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Furniture designer gets star turn in “Wakanda Forever”

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The Nyala chair and the Mukecha table/stool in orange/black on the set of Marvel Studio's "Black Panther: Wakanda Forever."

Ethiopian American artist and industrial designer Jomo Tariku contributed to the set design of Marvel Studios film, "Black Panther: Wakanda Forever," as his furniture pieces appear in the film.

Tariku, known for artistic but functional furniture inspired by his roots, worked directly with set decorators, Lisa Morgan, Molly Ebner and Academy Award winner Hannah Beachler throughout the set design process.



Tariku's Boraatii and Ashanti stools/end tables on the set of the film.

Two of the furniture pieces are the Mukecha table/stool and the Nyala chair. Exclusive to the Wexler Gallery, the Mukecha was inspired by traditional African mortars used for grinding barley and decorated with concentric orange rings alluding to the neck rings adorning bronze busts from The Kingdom of Benin. The mountain antelope from the Bale Mountains of East Africa influenced the Nyala chair design. Other included pieces include the Boraatii and Ashanti stools/end tables.

Recently honored with the 2022 Maker Award for Black Artists + Designers Guild (BADG), Tariku said on Instagram that he is working on exclusive Black Panther versions of the stools in the coming weeks.

Modern African furniture design is "a category that has yet to develop fully," Tariku told Designers Today last year, when his Mido chair was acquired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art's exhibit, "Before Yesterday We Could Fly: An Afrofuturist Period Room." "The market was very focused and still is on very Eurocentric design concepts," he said then. And he has looked to counter those ideas with his line of chairs and stools.