

# BENCHMARK

**Benchmark collaborates with emerging design talent Mac Collins  
on his first ever consumer collection**



British furniture maker Benchmark has unveiled **Iklwa**, its newest collection designed by rising talent Mac Collins, in what is the designer's first ever consumer collection. Benchmark has a longstanding history of supporting young designers, from Sebastian Cox to Russell Pinch and Thomas Heatherwick, all of whom have now established themselves as renowned designers in the UK and beyond.

Benchmark first came across Mac Collins at the London Design Fair in September 2018, when the Nottingham-based designer was announced as the winner in the inaugural Cræftiga Awards for his Indigo-blue Iklwa chair. Since then Benchmark has worked in close collaboration with the designer to merge his design with its making know-how and craft, creating a collection inspired by the original design.

Together with Benchmark, Collins has created a collection that fuses his African-Caribbean roots with British craft, a reflection of his upbringing in Nottingham as a child of British and British Caribbean parents. Comprising a big lounge chair, a second smaller lounge chair and side table, the Iklwa family is derived from Collins' original design and will be crafted in ash and oak, available in either an Earth Orange stain or a classic white oil.



# BENCHMARK



Collins' composition of powerful, spear-like forms is in tune with the ideas of Afrocentrism and Afrofuturism. Much like a throne, the visually intense high back of the Iklwa Lounge Chair is intended to frame, enhance, and empower those who sit in it. Added to this are the Iklwa Small Lounge Chair and Iklwa Side Table, where Collins has continued the design language with a wide back rest and spear-like table legs.

Benchmark sought to collaborate with Collins because of their unified views on simple and honest designs. The energy behind the design, integrity of approach and thoughtful inspiration are synonymous too with Benchmark's own design principles which are backed by their unrivalled craft process. On the collaboration, Benchmark Founder and MD Sean Sutcliffe comments:

*'The opportunity to support a young designer has been paramount to Benchmark since it was founded. A personal passion of mine, it was wonderful to be able to support Mac in crafting this piece for a wider audience whilst also allowing him to explore his creative freedom in terms of the collection influence and his African-Caribbean roots.'*

On his first-ever collection, Collins says:

*'It has been an honest and fulfilling process to work alongside Benchmark on this collection. I am glad to have pursued this venture with a British-based furniture maker with such integrity. It feels right to enable the design to have a wider reaching effect than I could have catalysed, and Benchmark have been a sincere and supportive partner in making this happen.'*

*The Iklwa Collection features in the 300 Objects: An Inaugural Exhibition for Modern Day Patrons as part of London Craft Week at the Quadrant Arcade, 82 Regent Street, London 21B 5HB from 30 September until 10 October 2020*



# BENCHMARK

## About Benchmark

A powerhouse of craft, Benchmark are one of the UK's leading furniture-makers. Founded by Terence Conran and Sean Sutcliffe in 1984, the company has a mission to create furniture that contributes to human health and well-being, using natural, sustainable and non-toxic materials. With workshops in Berkshire and Dorset, Benchmark works with many of the world's leading architects and designers on commercial and residential projects. From forest to finished piece, Benchmark are positioned as a leader in sustainable enterprise. Their approach marries forward-thinking design with exemplary levels of craftsmanship and creativity, producing furniture that exudes natural warmth and soul.

[benchmarkfurniture.com](http://benchmarkfurniture.com)

@MadebyBenchmark

**For further information and high res images, please contact: [fionac@benchmarkfurniture.com](mailto:fionac@benchmarkfurniture.com)  
01488 608038**

