

ZANAT

The origins of Zanat date back more than a century, when Orhan Nikšić's great-grandfather started a carpentry workshop based on a unique hand-carving technique in Konjic, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Nikšić gained Unesco protection for the technique and established Zanat a decade ago.

You started Zanat in 2015 with the aim of preserving this family legacy. Looking back on the past decade, what have been the defining moments in this journey?

My brother and I were ambitious, but we didn't want to destroy our heritage and start something completely new – we were very attached to the knowledge and history of the woodcarving craft and were determined to preserve it. My family has been practising it for four generations, but it was dying out. We realised there wasn't a single place where people could learn about it and its history, so we opened a small woodcarving museum.

Zanat was founded as a way to safeguard and evolve Konjic woodcarving. How do you protect this as the brand grows?

The woodcarving is a central part of Zanat's DNA, so we've been investing in training new apprentices. Since we launched Zanat, we have trained more than 70 young craftspeople. We are growing, but it's never going to be like Ikea. If I compare it to any company, then maybe Hermès, a huge company that still relies on traditional crafts.

Zanat's collaborations have been key to shaping its identity. How do you choose which designers to work with?

We don't approach designers just because they're big names – we look for people whose philosophy aligns with ours. For us, it's about more than preserving the craft, it's about shared values. We believe design has a broader social role, and we seek out people who feel the same. At first, we were surprised when some well-known designers wanted to work with us. We were still small, so we'd ask, 'What do you see in us?' But they all said the same thing: what we do is beautiful and different. They felt they'd discovered a new artistic medium, a way to express something unique.

What ambitions do you have for the future?

Our vision is to become the world's best and most innovative woodcarving company, to be the go-to name for handcrafted, sustainable design. And I hope, in doing that, we can redefine what luxury means. For us, luxury isn't about being pompous or flashy. It's about how things are made and how long they last.

zanat.org



The 'Rye' bar stool, by Yves Béhar for Zanat, will launch at Salone del Mobile

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