

TURNING TIDES

DESIGNING A MODERN BRAZIL

693 FIFTH AVENUE | NEW YORK



STATEMENT FROM THE ART ADVISOR
BRAZIL AND MODERN LIVING

After overcoming the horrors of the Second World War in 1950, there was a relaxed atmosphere and a positive feeling in the air. We were living in comfort or, as paraphrased in the song written by Gilberto Gil and Jôao Donato: "Peace invaded our hearts."

As Brazil entered a new way of life, the country was radiating hope to the world. Several waves of transitions followed, which positively impacted the configuration and nature of the Brazilian house. The introduction of new materials, colors, technologies and shapes spread innovation into the field of design, carried out predominantly in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. These new standards rested on aesthetic considerations and social concerns resulting from the changes underway in the country.

Alongside these changes, the implementation of the "50 years in 5" development policy, and the transfer of the administrative capital from Rio de Janeiro to Brasília – the heart of the country – were crucial factors for the modernization of Brazilian design. In addition to designers, many architects made their direct contribution to the furniture modernization process, creating an enriching dialogue between furniture, environment and landscape.

From Lina Bo Bardi's iconic work at the turn of the 40s and 50s to the present day, Carpenters Workshop Gallery exhibits 75 years of domestic objects in dialogue with the arts and Brazilian life, highlighting the role of design in recounting these stories. These different waves also correspond to changes in the productive structure of

Brazilian design, resulting in many designers becoming entrepreneurs and setting up their own businesses. The transition from artisanal production to industrialization, as well as the creation of several product lines, required significant investments and systematic interaction with the public consumer.

Turning Tides presents the fabric for modern living in Brazil. The public will see the various trends, the avant-garde and the diversity of materials used, but also the sovereign presence of wood, which establishes the designers' link with vernacular culture and the beginnings of Brazilian furniture. Brazil is a name that originates from one of the most charming species on the biodiverse and fertile earth, Pau Brasil. This history, culture and life is reflected in the dexterity and skill of our artisans, carrying out the magical transformation of this material.

The design of modern Brazilian furniture has become synonymous with the advent of a way of living centered on tropicality, nature and above all on products created with the diversity of wood species existing in Brazil. These characteristics give Brazilian furniture timeless virtues based on the tradition of working with the aforementioned materials.

The works exhibited here by Joaquim Tenreiro, Zanine Caldas, Carlo Hauner, Oscar Niemeyer, Lina Bo Bardi, Zanine Caldas, Sergio Rodrigues, Jorge Zalszupin, Giuseppe Scapinelli are exponents of Brazilian design who contributions has shaped the dream of modern living.

MARIA CECILIA LOSCHIAVO



LINA BO BARDI

[→ MORE OF THIS WORK](#)

WRITING DESK
1949

Caviuna Wood
78 x 170 x 80 cm
30 3/4 x 66 7/8 x 31 1/2 in

PROVENANCE

Indústrias Reunidas Fábricas Matarazzo,
São Paulo, Brazil.

Acquired from the above.

This rare writing desk is an exceptional work by the designer and architect Lina Bo Bardi. Made of caviuna wood, the piece is a classic of modernist mid-century style, notable in the simplicity of its design. This desk is one of a limited edition, produced by Moveis Artesanal, Carlo and Ernesto Hauner's company that would later become Forma Moveis. The piece therefore represents a short period of Bo Bardi's career of which examples are quite rare. While the materials show a South American influence, the playful lines are reminiscent of Italian modernism, especially the "Z" shaped legs, which are simultaneously delicate and dynamic. The piece was acquired from the offices of Indústrias Reunidas Fábricas Matarazzo, a major Brazilian business group. A perfect encapsulation of Lina Bo Bardi's unique artistic approach, this writing desk is a beautiful blend of Italian and Brazilian modes.



ZANINE CALDAS

[→ MORE OF THIS WORK](#)

DINING TABLE

1980S

Pequi wood

83 x 193 x 164 cm

32 5/8 x 76 x 64 5/8 in

PROVENANCE

Private collection of Nelson
Chieppe de Saldanha family.

Acquired from the above.



Zanine Caldas is renowned for his innovative use of precious Brazilian hardwoods. His late career and *Denúncia* collection especially highlight the craftsmanship and activism of the designer. Caldas' pieces are imbued with a deep sense of respect for the trees from which they were made. This impressive dining table, made of pequi wood, was carved from a single tree trunk. Its unique, organic form comes from the fact that the table's form was defined by the tree's shape. The simplicity of the design allows the focus to remain on the beauty of the wood. The sculptural quality of the table gives the piece a monumental feeling without sacrificing functionality.



ZANINE CALDAS

DENUNCIA DINING BENCH
1978

Pequi Wood
43 x 150 x 45 cm
16 7/8 x 59 x 17 3/4 in

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Brazil.
Acquired from the above.

This bench is part of the *Denúncia* collection, Zanine Caldas' protest furniture. Made of solid pequi wood, the piece presents the wood in its organic state. Variances in color or grain have not been corrected, Caldas lets the natural beauty of Brazilian hardwood be the focus. Though not an insubstantial piece, the clever design is composed of triangles with their vertices at the support point, creating an overall feeling of lightness. Like the entire *Denúncia* collection, the dining bench was inspired by local craftsmanship.

[→ MORE OF THIS WORK](#)





ZANINE CALDAS

NAMORADEIRA
1970s

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

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Brazil.

Acquired from the above.

The *Namoradeira* is among Zanine Caldas' most iconic pieces. Implementing traditional canoe building techniques, Caldas developed this design over many years, returning to it throughout his life. The form references le confident, a double vis-à-vis armchair with an 'S' shape that was popular in 19th century France. This piece is the earliest example of the series, making it especially rare. Made in the early 1970s, when Caldas first started to experiment with the *Namoradeira* design, it is smaller than later models. Carved from one single piece of rainforest hardwood, it is an incredible feat of craftsmanship. The design shows Caldas' preference for raw materials - no two pieces are exactly alike. The designer maintains the soft natural shape of the wood, expressing his connection with nature. The *Namoradeira* celebrates the raw beauty of wood, highlighting traditional woodworking techniques. A symbolic piece that underlines Brazil's precious natural resources.

[→ MORE OF THIS WORK](#)



ZANINE CALDAS

BENCH
circa 1980

Imbuia Wood
36 x 341 x 74 cm
14 1/8 x 134 1/4 x 29 1/8 in

PROVENANCE

Acquired from the artist.

Private collection of Mârcio Braga,
Flamengo Club's President. Buzios, Brazil.

Acquired from the above.

This bench encapsulates the mature aesthetic of Zanine Caldas. The designer's work was influenced by his interest in environmental and social activism. Caldas has cleverly repurposed the root of a tree as the base for the bench. Like much of his work in the *Denúncia* collection, the piece is engaged with Caldas' goal to reduce lumber waste. By giving utility to such roots Caldas shows his deep respect for Brazil's precious resources. The sinuous curves of the roots provide a welcome contrast to the more geometric lines of the bench's seat. The seat features marquetry work, a rare occurrence in Caldas' production. The designer used this technique to homogenize the reclaimed wood. It therefore shows a certain European influence, as well as an experimentation with different forms of craftsmanship. Juxtaposing craft and nature, this piece displays both Caldas' aesthetic and social goals. This bench was a special commission, created for Mârcio Braga, the president of the soccer club Flamengo, and bears a unique signature.

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ZANINE CALDAS

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DENUNCIA DINING CHAIR
1970-1980

Pequi Wood
83 x 57 x 52 cm
32 5/8 x 22 1/2 x 20 1/2 in

PROVENANCE

Private collection Sao Paulo, Brazil.
Acquired from the above.

This pair of dining chairs is part of the *Denúncia* collection, Caldas' protest furniture, designed in the later period of his career. The production took place for the most part in his Nova Viçosa workshop, where Caldas worked alongside skilled canoe builders, craftsmen who worked with enxó cutting tools to carve wood. Made in small quantities using forestry waste, each piece is unique. Because of this special production style, where each piece was hand carved from tree trunks, the form is adapted to the materials available.



ZANINE CALDAS

[→ MORE OF THIS WORK](#)

COWHIDE SOFA
1970

Pequi Wood, Cowhide
78.7 x 170.2 x 94 cm
31 x 67 x 37 in

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Brazil.
Acquired from the above.

Carved from a single trunk, this sofa designed by Zanine Caldas is an ode to the majesty of nature, demonstrating the scale of trees found in the Brazilian forest. Caldas highlights the precious skills of the artisans experienced in carving and building canoes, who worked alongside the designer. The leather cowhide that makes up the seat and back is fastened to three support points, with all other areas wholly carved out. With its raw materials and impressive scale, this sofa symbolizes Brazil's wealth of natural resources and craftsmanship.



JORGE ZALSZUPIN

[→ MORE OF THIS WORK](#)

MANHATTAN LOUNGE SET
1960

Suede

Sofa: 67 x 230 x 95 cm

26 3/8 x 90 1/2 x 37 3/8 in

Armchairs: 67 x 105 x 95 cm

26 3/8 x 41 3/8 x 37 3/8 in

Side Tables: 38 x 68 x 68 cm

15 x 26 3/4 x 26 3/4 in

PROVENANCE

Private collection, São Paulo, Brazil.

Acquired from the above.



Jorge Zalszupin, the Polish architect who arrived in Brazil in 1949, merged his European influences with the Brazilian modernist aesthetic. This *Manhattan Lounge Set* exemplifies Zalszupin's modernist vocabulary, which celebrated geometry, organic shapes, and fine leathers. It is very rare to find a complete Manhattan set, especially with the tables included. The pieces have never been separated.



JORGE ZALSZUPIN

[→ MORE OF THIS WORK](#)

BRASILIANA LOUNGE SET
1960

Imbuia Wood, Upholstery

Sofa: 68 x 262 x 98 cm

26 3/4 x 103 1/8 x 38 5/8 in

Armchair: 68 x 100 x 98 cm

26 3/4 x 39 3/8 x 38 5/8 in

PROVENANCE

Private collection, São Paulo, Brazil.

Acquired from the above.

Jorge Zalszupin designed this lounge set in honor of Brazil's new capital, Brasilia, designed by Oscar Niemeyer. Each piece of the set features a spectacularly carved wooden frame with a delicate, curved form. The sinuous lines that make up the design reference Niemeyer's architectural aesthetic. The simple design shows off the luxurious quality of the imbuia wood used. The set also features fine details like brass hardware. Made to mark a historic moment in the history of Brazil, this lounge set also represents a groundbreaking moment in the history of modern design. Today this design feels familiar, which only shows how cutting edge it was at the time of its creation. Zalszupin remains an important source of inspiration for today's designers. It is very rare to find a complete Brasiliana set. The pieces have never been separated.





JORGE ZALSZUPIN

COFFEE TABLE ROMANA
1960s

Caviuna Wood, Marble
29 x 137 x 68 cm
11 3/8 x 54 x 26 3/4 in

PROVENANCE

Private collection, São Paulo, Brazil.

Acquired from the above.

[→ MORE OF THIS WORK](#)

This coffee table demonstrates Jorge Zalszupin's unique sensibility that drew inspiration from both European and Brazilian design. The form of the table is simple and understated, creating an overall sense of harmony. The curved lines of the legs are balanced by the solid geometry of the tabletop. Made of precious materials like caviuna wood and marble, the piece has a feeling of luxury and timelessness. Zalszupin pieces were renowned for their exquisite level of finish, seen here in small details like brass buttons affixed to the tabletop.



JOAQUIM TENREIRO

COFFEE TABLE
1950

Vinhático Wood
28 x 161 x 104 cm
11 x 63 3/8 x 41 in

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Rio De Janeiro, Brazil.
Acquired from the above.

This trunk-shaped coffee table is one-of-a-kind. Its polished top contrasts with its natural and organic shape and the remaining bark on the sides, creating an engaging interplay of texture. The tubular legs are placed to give the sensation that the tabletop is floating. This coffee table was reworked several times by Tenreiro, who always adapted the shape from the initial trunk. Contrasting with his preferred vocabulary of thin, elongated lines, this piece holds a particular position in Tenreiro's production. It is a sculptural work, reflecting the artist's later approach to design, as he turned towards painting and sculpture.

[→ MORE OF THIS WORK](#)



JOAQUIM TENREIRO

COFFEE TABLE
1950

Vinhático Wood
28 x 161 x 104 cm
11 x 63 3/8 x 41 in

PROVENANCE

Bloch Editores, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Acquired from the above.

[→ MORE OF THIS WORK](#)

Made of vinhático wood, this table is an example of Joaquim Tenreiro's commitment to fine craftsmanship and love of natural materials. The understated structure of the base gives the table a unique feeling, as if it is floating. While the table's geometric grouping of three circles shows Tenreiro's understated modernism, the piece also differs from much of the master's work through its engagement with more free and organic forms. The table's shape was first defined by the natural form of the material, then adjusted to meet the designer's vision.



JOAQUIM TENREIRO

WRITING DESK

1966

Imbuia Wood, Glass

75 x 164 x 73 cm

64 5/8 x 29 1/2 x 28 3/4 in

PROVENANCE

Editora Bloch, Rio De Janeiro, Brazil.

Acquired from the above.

→ MORE OF THIS WORK

This desk was designed by Joaquim Tenreiro for the Bloch Editores headquarters in Rio de Janeiro. In the mid-1960s, Tenreiro and Sergio Rodrigues were chosen to oversee the furnishings of the new building, designed by Oscar Niemeyer. Tenreiro and Niemeyer had first worked together in 1942 and maintained a close relationship afterward, collaborating on various projects. Partnerships with influential architects propelled Tenreiro's career forward and allowed him to experiment with modern furniture in conversation with new, future-facing spaces. This desk features a green reverse-painted glass top and three drawers in a sleek and light design that has both an industrial and a traditional feel. Much like the Triangular tables designed for this project, this piece demonstrates Tenreiro's engagement in modernity, as well as his interest in traditional materials.



JOAQUIM TENREIRO

BENCH
1960

Imbuia Wood, Marble, Upholstery
28 x 275 x 65 cm
11 1/8 x 108 1/4 x 25 5/8 in

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Rio De Janeiro, Brazil.
Acquired from the above.

This bench is one-of-a-kind, the result of a private bespoke commission. Joaquim Tenreiro often created custom pieces designed to perfectly fit into the homes of Brazil's elite. This bench's minimal design highlights the beauty of the imbuia wood and marble used in the piece. It demonstrates Tenreiro's passion for visual lightness, a sense of craftsmanship, and material purity in his work. The design typifies the interior design projects overseen by Tenreiro, in which large spaces were complemented with low, horizontal furniture, to create a modern and spacious atmosphere.

[→ MORE OF THIS WORK](#)



JOAQUIM TENREIRO

[→ MORE OF THIS WORK](#)

DINING SET

10 Armchairs and 1 Dining Table
circa 1960

Peroba Wood, Cane, Glass
31.5 x 61.5 x 50.5 cm
12 3/8 x 24 1/4 x 19 7/8 in

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Jardim, São Paulo, Brazil.
Acquired from the above.





This dining set is composed of pieces that are light and simple, yet strong. The dining table is one of Tenreiro's most iconic designs, also available in a coffee table version. Its striking visual impact relies on the sleek composition and choice of materials. By treating local wood as a modern material, Tenreiro made fresh and timeless furniture. The pieces are made from a light shade of peroba wood seldom seen in Tenreiro's oeuvre. This is because the set was a custom order, and the client specifically requested this color of wood. The chairs are designed as lightweight, adaptable pieces. Tenreiro's attention to detail is noticeable in features such as the slightly tilted backrest, which prioritize comfort. The use of caning and local wood is an aesthetic choice as well as a technical one: it allows resistance and ventilation in a tropical climate. It is unusual to find a complete dining set from Tenreiro, making these pieces even more rare.

OSCAR NIEMEYER

SIDE TABLES (PAIR)
1960

Steel, Glass
35 x 49 x 33 cm
13 3/4 x 19 1/4 x 13 in

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Sao Paulo, Brazil.
Acquired from the above.

[→ MORE OF THIS WORK](#)

Oscar Niemeyer is Brazil's most iconic architect. Though most famous for his buildings, his modernist furniture also deserves recognition. This pair of side tables is an excellent example of Niemeyer's furniture, as it can be put directly in conversation with his architecture. The tables feature curved and sinuous forms, hallmarks of Niemeyer's artistic vocabulary. He sought to imbue the process of furniture-making with the traditions of modernist and contemporary architecture. This pair of side tables show the architect succeeding in this endeavor. Though small in scale, they feel monumental. It is unusual to find a pair of these side tables on the market.



CARLO HAUNER

[→ MORE OF THIS WORK](#)

Prototype Armchairs (Pair)
1950

Iron, Black Lacquered Wood,
Upholstery (Leather)
83.5 x 62.5 x 80 cm
32 7/8 x 24 5/8 x 31 1/2 in

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Sao Paulo, Brazil.
Acquired from the above.

This armchair is a typical piece of Carlo Hauner's design from the 1950s. The wide, curved backrest gives depth, while the seat rises over the armrests, providing cocoon-like comfort. The chair also demonstrates the innovative ways Hauner used wood. Unlike other designers working in mid-century Brazil, Hauner didn't use wood purely for its aesthetic or symbolic value. Instead, it is employed for its ability to be shaped and crafted. This industrial approach differentiated Hauner from his contemporaries. The style is modern yet clearly designed with function in mind, another characteristic of Hauner's style.



CARLO HAUNER & MARTIN EISLER

[→ MORE OF THIS WORK](#)

REVERSIBLE ARMCHAIR
1955

Iron, Upholstery
(Fabric: Loro Piana Connemara Bianca)
69 x 108 x 73 cm
27 1/8 x 42 1/2 x 28 3/4 in

PROVENANCE

Private collection, São Paulo, Brazil.
Acquired from the above.



Carlo Hauner and Martin Eisler founded the influential Brazilian design studio Forma in the 1950s. Hauner and Eisler were among many European designers who moved to South America during this time when fresh materials and new processes were being introduced into the commercial market. This reversible armchair demonstrates the central tenets of their modernist design philosophy, characterized by thin tubular frames juxtaposed against a clean upholstered finish. The matching curves of the two components combine the minimalism of European modernism with the sensual forms of Brazilian design. The clever design allows the chair to be repositioned freely. Today this piece is among the most recognizable designs by Hauner and Eisler and a symbol of mid-century modernism.



CARLO HAUNER & MARTIN EISLER

LOUNGE CHAIRS (PAIR)
1950S

Metal, Upholstery
71 x 70 x 60 cm
28 x 27 1/2 x 23 5/8 in

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Acquired from the above.

This pair of armchairs presents a clean design in the duo's typical style: a smooth seat and backrest set on an elegant thin metallic frame. The design of the chair bears both European and Latin American influences, typical to Hauner and Eisler. The sleek, restrained lines are in the tradition of European minimalism, while the curves are pure Brazilian modernism.

[→ MORE OF THIS WORK](#)



SERGIO RODRIGUES

MOCHO STOOLS (PAIR)
1980

Imbuia Wood, Upholstery
36 x 40 x 40 cm
14 1/8 x 15 3/4 x 15 3/4 in

PROVENANCE

Private collection, São Paulo, Brazil.
Acquired from the above.

[→ MORE OF THIS WORK](#)

A modernization of vernacular Brazilian furniture, the *Mochó Stool* was one of Sergio Rodrigues' first major designs. Inspired by traditional milking stools, the designer decided to create his own version of this classic form. There is a connection to mid-century European design, especially the *Berger Stool* designed by Charlotte Perriand. The *Mochó* references a global artistic vocabulary, while also remaining distinctly Brazilian and true to Rodrigues' style. The stools are carved from a single piece of imbuia wood, showing Rodrigues' hallmark fascination with good craftsmanship. Designed to be used, the stool even has a handle to facilitate being carried from room to room. Accessible yet elevated, historic yet forward-thinking, the *Mochó Stool* remains an icon of both Rodrigues' style and Brazilian design. This model includes an upholstered cushion that adds a touch of sophistication.



SERGIO RODRIGUES

HAUNER SOFA
1950

Pinho de Riga Wood, Upholstery
78 x 116 x 56 cm
30 3/4 x 45 5/8 x 22 1/8 in

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Sterblitch Family, Brazil.
Acquired from the above.

Sergio Rodrigues designed the Hauner sofa in 1950. The piece is characteristic of Rodrigues' unique aesthetic and the mid-century sensibility he championed. Made of beautiful pinho de riga wood, the sofa is striking and comfortable. The tapered legs and slatted frame make the piece solid, yet light, substantial, but never bulky. The wood is polished to a shine, showing off the beauty of the natural grain. The structure is covered with large, upholstered cushions. The piece was one of the first original models produced by Rodrigues and shows the designer creating his personal style. The sofa was designed as an homage to his friend and collaborator Carlos Hauner, creating a dialogue between the two designers.

[→ MORE OF THIS WORK](#)



GIUSEPPE SCAPINELLI

[→ MORE OF THIS WORK](#)

COFFEE TABLE
1950

Brazilwood, Glass
41 x 90 x 49 cm
16 1/8 x 35 3/8 x 19 1/4 in

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Rio de Janeiro.
Acquired from the above.

The Italian architect and designer Giuseppe Scapinelli made a name for himself in São Paulo with his unique wooden furniture creations. His style, which greatly differed from the popular mid-century modern aesthetic, emphasized curved lines and points. This coffee table demonstrates Scapinelli's talent as a craftsman. His ability to render complex designs in a way that comes across as effortless can be observed in this piece, where a glass tabletop is supported by thin tendrils of brazilwood. The curves are counterbalanced by straight lines that add a certain rationality to the piece.



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