRON FURNITURE, FOR PEKELMAN FURNITURE**

In addition to the high-profile venture of Móveis Z – Z Furniture, Furniture and being a pioneer of the industrialization of modern furniture in Brazil, Zanine also designed iron furniture: chairs and coffee tables with glass tops, in the city of São José dos Campos, São Paulo, in the 1950s.

Structured in tubular iron, they used coloured PVC in the form of spaghetti threaded under tension, to form the backs and seats. Cushions covered in fabric with organic patterns were placed over the seats, providing comfort.

Throughout the 20th century, the use of this synthetic material enchanted the market and became popular in Brazilian homes, bringing the translucent colour of plastic. Nowadays, other designers Fernando Jaeger, Fernando and Humberto Campana, and Patricia Urquiola also use this same colourful spaghetti in their creations.

**DESK**

1950s

Marine Plywood  
71 x 220 x 90 cm  
28 x 86 5/8 x 35 3/8 in

Made of marine plywood, this desk is lightweight, and the design allows for two simultaneous uses, right and left.





TABLES

- 1

1950s  
Naval Plywood  
46 x 91 x 82 cm  
18 1/8 x 35 7/8 x 32 1/4 in
- 2

1950s  
Naval Plywood  
50 x 72 x 50.5 cm  
19 3/4 x 28 3/8 x 19 7/8 in
- 3

1950s  
Naval Plywood  
94 x 100 x 40 cm  
37 x 39 3/8 x 15 3/4 in



1



## SIDE TABLES

- 1** (Pair) 1980  
Reclaimed Wood  
45 x 45 x 45 cm  
17 3/4 x 17 3/4 x 17 3/4 in
- 2** 1980  
Reclaimed Wood  
45 x 45 x 45 cm  
17 3/4 x 17 3/4 x 17 3/4 in
- 3** (Pair) 1980  
Reclaimed Wood  
45 x 45 x 45 cm  
17 3/4 x 17 3/4 x 17 3/4 in

2



3





STOOLS

- 1

(2 Available) 1980

Wood

41 x 48 x 48 cm

16 1/8 x 18 7/8 x 18 7/8 in
- 2

(4 Available) 1980

Reclaimed Wood

45 x 35 x 35 cm

17 3/4 x 13 3/4 x 13 3/4 in
- 3

1970

Juerana Wood

44 x 33.5 x 33.5 cm

17 3/8 x 13 1/4 x 13 1/4 in



CONSOLES & BENCHES

- 1

(2 Available) 1970

Juerana Wood

46 x 260 x 36.5 cm

18 1/8 x 102 3/8 x 14 3/8 in
- 2

1970

Vinhatico Wood, Glass

72 x 160 x 60 cm

28 3/8 x 63 x 23 5/8 in
- 3

(4 Available) 1978

Pequi Wood

43 x 150 x 45 cm

16 7/8 x 59 x 17 3/4 in





**EXHIBITION CREATED IN CLOSE PARTNERSHIP  
WITH THE JOSÉ ZANINE CALDAS INSTITUTE.**

Maria Cecilia Loschiavo dos Santos and Amanda Beatriz Palma de Carvalho are prominent researchers and academics, and are the leading contemporary reference points for Brazilian design. All the texts presented in the exhibition have been written by them and approved by the José Zanine Caldas Institute.

**CURATORS**

Amanda Beatriz Palma de Carvalho, Architect-Researcher  
Maria Cecilia Loschiavo dos Santos, Philosopher & Professor of Design

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Long live Zanine!

– Maria Cecilia Loschiavo dos Santos  
& Amanda Beatriz Palma de Carvalho