

homecoming



Words / Lindi Brownell Meiring Photography / Aart Verrips

An exciting collaborative collection by TheUrbanative explores home as a sanctuary



From left Musha ('home' in Shona) scatter cushion made in collaboration with Neimil. Hlutha ('fullness' in isiXhosa) table. Akaya ('home' in Xitsonga) lounge chair, with fabric by The Mill Fabrics.
Opposite Oku ('firelight' in Igbo) hut candle made in collaboration with Okra Candle.

Award-winning furniture and product design studio TheUrbanative, headed up by the charismatic Mpho Vackier, has launched the Homecoming range. Conceived during lockdown, the collection reflects on what 'home' means to different people across the continent. It also explores the concept that home is not only a physical place but a sanctuary where we feel a sense of comfort and belonging. Mpho, who believes strongly in telling African stories through design, has worked with six local designers and makers on some of the pieces, including furniture, ceramics, candles and lighting: The Herd, Okra Candle, Neimil, The Mill Fabrics, Wolkberg Casting Studios and Jan Ernst.

Together, these creatives have developed pieces inspired by the shapes, textures and colours of vernacular African architecture. They're named for the words associated with home in languages spoken across Africa. From the Mudziira (meaning 'warmth' in Shona) floor lamp to the Hlutha ('fullness' in isiXhosa) table and the Isinmi ('rest' in Yoruba) ottomans, the names aim to celebrate the people, cultures and stories surrounding each word and language. What started with the Akaya ('home' in Xitsonga) lounge chair in 2020 has turned into a collection of 24 pieces just a year later, that speaks of collaboration, community and – most significantly – home in all its forms. ●



From left Mudziira ('warmth' in Shona) floor lamp made in collaboration with Wolkberg. Isinmi ('rest' in Yoruba) ottomans and Pumzika ('rest' in Swahili) couch, all with fabrics by The Mill Fabrics.

