



*S.A.M. No. 506 Table by Jean Prouvé, 1951. Photo © Galerie Patrick Seguin*

MASTERPIECES

# S.A.M. No. 506 Table, 1951

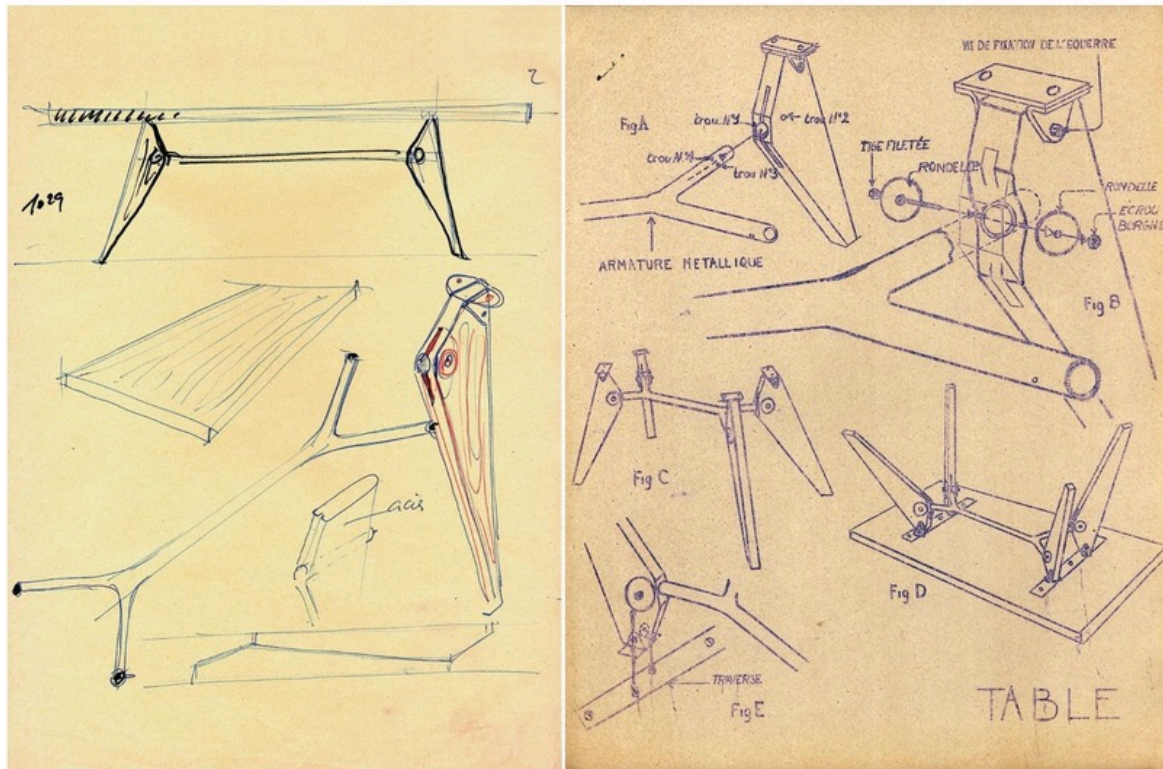
*Design Miami*

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This postwar table design showcases French master Jean Prouvé's engineering approach



“Jean Prouvé represents in a singularly eloquent manner, the type of the constructor... I mean by this that Jean Prouvé is, indissolubly, architect and engineer. Or rather, architect and constructor, for everything he touches and conceives immediately assumes an elegant plastic form while offering brilliant solutions with regard to strength and manufacture.” —Le Corbusier, 1954



*Left: Sketch of the S.A.M. Table by Jean Prouvé detailing the crossmember between the legs. Right: S.A.M. No. 502 Table assembly instructions by Ateliers Jean Prouvé, ca. 1951. Images courtesy of Galerie Patrick Seguin*

Born in Paris in 1901, Jean Prouvé trained as a metal worker at École Supérieure in Nancy, the manufacturing town that he would call home for the rest of his life. In 1924, he opened his own workshop there, specialized in sheet metal, an inexpensive, durable, and flexible material much in demand at the dawn of the modernist era. By the 1930s, he was designing streamlined functionalist furniture in sheet metal while collaborating with some of the most vanguard architects of his time. In the 1940s, he opened a factory just outside Nancy, where he fabricated bespoke products to spec alongside his own furniture designs intended for use in schools, work places, and government buildings.



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This S.A.M. No. 506 Table, produced by Prouvé in 1951, was derived from a prewar prototype, a collection of dining room furniture that received the Meubles de France award in 1947. The model features a folded sheet metal base, designed to be demountable—delivered flat-packed in a kit with assembly instructions—as evidenced by the protrusion of the cap-ends where the crossmember frame meets the brace connecting the legs. The base was attached to the cross pieces of the upper frame with brackets and screws.



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Always evolving and efficient, Prouvé went on to use this model as the basis for several later variants, including the Tropique suite of furniture designs he famously developed for the Air France facilities in Congo-Brazzaville.

This particularly beautiful example of Prouvé's rationalist oeuvre is exceptionally well-preserved, presenting an elegant patina across the green-finished base. Patrick Seguin, who tops the list of mid-century French experts, acquired this piece directly from its first owner. ♦

*This text was written in collaboration with Galerie Patrick Seguin.*

*S.A.M. No. 506 Table by Jean Prouvé can be found in the Design Miami/ Shop here.*