



“Show them who we are.”

-Ramonda, “Black Panther: Wakanda Forever”

PRODUCTION NOTES

In Marvel Studios’ “Black Panther: Wakanda Forever,” Queen Ramonda, Shuri, M’Baku, Okoye and the Dora Milaje fight to protect their nation from intervening world powers in the wake of King T’Challa’s death. When Namor, king of a hidden undersea nation, alerts them to a global threat and his disturbing plan to thwart it, the Wakandans band together with the help of War Dog Nakia and Everett Ross and forge a new path for the kingdom of Wakanda.

According to director Ryan Coogler, Shuri struggles to embrace Wakanda’s next chapter. “Ramonda realises that it’s been a year since T’Challa’s passing and Shuri’s still not healing—she’s not taking steps to move forward in a healthy way,” says Coogler. “They take a retreat—stepping away from the city, from the technology—to sit with no distractions and perform what is essentially a grief ritual. That’s when Namor shows up.”

First appearing as the Sub-Mariner in Marvel Comics #1 in 1939, Namor is among Marvel’s oldest characters, acting both as hero and villain in the years to follow. Says Coogler, “In our story, he represents Talokan, a hidden underwater civilization that is our reimagined version of the comic book realm of Atlantis. His appearance there shows that Wakanda is not as safe as they thought, and he presents Ramonda and Shuri with a proposition.”

Despite state-of-the-art technology and hypervigilance, the Wakandans were completely unaware of Namor and his kingdom. “The notion of a society that was forced into hiding because of the events of the outside world is very much germane to the world of ‘Black Panther’ in the Marvel Cinematic Universe,” says producer Nate Moore. “Ryan [Coogler] is a very savvy filmmaker in putting these things together. Namor’s concerns resonate with Ramonda and Shuri—their nations have some things in common. But they may not agree with his solution.”

The encounter with Namor sets into motion Wakandan efforts to mitigate the situation in their own way—although Ramonda can’t help but worry about her daughter’s safety. “Ramonda is such an important character,” says Moore. “Here’s a mother who’s lost her husband and now her son. She has been ruling Wakanda in the absence of the king. It’s an interesting dichotomy seeing these two women as leaders, as the queen and the princess, and as mother and daughter.”

Says Coogler, “We were really excited to explore the relationship between Ramonda and Shuri. The first film has a lot of father-son dynamics—both the protagonist and antagonist had to deal with moving on after his father passed away. This film very much became a story with motherhood as a motif. So often moms have to continue to mother through difficult situations.”

HONORING CHADWICK BOSEMAN

When Chadwick Boseman passed away in 2020, the filmmakers had to take a big step back and really consider what this next story could be. King T’Challa was the heart of “Black Panther”—and Boseman remains in the hearts of everyone who worked alongside him. “Chad’s passing affected filmmakers and the actors in a way that was incredibly profound,” says Coogler. “Chad was very much our artistic partner in this project, in this franchise and in this storytelling. I would spend time with him, just he and I, talking about where we wanted to see the character go, where we wanted to see the story go, how much he admired the other characters and the actors that portrayed them. We realized that it would only be right for us to continue the story.”

Adds Moore, “We didn’t think Chad would have wanted the world of Wakanda—and the effect that movie had on kids—to go away. Emotionally, it felt like letting it go would be the easier thing to do, but I don’t think it would’ve been the right thing to do. I think to do right by the legacy of the man, you have to continue to do right by the legacy of the movie.”

As filmmakers thought about the story, a new theme arose: How does one cope with grief and overcome loss? This theme, and how it affects each character, ended up being the driving force of the narrative. “For the story of Wakanda to move forward in a world where T’Challa is now no longer with us, it only made sense to investigate what that loss meant for all of the people that he touched,” says Moore. “And there’s no one who’s going to feel that effect more than his little sister, Shuri.”

A genius and top scientist, Shuri tries to lose herself in her work until Namor’s arrival forces her from her comfort zone. She’s not alone, of course—not in grief and not in her

desire to uphold Wakanda's world standing. The princess and Queen Ramonda have a support system that includes Nakia, the greatest spy Wakanda has ever known; Okoye, the passionate and powerful leader of the Dora Milaje; M'Baku, the ruler of Jabariland; Ayo, an elite enforcer of the Dora Milaje; Aneka, high-ranking leader of the Dora Milaje; and Everett K. Ross, American CIA agent.

Stars returning to the world of Wakanda include Emmy® nominee Letitia Wright ("Silent Twins," "Black Mirror") as Shuri, Academy Award® winner Lupita Nyong'o ("The 355," "12 Years a Slave") as Nakia, Danai Gurira ("The Walking Dead," "All Eyez on Me") as Okoye, Winston Duke ("Nine Days," "Us") as M'Baku, Florence Kasumba ("Avengers: Infinity War," "Wonder Woman") as Ayo, Emmy® and BAFTA award winner Michaela Coel ("I May Destroy You," "Chewing Gum") as Aneka, with Martin Freeman ("Breeders," "The Hobbit" trilogy) as Everett Ross, and Academy Award® nominee Angela Bassett ("911," "Mission: Impossible-Fallout") as Ramonda.

The film also features a host of characters who are new to the Wakandans, portrayed by award-winning actors. Ariel Award winner Tenoch Huerta Mejía ("Narcos: Mexico," "The Forever Purge") stars as Namor, ruler of Talokan, a hidden nation under the sea. Alex Livinalli ("Ozark," "Queen of the South") portrays Attuma, Namor's strongest warrior; Mabel Cadena ("The Dance of the 41," "The Goddess of Asphalt") was cast as Namora, a fierce Talokanil warrior; and Dominique Thorne ("Judas and the Black Messiah," "If Beale Street Could Talk") stars as Riri Williams, a 19-year-old MIT student with a surprising and sought-after skillset.

Says Moore, "I think audiences can expect this movie to celebrate both the legacy of the character of T'Challa and that of Wakanda as it continues to move forward. It's going to introduce new characters that you've never seen before and be the building blocks for the next phase of the MCU."

Ryan Coogler ("Black Panther," "Creed," "Fruitvale Station") directs from a screenplay he wrote with Joe Robert Cole ("Black Panther," "All Day and a Night," "The People v. O.J. Simpson: American Crime Story"). Kevin Feige, p.g.a., and Nate Moore, p.g.a., are the producers; Louis D'Esposito, Victoria Alonso and Barry Waldman are executive producers. David J. Grant is co-producer.

The creative team behind "Black Panther: Wakanda Forever" includes director of photography Autumn Durald Arkapaw, ASC ("Loki," "The Sun Is Also a Star") and many of "Black Panther's" original team—including Academy Award®-winning production designer Hannah Beachler ("Black Is King," "Moonlight"), editor Michael P. Shawver ("A Quiet Place Part II," "Creed"), Academy Award®-winning costume designer Ruth Carter ("Coming 2 America," "Selma"), visual effects supervisor Geoffrey Baumann ("Doctor Strange," "Avengers: Age of Ultron"), Emmy®, Oscar® and Grammy Award®-winning composer/score and song producer Ludwig Göransson ("Venom," "Fruitvale Station"), music supervisor Dave Jordan ("Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness," "Thor: Love and Thunder") and Academy Award®-winning special makeup designer Joel Harlow ("Black Adam," "Jungle Cruise") returned for the sequel. Nicole Rowley ("Black Widow," "Aquaman") is visual effects producer, and Kelley Dixon, ACE, and Jennifer Lame, ACE, ("Tenet," "Marriage Story") are editors.

Production for “Black Panther: Wakanda Forever” kicked off in June 2021, filming on location and on soundstages in and around Atlanta, Ga. Other locations include the MIT campus in Cambridge, Mass., and Puerto Rico, creating the film’s rich and diverse settings.

Marvel Studios’ “Black Panther: Wakanda Forever” opens in UK cinemas on November 11, 2022.

BUILDING CHARACTER **Bringing Together Returning Cast and New Favorites**

Marvel Studios’ “Black Panther: Wakanda Forever” welcomes back to the big screen many of the characters audiences connected with when “Black Panther” hit the big screen in 2018. The new story returns to Wakanda following the death of the king, reuniting with beloved characters as they grieve his loss while imagining a future without him. Adding to their struggles is the arrival of a new nemesis—though his sensibilities and loyalty are subtly reminiscent of the leader they mourn.

The character roster includes Wakandans, members of the new kingdom the film introduces, Talokan, as well as allies—old and new.

SHURI is a top scientist, genius, daughter of Queen Ramonda, princess of Wakanda, and sister of the late King T’Challa. She tries to soothe her sadness through work, but the events that unfold force her to step out of her comfort zone. Letitia Wright, who returns to portray the character, found she shared many of Shuri’s emotions. “There is a quote that one of my directors Steve McQueen used,” she says. “He said sometimes life imitates art and art imitates life. In ‘Black Panther,’ Shuri is so bold in her choices about science and technology and creation. There’s a space for her to just be amazing, to make mistakes. And she has her brother and her family. She has this lack of limitation. There are no ceilings, and her brother trusts her to create his whole armor. So, we see this young woman in her element, in her light. Then, she is transformed through this experience of loss and change. It was that moment that it hit me—when I read the script, art was imitating life. Shuri has to process grief unexpectedly. It really is a 180. It’s hard to find light. It’s hard to find peace. It’s hard to wake up and say, ‘I’m going to go create today.’ Who is she creating for?”

According to director Ryan Coogler, the storytelling came to life because of Shuri. “It was important for us to start with Shuri because, in many ways, she’s the audience surrogate of the movie,” he says. “She’s our protagonist, and I think it’s through her eyes that we go on the journey of the film.

“I think she was also an audience surrogate for me as the cowriter/director,” Coogler continues. “When I got the job for the first one, T’Challa was a character who—when you read the books—you kind of look up to him. He’s an aspirational character. I think in that film, Shuri was the character who looked up to him the most. What was so great about Letitia [Wright]’s performance was that she knew how to make T’Challa smile. She knew how to make T’Challa vulnerable. And I think a lot of that came from the

chemistry between Letitia and Chadwick [Boseman], as actors. It was part of why Letitia got the role. In chemistry reads, for whatever reason, she could poke through Chad's—T'Challa's—armor and get a unique response out of him. It felt like siblings. And as I got to know Chadwick, working on the film and personally, he became like an older sibling.

“So, it made a lot of sense that she would be the window into the emotional journey of the film,” adds Coogler. “And as fantastical as Shuri's journey is, it is very real. It is very relatable to see someone who was young and bright-eyed and optimistic mature into adulthood, and wrestle with things that I think all adults wrestle with—like the idea of the mortality of loved ones that you believed were invincible, the idea of having to live with your own failures, and also learning to appreciate relationships maybe you took for granted. So, I think she became a character who we could explore all of these things through.”

Wright's innate connection with the character continued into the new story—but it was not without trepidation. “The challenge that I faced for myself was just processing how I was going to allow this character to evolve,” she says. “It was a challenge giving her everything that she needs. In the first film, it was really clear that her mission was to create and invent new technology. She was that person that lifted the room. It was a challenge to know that, with what Shuri's going through right now, I wouldn't be able to do that.”

According to Wright, Shuri must venture beyond Wakanda—diving to new depths, so to speak, where Namor has built his underwater kingdom. Shooting underwater wasn't always easy. “It was a challenge sometimes to get into the swimming pool and feel like, ‘Am I going to be able to dive today? Am I going to be able to do this underwater sequence?’” says Wright. “But being loved and protected by a team, especially the underwater team, motivated me and presented an opportunity for growth. Plus, I had the support of Ryan [Coogler], who would just confidently say, ‘Tish, you can do this.’ That pushed me forward every day.”

Costume designer Ruth Carter wanted to honor the character's emotional journey. “We knew this was a film about grief and loss and didn't want to accentuate Shuri's costume because the somber mood when she's introduced was important to hold onto,” says Carter. “In the first film you saw her in brights. In this film, you see her in grays, somber colors. It was very simple, very close to the body, very protected. And then as she starts to develop through the storyline, we see a lot of her innovations. That still is a part of the story as it was in the first film. We came up with some casual things for her to have on in the Wakandan bush and the track suit she wears when she goes to Boston. Her character does come to life.”

NAKIA is the greatest spy Wakanda has ever known. Infiltrator of many nations, War Dog Nakia is Wakandan to her soul—even when she's far away. “In the first film, we meet Nakia, and she is this lone wolf,” says Lupita Nyong'o, who returns to play the mysterious character. “She's very idealistic and independent and tenacious about sticking to her beliefs. She also has this incredible love relationship with T'Challa.

“All these years later, after the blip and ‘Avengers: Endgame’ and the loss of T’Challa, we find a Nakia who has definitely matured,” continues Nyong’o. “I think compromise is a word that she entertains more, albeit still holding very strong, idealistic views. She has grown into a nurturing spirit, and I think there’s something more organic and mellow about Nakia now.”

Nakia’s appearance in “Black Panther: Wakanda Forever” had to reflect her new perspective. “Nakia had left Wakanda and she has been living in Haiti,” says hair department head Camille Friend. “Her look needed to show an evolution and growth as a person, so we decided to develop her look into locs, but keep her in her signature reddish auburn hair color.”

The character finds herself on a critical underwater mission, which meant Nyong’o had to dive in. “First of all,” she says, “I have to say that Ryan [Coogler] seems to have something for water because in the first film, there were fights in the water. And that was a challenge in and of itself. So, when I read the script, I thought, ‘Oh, he’s really going into it this time. He’s really embracing his fascination with water.’ I definitely paused and thought that I was going to have to learn a few things.

“Now, I’ve swum in a mediocre manner since I was little,” Nyong’o continues. “I can float, but I panic swim. I used to swim like a puppy—not anything that anyone wants to film. So, I immediately had to get to training. I decided to go the extreme route and do what was not even being asked of me in order to be as elastic as I could when I came to set. So, I did something called XPT, extreme performance training. It’s training that was created by Laird Hamilton and Gabby Reece, and it involves breath work, movement underwater with weights, and incredible attention to restorative techniques like ice baths and saunas. I did this, and I walked underwater with 30-pound weights for the first time in my life. It was amazing because it really opened my breath capacity, and I could hold my breath for long periods of time in such a way that shooting became a lot easier. I also had an incredible swimming trainer, Pamela Baldwin, and she helped me become friends with the water.”

According to costume designer Ruth Carter, the character had to be properly outfitted for the underwater sequences. “She has a submersible suit that has a lot of bioluminescence to it,” says Carter. “It has a lot of magic, a lot of tribal markings. There are a lot of South African painters who do this wonderful full body tattoo work that has tribal markings—that was one of the influences to creating her suit. Also, because of the beauty of the ocean and the bioluminescence, we wanted to keep her in the green color. We came up with these foilings and paintwork that are different levels of green—some bright, some blue, some lit up. It is really beautiful.”

Nyong’o agrees. “It’s got this metallic sheen to it,” says the actress of the suit. “It’s sweet, and I love being in it. It was really cool to see it built on me and see how the colors play with the light and give incredible shape and dimension.

“And the cool thing about my costume is that it’s beautiful in and out of the water,” Nyong’o continues. “It has this uncanny quality where it never looks wet, so it actually

made filming easier because I could do many takes and look dry without having to get into a new suit.”

According to Carter, all of the underwater costumes had to be tested to ensure the look came across. “We had a big tank on stage 7 where we could put our costumes on camera and see just how dark it was underwater with the lighting, how luminescent everything would be, how impactful.”

OKOYE is the confident, passionate and powerful leader of the Dora Milaje and general of Wakanda’s armies. Her role is more than a job to Okoye—it’s who she is. According to producer Nate Moore, the character and the women she leads are important to Wakanda’s identity. “We know the Dora are much-beloved characters and Okoye, as the leader of the Dora, makes such an impression in ‘Black Panther’ and in the ‘Avengers’ films that there was no question we had to continue their story,” says Moore. “What we thought was interesting though was to shake up their ranks and send Okoye—who you could argue has never lost a fight—on an emotional journey.”

Danai Gurira, who returns as Okoye, reflects on the character’s introduction to the MCU. “It was very exciting the way that [director Ryan Coogler] envisioned her and the idea of her being a general, the idea of the Dora Milaje as a whole, and then her specific type of energy,” says Gurira. “It just became really great to explore her with him. I really was very interested in her unexpected aspects like her humor, her cheekiness. I thought that this is a woman who really enjoys her life, and she loves being a Wakandan more than anything and believes that Wakandans are all types of the bomb.

“Her traditionalism was definitely something that helped me anchor her because her connection to her country was so, so passionate and also so militaristic,” continues Gurira. “The loyalty and the readiness to do whatever for her nation’s well-being, for her people’s well-being, was something that I found very organic to connect to because I grew up on the continent. I grew up in a country that had recently come out of colonization when I moved there. I understood how special a nation like Wakanda existing was—a nation that left you with that question: Who would we have been as a continent had we never been colonized?”

“Then they have this MCU version of an answer to that,” continues Gurira. “So, to me, I felt very passionately that this is a character who, alongside and under the king and then the queen, is safeguarding that sacred place. That connection for me was just so instant and easy to find. We really set her up for what happens in this next movie’s story because of how connected she is to that sacred vow she’s made to this nation.”

According to screenwriter Joe Robert Cole, Okoye is still loyal, dedicated and driven. But she’s not infallible. “We see in this film that Okoye starts to journey away from being the staunch traditionalist she was and that we all have known her to be throughout the films,” he says. “Okoye has a really cool arc. She’s someone who has always shown her love for Wakanda with the tip of her spear, but she is unmoored. Her journey is one of trying to find place.”

According to Joel Harlow, makeup department head and special makeup designer, his team updated the approach to Okoye's head tattoo. "Traditionally you would do it as a series of transfer pieces and a stencil but not a 3D-printed stencil," says Harlow, who started with a scan of Gurira's head. "We built the stencil based on the tattoo transfer, which is a series of two different overlapping stencils. There are five pieces that go on to create the black outer lines and the black inner triangles. Then there are red pieces that go on to create the red line work on the inside. So, when I'd get her in the morning, I'd put the black pieces on and airbrush in between the stencil on her head. Then do the red one. Airbrush the individual lines. It was perfect every time. We took what was a four-and-a-half-hour makeup process and brought it down to 35-40 minutes. And while it used to take an hour and a half to remove, it took maybe 10-15 minutes."

M'BAKU is the ruler of Jabariland who must make a difficult choice when new threats emerge. According to Winston Duke, who once again portrays the character, a lot has happened since "Black Panther." "He did not disappear as a result of the snap, so he was there as the country had to deal with that loss," says Duke. "He was involved in the battles of 'Avengers: Infinity War' and 'Avengers: Endgame,' and he is transformed. He had to go through all of it, and he was essentially one of the pillars of Wakanda during that time. So, he has seen the consequences of opening the borders, the consequences of a brand-new world. He is now a full-fledged member of Wakandan society. He's a part of the tribal council so he has a lot more responsibility and we'll see that play out in this film."

"I look at M'Baku as a stress test to see if things belong," continues Duke. "M'Baku puts pressure on things to make sure that they are deserving and can withstand the changes that will come in Wakanda. He pressures everything. He pressures everyone. Sometimes, it's with humor. Sometimes, it's antagonistic. But at the end of the day, he wants the best for Wakanda, and I think that's a deeply honorable, powerful thing. He doesn't mind making enemies if it means protecting his people."

Alongside several of the film's stars, Duke did a lot of training for the follow-up to "Black Panther." "We all had to do a lot of swimming training and a lot of free-diving training," he says. "I got to hold my breath for up to four minutes, which is really cool. I got to jump off of a really high height and do an incredible stunt that I was really stoked about, and I'm excited for people to see."

"The fight training was really incredible, and I always try to make M'Baku feel like a strong man instead of a body builder or a guy that's about aesthetics," continues Duke. "So, he's always strong and has the silverback attitude. He has a lot of weight, culturally, on his back, and he carries it with pride, and that's a really big part of what defines the character."

According to hair department head Camille Friend, the character is beloved among audiences around the world. "Winston Duke's M'Baku look is one of the fan-favorite looks," she says. "We wanted to evolve his look and give him something that makes him look matured. I added some gray pieces in the front, which were created with micro wefts of gray hair that are hand-tied. And for the shag pieces in the nape piece, that was

Ryan Coogler's idea. We gave him a late 1980s shag, which was done with a hairpiece that we glued on.”

RAMONDA is the Queen of Wakanda, the most powerful nation in the world. She must navigate threats and lead her people—but never forgets her role as mother. According to screenwriter Joe Robert Cole, Ramonda’s depth of emotion is a cornerstone for the story. “She comes to the table having dealt with grief before—with her husband, having lost Shuri and T’Challa in the blip, then having them come back only to lose her son. She has a unique point of view.”

Angela Bassett, who returns to portray the queen, adds, “It’s been a year since the passing of her son, of Shuri’s brother. And to Ramonda, tradition is important. Grieving, recognizing that grief, going through the various stages of it, that’s something that this mother understands, that this queen understands, with her husband and her son passing. She’s a woman of faith. Shuri’s a young woman of science. So, the respect for that, the recognition of that, the embracing of that is not in her wheelhouse. But a mother knows. A mother can see.”

Bassett treasures the character and the opportunity to bring her to life. “It was an offer that couldn’t be refused,” she says. “It was an opportunity to see women who look like me in their resplendent glory. And those opportunities were few and far in between. So, I’m just so grateful and blessed that it happened during my time and that Ryan [Coogler] and whomever the powers that be thought that I could bring her to bear, bring her to light. I’ve come to just love and admire and revere the character. It’s almost as if I’m on the outside looking in, looking at her as an audience member, as a woman of color, as a little girl that fell in love with cinema and characters and who they represent and how they can inspire on screen.”

For costume designer Ruth Carter, dressing Ramonda is a delight. “I guess every costume designer would want to adorn a queen,” says Carter. “And if you are given the task to dress the Queen of Wakanda then, yeah, it’s a dream come true. And—she’s played by Angela Bassett—I can’t think of a better scenario. Angela and I have a long history of movies together.

“[Her costumes] are really all based on beauty, African royalty, technology,” continues Carter. “We brought in our 3D artists to create a new crown for her that she wears at the United Nations—Ryan [Coogler] really wanted her to enter the UN in something very regal and a big, big presence. Purple was chosen for the UN, and the red was chosen for the palace. We have a color story going even for the white that she wears. Angela definitely empowers her costume. Of course, Angela Bassett could wear a 10-gallon hat and still make it work.”

Hair department head Camille Friend agrees. “She is one of the most beautiful women in the world,” she says. “I designed a shorter look to give her a different look but still keep her in the white, silver and gray tones for her hair color. Angela Bassett is the only actress I know who can wear white and grey tones and still look stunning.”

AYO is an elite enforcer of the Dora Milaje and protector of the throne, who with Okoye and Aneka, deliver Ramonda and Shuri to their remote river retreat, promising to return in two days to escort them home.

According to producer Nate Moore, Ayo and the Dora Milaje won over audiences from the get-go. “When we first started building the Dora, I don’t think we realized how much of a chord they would strike with audiences,” says Moore. “Florence Kasumba as Ayo was actually introduced in ‘Captain America: Civil War’ before we introduced Danai Gurira as Okoye in ‘Black Panther.’ Okoye, Ayo and the Dora were characters that we loved. But we always want to see how audiences react before we decide where we might see them again. And, obviously, when ‘Black Panther’ came out, they hit in a big way.

“So that’s a great problem to have, right—this group of women who we see in giant movies like ‘Avengers: Infinity War’ and ‘Endgame,’ but also in smaller ways like Florence Kasumba’s Ayo showing up in ‘The Falcon and The Winter Soldier,’” concludes Moore. “They’re interesting, iconic characters—audiences have an emotional reaction to them.”

ANEKA is a high-ranking leader of the Dora Milaje who leads by example. Highly skilled in various fighting styles, Aneka has a bit of a rebellious streak. Aneka and Ayo are called to take on a bigger role in the Dora Milaje. “It’s a really interesting dynamic that we haven’t seen before,” says screenwriter Joe Robert Cole. “Aneka is the first to volunteer when it comes to trying out new weapons, and seeing Ayo and Aneka fighting back-to-back is really exciting.”

Adds property master Drew Petrotta, “They have upgraded suits and gear including energy daggers that function like a lightsaber would: they are handles with complete energy creating the blade.”

Michaela Coel joins the MCU as Aneka.

RIRI WILLIAMS is a whip-smart, super cool 19-year-old MIT student whose genius brain may very well get her into trouble. “She has finessed her way through as a traditional student in a way that she can stay personally interested and engaged, which has taken the form of hustling rich kids from their money in exchange for completing their homework assignments,” says Dominique Thorne, who plays Riri.

Thorne auditioned seemingly unsuccessfully for a role in “Black Panther”—but got a call a couple years later inviting her to portray Riri in both the upcoming “Ironheart” series on Disney+ and “Black Panther: Wakanda Forever.” “My understanding of her from the comics was a guide to how she might navigate the world, but [director Ryan Coogler] had a vision and knew how to execute it. It was a beautiful gift to be able to hear his thoughts on what makes Riri go, what drives her, what pushes her—specifically in the moment we’re meeting her.”

Coogler feels Riri is best introduced from Shuri’s point of view. “Shuri’s at a turning point,” says the director. “For us, it was very clear that this film was about what type of

person she is going to become. And by proxy, what kind of place that Wakanda's going to become. Shuri's at a point where she's vacillating between optimism and pessimism, and she meets Riri, who is like a version of herself.

"She ends up taking on kind of a big sister role with Riri, which is really interesting because Shuri was the youngest character in the first film," Coogler continues. "I remember working on movies where I was directing but I was also the youngest person on the crew. Now I work, and it's a whole flock of folks much younger. That's the idea of time and change, and we wanted to highlight that. With Riri, it was somebody for Shuri to help be responsible for and to look out for and advise.

"But because we were faithful to the books, Riri is, in some ways, right there on par with Shuri," adds Coogler. "It gave us the opportunity for her to have somebody to bounce ideas off of in a steel-sharpening-steel type of way. Also, it gave us a great window into the African American community, which was present in the first film through the character Killmonger. So, it was great to have this young college student from Chicago running circles around everybody in school but now thrust into this crazy world with the Wakandans and the Talokanil."

When it came to the look of the character, filmmakers had to imagine both the student and the budding Super Hero. Says Camille Friend, hair department head, "I wanted to give her a hairstyle that college students wore. Something simple and low maintenance. Many Black women are going to college wearing braids these days."

Costume designer Ruth Carter says the character's personality definitely helps shape the Super Hero look. "Riri is a gearhead," she says, "her father worked on car engines. And she's very much a tech student who builds a machine that impresses even Shuri. When you're creating a costume that's purely based on gadgets and technology, you really need to curate with a team. It's also a very difficult costume to craft with all kinds of mechanical parts. You can imagine the plethora of pieces that would go into a costume like that."

EVERETT ROSS is a CIA agent for the United States who has a soft spot when it comes to the Wakandans. According to producer Nate Moore, the character brings with him a great deal of gratitude. "The Wakandans don't have a ton of traction in the U.S., but they do have one key ally in Everett Ross," says Moore. "If you remember, Shuri saved his life in 'Black Panther.' They ask for his help when they come to the United States to investigate what Namor told them."

Ross first appeared in the MCU in "Captain America: Civil War"—a period of time in which he hadn't yet warmed up to the Wakandans and their plight. But by the time the action of "Black Panther" gets underway, he secures his role as a good guy and ally when he jumps in front of Nakia—taking a bullet for her—which ultimately earns him a free trip to Wakanda where Shuri works her magic to save him. Martin Freeman returns as Everett Ross.

NAMOR is the ruler of Talokan, a breakaway underwater civilization descended from an ancient Mayan community and hidden in the depths of the ocean. Says director Ryan Coogler, “In this film, Namor is the product of a society that had to change themselves drastically in order to survive and to keep going. And, just as in the comics, he has a real distrust of everything that’s not his people under the water, and he has very specific reasons for that.

“[Namor has] lived a really long time and knows no equal in terms of his capabilities, being able to fly and breathe underwater, and breathe at high altitudes and walk around on land,” continues the director. “He’s incredibly strong. In the comics, he’s as strong as Thor. And if he’s around enough water, he can be as strong as the Hulk. There is a cultural element—we were deeply inspired by Mesoamerican cultures, specifically from the Yucatan and the Mayan post-classic period.”

Tenoch Huerta Mejía joins the MCU for the first time as the powerful king. “It’s a dream,” he says. “I never imagined I’d be here playing this character, especially to be one of the first [Marvel] Super Heroes. So, I’m really glad. And then, how they created the base of the character now, in Mayan culture, is amazing.

“I’m Mexican,” Huerta continues. “I’m mixed, which means that in my heritage, I have Indigenous blood. So, for me, to be part of this world is a dream. It’s the opportunity to play a character that I hope is going to be really important in terms of representation for many, many kids all around the world—especially in Latin America, especially those who have the strongest Indigenous heritage.”

Costume designer Ruth Carter and her team embraced the Mesoamerican inspiration for the Talokanil, working with historians in an effort to infuse the looks with authenticity. But, by definition, the world depicted in the film is a departure from anything that might exist in historical Mayan culture. “The subculture has lived under water for hundreds of years, giving us more latitude,” says Carter, who consulted with marine experts to incorporate deep-sea elements into the Talokanil looks. “Namor’s costumes reflect the tradition that he honors and the position he holds as king. We used a lot of kelp to make his headdress and his hand-woven cape. We added shells and beads—his look gives you a sense that he has traveled through time.

“He has one drape that he wears underneath his arm and over his shoulder that feels very Roman or Grecian,” adds Carter. “And he’s able to get away with it because we’re not stuck in one time of the Mayas. We’re actually showing that he has a story to tell. He has the story of his life and the growth of this world.”

Hair department head Camille Friend and her team did their homework. “Namor was a character that I did a lot of research for and studied the comics to see the evolution of his looks,” she says. “I wanted to stay with the square shape of his signature hairstyle that was established in the comics, but give it a modern look with an edge.”

ATTUMA is Namor’s strongest warrior with unbelievable skills, strength and speed. Producer Nate Moore compares the character with his counterpart in the Dora Milaje.

“Okoye’s a powerful character in that she’s charismatic without saying a lot,” says Moore. “A lot of that is in Danai’s stature and in her eyes. She’s always watching. She’s always very active in scenes even if she’s not saying a lot of dialogue, frankly. In finding our Attuma, who ends up being a foil to Okoye through most of the film, we needed to find an actor who had a similar skill set, someone who wouldn’t necessarily need a lot of dialogue, who had a physicality that was very obvious, who looked iconic. We cast Alex Livinalli as Attuma.”

For Livinalli, joining the MCU with this director and this cast is both exciting and inspiring. “‘Black Panther’ itself is such a symbol,” he says, “not only for the African American community but for me being Hispanic—I see it as a symbol of hope.”

When he learned he’d been cast in the role, Livinalli—like most actors would—began the task of researching the character. “I was like, ‘Wow, this guy’s a bad, bad man.’ And then I had a meeting with Ryan [Coogler] and he said, ‘What we’re doing is very different from what you’ve seen in the comic books.’”

“I read the script and saw the relationship he has with Namor and Namora,” continues Livinalli. “Yes, he’s a fighter. But the way I see him, he’s just a very lovable person. He has love for his people, for Namor, for Namora, for his way of life—he’s kind of like a father protecting his family. That’s who Attuma is. ‘If you compromise our way of life, you’re gonna see how much I love fighting.’”

Fight coordinator Aaron Toney was tasked with working with Livinalli and other cast members for the fight sequences. Toney crafted a subtle style with a variety of influences. “I pulled from Lucha libre and an Asian style called Baji that focuses on grounding your body while delivering shoulder strikes, elbow strikes and anything that literally makes you a tree, which is a lot of fun,” says Toney. “Namor does things that seem unorthodox but effective—Namora is more swift and Attuma is fast.”

Adds Moore, “The great thing about Alex and Attuma as a character is while he is the heavy—the enforcer if you will—he plays it with a smile. There’s a little bit of charm there. There’s a little bit of a twinkle in his eye, where he’s having fun with the character. And he’s having fun even when he’s fighting Okoye, which can’t be easy for him because he’s under a layer of blue prosthetics.”

Makeup department head and special makeup designer Joel Harlow considered the character’s underwater home when creating Attuma’s look. “Both Namora and Attuma, our two main Talokanil, are blue when they’re on the surface. Namor maintains his natural skin tone. But the rest have gills—we made gill prosthetics for their necks with an ornamental breathing gasket. They also have one around their faces that have glyphs—they’re all made out of jade. I sculpted three different sizes.

“I sculpted one specifically for Namora and one specifically for Attuma,” Harlow continues. “They also have ear prosthetics that have piercings to simulate what Namor has naturally, as their way to honor him. Attuma has a uniquely shaped re-breather—it’s a little more menacing, comes farther down on his nose. He also has shark tooth scarification pieces on his stomach and shark teeth piercings on his chin.”

NAMORA is a fierce Talokanil warrior determined to protect her people's land under the sea. Mabel Cadena, who was cast as Namora, found the character to be multi-faceted. "Namora is a strong woman," says Cadena. "She can be a warrior. She can be a princess. She can be different things. Namor and Namora have this relationship: father and daughter. And she's the right-hand woman of Namor. So, she's ready to protect Namor and protect his people and fight to the death for all of them."

The kingdom of Talokan is a breakaway civilization—Talokanil speak Yucatec Mayan, which meant several members of the cast had to learn to speak the language. Says Cadena, who learned English at the same time, "That was an interesting challenge—it was really hard to learn—I'd study English for an hour and [Yucatec] Mayan for an hour. We had a lot of time with our coach for pronunciation and to memorize the lines and work on the script."

And alongside several cast members and filmmakers, Cadena also had to get comfortable under water. "I had to learn to hold my breath for a long time," she says. "I had a couple acrobatics [lessons] to get a feel for my underwater movement. It was the most amazing experience of my life because I really love it—I really felt free working under the water, relaxed."

Stunt coordinator Chris Denison worked with the majority of the cast to hone their underwater skills. "We started by working on overall comfort in an aquatic environment," says Denison. "From there, once everybody had a good foundation, we built in some of the breath-hold and free-diving skills because they have to look competent and extremely comfortable—like they were born under water. Weight and gravity dynamics matter a lot in creating a good underwater performance. Buoyancy control was key for the Talokanil warriors. They have to be dialed in. You can't have the one warrior skipping across the bottom of the ocean. They all have to be pretty smooth swimmers. We worked with the cast to develop a comfortable swim stroke for each of them."

Costume designer Ruth E. Carter wanted to ensure the character exuded strength. "Namora is a new female character in this world, and she is just such a strong power player, a powerhouse warrior," says Carter. "Her headpiece was based on the lionfish. And it's huge. It's massive."

"When we went to create her costumes for her regular life in a peaceful world that's not always at war—we came up with fabrics that were ombréd with dyes and created this water story within the color palette of her costumes," continues Carter. "The fabrics that we used were floaty and sheer and had a lot of beauty to them. I felt that her costumes across the board were very unique and successful."

Camille Friend, hair department head, says her team designed two looks for Namora. "First, her warrior look was created around her headpiece," says Friend. "She wore a large headdress. We needed to help support and balance the pieces. I started with a ponytail with a braid around it to attach the headpiece that creates a bun. Her second look is her relaxed look when she is under water and at home in Talokan. It's a long a flowing high ponytail."

BUILDING THE WORLDS OF “WAKANDA FOREVER” **Filmmakers Return to Wakanda and Create a Stunning New Undersea Kingdom**

“Black Panther: Wakanda Forever” returns to the rich and extraordinary world of Wakanda where the community mourns the passing of their king. The film also ventures to an intriguing new place, Talokan, which is a breathtaking underwater civilization descended from an ancient Mayan community. According to director Ryan Coogler, the two kingdoms have a lot in common: both were hidden from the world and both have a powerful resource that the rest of the world wants.

Coogler and his team started by asking what audiences want from a “Black Panther” movie. “We decided that there’s an expectation of a level of cultural specificity and for there to be a seriousness to presentation of cultural things,” he says. “That was one of the pillars of what we were doing, and we knew that the film would be about Wakanda’s coming in contact with another place. Mesoamerica was something that I was thinking about quite a bit. And upon research, I realized that stories similar to Atlantis existed in almost every culture.

“We were, thankfully, introduced to Dr. Gerardo Aldana, who’s a professor of history and this is his field,” continues Coogler. “He was an incredible guide for us in terms of turning us onto any kind of knowledge or literature that would be helpful, and in helping to supervise all of our prep phase in terms of the costumes and the production design and the language. I think there’s seven languages spoken in the film, Yucatec Mayan being a major one. He’s somebody who has both worked with modern Mayan communities and reads and writes glyphs.

“All these things work themselves into the film, and the more we got into it, the more we realized it was meant to be,” continues the director. “These cultures were very closely related and also different in ways that are really cool. I’m forever indebted to Dr. Aldana and the performers of Mayan origin who we worked with. We wanted to recognize that there are so many Mayan communities in Mexico, Central America and here in the US, even though they are oftentimes misrepresented as a people that don’t exist anymore.

“The cultural specificity is something I think audiences expect from these movies,” Coogler concludes. “So, we wanted to fulfill that while being respectful, while being truthful. And the biggest benefit we could have is people watching and wanting to know more, wanting to seek out more knowledge and being inspired.”

WAKANDA

Production designer Hannah Beachler, who earned an Oscar® for her work on “Black Panther,” reteamed with Coogler to bring the worlds of “Black Panther: Wakanda Forever” to life. For Wakanda, Beachler was tasked with expanding the nation, creating new, never-before-seen areas. “That’s the exciting part,” she says. “We’re going to see more of our capital city, our golden city. You can think of it like Manhattan, where you have the culmination of all of the different districts of the country in once place.

“We get to see more of the day-to-day life of the normal Wakandans,” adds Beachler, “as well as North Triangle, the oldest place in all of Wakanda, which is inspired by ruins in Zimbabwe. We’ll see a little river town for the first time and more of Jabari. We also have new aircrafts for the Wakandan Navy that we didn’t have before.”

According to Beachler, they built the entirety of the Royal Talon Fighter and the cockpit of the Sun Bird.

SHURI’S LAB

Shuri, of course, remains a dedicated scientist, and in “Black Panther: Wakanda Forever,” Shuri immerses herself in her work in an effort to avoid dealing with her grief. Beachler’s team had to rebuild her lab for the film. “I was really excited about this one because in the first film, it exploded when Ross tried to drive the RTF [Royal Talon Fighter] and then the Dragon Flyer outside blows up at the last second and it’s completely destroyed,” she says. “This time, we gave her a vibranium-powered, floating elevator and we did this beautiful mural on it. Her space has become a computer in total, so she very much has control of it—imagine it being like 4D. It’s my favorite set because it’s gorgeous. Shuri’s lab is hard to top.”

TALOKAN

As Talokan began to take shape, Coogler and the filmmaking team wanted to ensure that the reimagining of the comic book realm of Atlantis was grounded. “It came from the first film—we wanted Wakanda to feel like a real place—a place you could go and visit,” says Coogler. “We realized pretty quickly that we needed to build a history for Talokan for it to feel like Wakanda felt in ‘Black Panther.’”

Talokan, a fictional breakaway underwater civilization descended from an ancient Mayan community and hidden in the depths of the ocean, reflects how a real community might have evolved over time, forced underwater and separated from the rest of their people and culture. Inspired by the rich histories and cultures of ancient Mesoamerican civilizations, the filmmakers worked closely with consultants to ensure thoughtfulness and intentionality in the creative decisions made across everything from production design to costumes to storytelling. The designs of the characters and city indicate not just their roots but how the ocean environment has become core to their culture and way of life.

According to Beachler, the world of Talokan took nearly two years to develop. “We started at the very beginning,” says the production designer. “‘Where are they located? How did they get there? How did they survive?’ We wanted the underwater city to be modern but with the architecture they would have taken with them. It’s mysterious and provocative and gorgeous.

“It’s a big city,” continues Beachler. “It was built largely in VFX, but we built Namor’s throne room, which is fabulous, bright red—that is the color of Talokan. I think that it works really well under the water. When you’re in his throne room, you can see hieroglyphs that surround the back. We wrote an establishment story for Namor, and all of the glyphs were written and designed by our graphic artist Kelsie Brennen and Dr.

[Gerardo] Aldana. It tells the story of Namor establishing Talokan 200 years after moving through the ocean.”

Beachler felt the underwater city had to be built mostly with stone, and couched it in Mayan-inspired architecture, colors and iconography that is a homage to a civilization that is still very present but also has a classic feel to it. “It felt like starting over just like when I walked into Wakanda,” says Beachler, who developed a 400-page guide for the undersea kingdom. “I couldn’t just do one world, right?! There had to be another one added into all of this.”

FILMING UNDERWATER

Director of photography Autumn Durald Arkapaw, ASC, was responsible for capturing the unique civilization, which called for a strategic approach to the underwater shots. “We shot all underwater anamorphic—2x anamorphic and the same lenses that we used on the whole picture,” she says. “So, when you see the IMAX frame, they’re not spherical lenses, they’re anamorphic, but they’re a 1.3 squeeze. All lenses have an emotional quality to me and hopefully to the viewer after they see it. I favor a vintage look, something that has a little bit more texture that will beat up the digital image. And Ryan [Coogler] wanted this to have a sense of the protagonist being in a dream state. So anamorphic lends itself to that.”

A signature color of Talokan, red is featured throughout the film in key areas. But placing it underwater proved challenging. “We’re breaking some barriers with color because red is very hard to see in certain depths of water,” says Durald Arkapaw. “But red is an important color and we made sure it pops in water. Our VFX post supervisor Geoffrey Baumann, Hannah [Beachler] and I worked together, making sure everyone was getting what they wanted in color and seeing things at certain depths. And Ruth [Carter] has such beautiful costumes that you want to make sure that those colors pop and that they flow the right way. With this challenge came a lot of creativity because it is a new world.”

HITTING THE RIGHT NOTES

Oscar®-Winning Composer/Producer Ludwig Göransson Reteams with Director Ryan Coogler to Create Innovative Soundscape

Ludwig Göransson—Academy Award®-winning composer of “Black Panther” and two-time Emmy® and Grammy® recipient—returns to compose and produce both the score and original songs for “Black Panther: Wakanda Forever.” According to director Ryan Coogler, the songs album and the score album are fully integrated, creating an immersive musical experience with the instrumentation, song lyrics, themes and every last musical note becoming part of the storytelling.

The film marks the fourth cinematic collaboration of Göransson and Coogler, and Göransson didn’t have to think twice about reteaming with the director for the eagerly awaited sequel. “It’s a profound honor,” he says. “I felt so grateful to be included in the first film, which turned out to be so much more than a film really—it was a movement. And then losing Chadwick ... I think everyone involved in this film felt an enormous

responsibility to dig even deeper and go even harder, to give their all to this film, because for us, it was so much more than a film—it was our way of memorializing him and his legacy.”

Göransson most definitely gave it his all, creating an innovative soundscape born from discussions he and Coogler had while attending USC School of Cinematic Arts together. “Ryan and I have always wanted to create a truly immersive musical experience, where songs and score go hand in hand, to create one musical statement from beginning to end,” says Göransson.

It’s an approach that is unique to the film industry and Göransson himself. “I’ve never worked on both the score and the soundtrack of a film before,” says Göransson. “Usually, they are two different teams, and this was one. It was like my two worlds coming together, scoring and recording with artists.”

Göransson’s experience producing artists, including Childish Gambino, Adele, Haim and Justin Timberlake, and scoring films and TV series, such as “Creed,” “Tenet” and “The Mandalorian,” make him uniquely qualified to spearhead both parts of the soundscape. He is adept at collaborating, producing and relating to major-label recording artists, as well as working with the world’s top orchestral players.

One of Göransson’s most notable collaborations was with the top-selling digital singles artist of all time: Rihanna. “Lift Me Up,” the lead single from the upcoming “Black Panther: Wakanda Forever” original soundtrack, was released on Oct. 28 via Rihanna’s own Westbury Road label in partnership with Roc Nation and Def Jam Recordings. Produced by Göransson and co-written by Göransson, Tems, Rihanna and Coogler, it was recorded by Rihanna as a tribute to the extraordinary life and legacy of Chadwick Boseman who was so central to the phenomenal global success of “Black Panther.”

Göransson and Coogler’s fourth cinematic collaboration has been a massive labor of love. Says Göransson, “We spent over 2,500 hours recording this score, using six studios across three continents and five countries. It features over 250 musicians, which includes two orchestras, two choirs and over 40 vocalists.”

Aside from the familiar “Black Panther” theme and talking drum, almost all the music featured in the film is new, and per Göransson, it “opened up a lot of possibilities for some wildly different sound worlds and themes to intersect and play off each other in some interesting and surprising ways.

“We had to go to the places where the unique sounds were—we had to visit these environments,” he continues. “We had to make the process as real and as truthful as possible for the artists and musicians who worked on the music. We were able to create a completely unique sound experience, traveling all over the world to get the most authentic sound for the story as we possibly could.”

As story elements were inspired by both Nigerian and Mesoamerican cultures, recording sessions took place in locations such as Lagos, Nigeria, and Mexico City. “We worked with music archaeologists in Mexico to research sounds much of the world has

not heard,” says Göransson. “Throughout the score, you’ll hear instruments native to the Mayan experience, and on the soundtrack, you’ll hear a Mayan rapper [Pat Boy].”

Recording sessions in Lagos bestowed the track originally featured in the film’s deeply moving teaser trailer. “Ryan and I traveled to Lagos, which is the hotbed of so much great music you hear today,” says Göransson. “We worked with an extraordinary artist named Tems and she is the first voice you hear singing Bob Marley’s ‘No Woman, No Cry.’ Her voice as a singer and as a songwriter is extremely powerful—she has this strength and wisdom that is so potent.”

The longtime collaborators shared a clear vision for the soundtrack from beginning to end. “Ryan and I talked about the importance of creating an immersive journey of sound and voice,” says Göransson. “There would be no needle drops here. If we used a song in the film, we wanted it to be the entire song, and to be connected to the story. Thematically, we wanted to move the audience from grief to celebration. When you listen to the soundtrack, you can close your eyes and relive the experience of the movie. That was the intention.”

“Black Panther: Wakanda Forever” features more than 20 original song moments with African, Meso-American and American instrumentation, singers and musicians. The “Black Panther: Wakanda Forever” soundtrack album, produced by Ryan Coogler, Ludwig Göransson, Archie Davis and Dave Jordan, will be available on Nov. 4, 2022, from Marvel Music/Hollywood Records, and the “Black Panther: Wakanda Forever” score album, composed by Göransson, will release on Nov. 11, 2022.

ABOUT THE CAST

Emmy®-nominated **LETITIA WRIGHT (Shuri)** is one of the most popular and sought-after actors in Hollywood.

Emmy-nominated Letitia Wright is defining herself as one of the industry’s most captivating young actresses. She won the 2019 BAFTA Rising Star Award and a 2019 SAG Award® as part of the “Black Panther” best ensemble, following critical acclaim for her scene-stealing performance as Shuri. The film grossed over \$1.3 billion at the global box office and was nominated for a 2019 Academy Award® for best picture—a first for a Super Hero film.

Most recently, Wright starred in Kenneth Branagh’s “Death on the Nile” for Disney/Twentieth Century Fox opposite Gal Gadot and Tom Bateman and the Universal/Illumination musical comedy “Sing 2” alongside Matthew McConaughey and Taron Egerton—marking her first foray into animated film. Prior to that, Wright returned to UK screens for the BAFTA-nominated, female-led anthology series “I Am” for Channel 4 for her episode “I Am Danielle,” which earned her an Edinburgh TV Award nomination for best TV actor - drama. She developed the powerful storyline in creative partnership with director Dominic Savage, touching on themes of young love and betrayal in the modern age and filmed using improvised dialogue. This followed a

starring role in Steve McQueen's anthology series, "Small Axe," for BBC/Amazon. Wright's episode, "Mangrove," was included in the Cannes 2020 official selection and the series was nominated for two Golden Globe® Awards, including best television motion picture.

2022 is shaping up to be Wright's biggest year yet, with upcoming roles in "The Silent Twins," the first stand-alone English-language feature from rising Polish director Agnieszka Smoczyńska, which premiered in Un Certain Regard at the 2022 Cannes Film Festival and received a rare five-minute, 21-second standing ovation. The film sees Wright take in a producer role and will release in the U.S. on Sept. 16. Wright also "delivers her most moving performance yet" (Variety) in upcoming Ireland-set drama "Aisha" written and directed by Frank Berry and also starring Josh O'Connor. The film premiered at the 2022 Tribeca Film Festival to rave reviews across the board with Screen International hailing her performance as "phenomenal in a career-best turn." Rounding off the year, she stars alongside Jamie Bell and the late Michael K. Williams in the 3.16 Productions and Bron Studios western, "Surrounded."

Past credits include "Avengers: Infinity War," "Avengers: Endgame," "Urban Hymn," "Guava Island," "Humans," "My Brother the Devil," "Top Boy" and the critically acclaimed science-fiction anthology series "Black Mirror" for which her performance earned her an Emmy Award® nomination for outstanding supporting actress in a limited series or movie.

3.16 Productions was created by Letitia Wright in 2020 with a mission to create impactful film and television content with a focus on cinematic excellence. Wright has curated an exciting slate of meaningful, purpose-led short films and features, including "Surrounded," alongside Bron Studios, Black Hand Productions and Mandalay Pictures, and the award-winning "Things I Never Told My Father" (also written by Wright), which picked up best international at the New York Shorts International Film Festival and earlier this year, showcased at the Pan African Film Festival. Coming soon on 3.16's slate is "Highway to the Moon," Wright's next writing venture and also her directorial debut.

LUPITA NYONG'O (Nakia) is a Kenyan actress, producer and New York Times bestselling author. She made her feature debut in Steve McQueen's Academy Award®-winning film "12 Years a Slave." For her portrayal as Patsey, Nyong'o received the Academy Award®, the Screen Actors Guild Award®, the Critics' Choice Award®, the Independent Spirit Award® and the NAACP Image Award®.

Nyong'o played Nakia in Marvel Studios' Academy Award®-nominated film "Black Panther," which broke numerous box office records. The cast won the SAG Award® for best ensemble and her performance earned Nyong'o a nomination for an NAACP Image Award®.

Nyong'o most recently starred in Universal's thriller "The 355" alongside Jessica Chastain, Diane Kruger, Penélope Cruz and Sebastian Stan. It was released in theaters in January 2022. In Jordan Peele's critically acclaimed horror film "Us," she starred as

both Red and Adelaide, which garnered her a Screen Actors Guild® nomination, the New York Film Critics Association Award for best actress, and an NAACP Image Award®. Past credits include “Little Monsters,” “Queen of Katwe,” “Star Wars: The Force Awakens,” “Star Wars: The Last Jedi” and “Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker.”

Nyong’o earned a Tony® nomination for her Broadway debut in Danai Gurira’s play “Eclipsed.” She returned to theater, albeit audibly, in 2021 when she played Julieta in The Public Theater’s bilingual (Spanish and English) audio adaptation of Romeo y Julieta. She also executive produces the YouTube original family program “Super Sema.” The animated series, which returns for a second season in June 2022, depicts Africa’s first kid superhero and features Nyong’o’s voice. She can also be heard narrating Discovery’s docu-series “Serengeti,” which explores the dramatic day-to-day happenings of animals living in Tanzania’s Serengeti National Park.

In 2020, Nyong’o narrated her debut children’s book, “Sulwe,” for Netflix’s “Bookmarks: Celebrating Black Voices,” which earned her an Emmy Award®. “Sulwe,” a New York Times No. 1 bestseller, released by Simon & Schuster in 2019, discusses colorism—the preferential treatment of those with lighter skin, which is an issue across the globe and impacts children from a young age. “Sulwe” is being adapted into an animated musical feature for Netflix.

Nyong’o will host a Warner Music Group podcast centered on nonfiction cultural storytelling that explores the African diaspora.

DANAI GURIRA (Okoye) is an award-winning playwright and actress. Distinguished as the first African female writer to have a play on Broadway and to bring the perspective of African women to mainstream theater, her stage plays give voice to untold narratives. They include In the “Continuum” (OBIE Award, Outer Critics Award, Helen Hayes Award), “Eclipsed” (Tony® nomination: best play, NAACP Award, Helen Hayes Award: best new play, Connecticut Critics Circle Award: outstanding production of a play) and “The Convert” (six Ovation Awards, L.A. Outer Critics Award). Her newest play, “Familiar,” received its world premiere at Yale Rep and premiered in New York at Playwrights Horizons in February of 2016. Commissioned by Yale Rep, Center Theatre Group, Playwrights Horizons and the Royal Court, she is a recipient of the Sam Norkin Award (2016 Drama Desk Awards), a Whiting Award as well as a Hodder Fellowship.

As an actor, Gurira starred as General Okoye in Marvel’s 2018 Academy Award-winning blockbuster film Black Panther, for which she won a People’s Choice Award (favorite action movie star), an NAACP Image Award (outstanding supporting actress/motion picture) and a shared SAG Award® (outstanding performance by a cast/motion picture). Later that year, she reprised her role in “Avengers: Infinity War” and again in “Avengers: Endgame,” which went on to become the No. 1 top-grossing film in history.

She most recently starred in her final season as Michonne on AMC’s “The Walking Dead,” which remains a top-rated cable program in its tenth season. Her other acting credits include the feature films “All Eyez on Me,” “Mother of George,” “The Visitor” and Shakespeare in the Park’s stage production of “Measure for Measure” (Equity Callaway

Award). This summer, Gurira starred as the title character of Richard III for Shakespeare in the Park, which was directed by Robert O'Hara. She will next go into production on a limited series for AMC in which she will reprise her role of Michonne from "The Walking Dead" and reunite her with costar Andrew Lincoln. The new series will continue the journey and love story of Rick Grimes and Michonne with six episodes in 2023. She will also serve as an executive producer.

Born in Iowa to Zimbabwean parents and raised in Zimbabwe, Gurira holds an MFA from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. An ambassador for Bono's ONE campaign, she is co-founder of Almasi Arts Alliance, which works to give access and opportunity to African dramatic artists. With a personal dedication to effect tangible change in gender equality and push global leaders toward real policy transformation, she is founder of Love Our Girls, which spotlights the specific challenges faced by women and girls while celebrating the courageous work by organizations seeking to make a difference. In December 2018 she was also named a Goodwill Ambassador for UN Women, supporting its mandate of gender equality and women's rights and leveraging her celebrity as an amplifier of other women's voices.

WINSTON DUKE (M'Baku) made his feature film debut in "Black Panther," the highest-grossing film of 2018, as well as the sixth highest-grossing film ever in the United States. Duke played the fan-favorite character M'Baku. The role earned him his first NAACP Image Award® nomination for breakout of the year. Duke reprised his role as M'Baku in "Avengers: Infinity War" and "Avengers: Endgame." His other film credits include Peter Berg's Netflix crime drama "Spencer Confidential" and Jordan Peele's "Us," for which he received an NAACP Image Award® nomination for outstanding lead actor in a motion picture.

Duke most recently starred in Sony Picture Classics' "Nine Days," in which Duke not only played the lead role, but also served as an executive producer. He is currently voicing Bruce Wayne in Spotify's original audio series "Batman Unburied." "Batman Unburied" has been a global hit, reaching No. 1 on Spotify charts after its May 3 debut and remaining near the top since then.

Duke has received numerous accolades including the breakout award at the 2018 Savannah Film Festival and was highlighted as one of the top 10 actors in Hollywood Reporter's Next Generation issue. The actor was also awarded with the Advanced Imaging Society's Social Justice Lumiere Award for his work as the star and executive producer of "The Messy Truth VR Experience," a virtual reality (VR) short doc which provides viewers with a look at the timely themes of race, mercy and redemption through someone else's eyes.

Outside of acting, Duke is an advocate for the HeForShe movement and most recently issued a global call to action for gender equality and gender equity during the United Nations HeForShe Impact Summit. He also has joined the American Diabetes Association® to spark a national conversation about diabetes, a disease that impacts nearly half of the U.S. adult population. Additionally, Duke recently started working with Partners in Health, a nonprofit global health and social justice organization fighting

injustice by bringing the benefits of modern medical science to impoverished communities around the world.

A native of Trinidad and Tobago, Duke received his bachelor of arts in theatre at the University at Buffalo and a master of fine arts at Yale School of Drama.

ANGELA BASSETT (Ramonda) is an actress, director and executive producer known for captivating, emotionally-tinged performances full of dignity in treasured films such as “Waiting to Exhale,” “How Stella Got Her Groove Back” and “What’s Love Got to Do with It?”—for which she received an Academy Award® nomination. She has since made star-turns in the historic “Black Panther,” “Mission: Impossible - Fallout” and “Bumblebee.” Plus, there’s “9-1-1” and “Master of None.”

Other recent projects include Disney and Pixar’s Academy Award®-winning animated feature “Soul,” for which she lent her voice for the character Dorothea Williams. Other films include “Otherhood” and “Gunpowder Milkshake” from Netflix; and “The Flood” from National Geographic, for which she received an Emmy® nomination for outstanding narrator. Further, she was nominated for two Emmys®, including outstanding narrator for “The Imagineering Story: The Happiest Place on Earth” and outstanding guest actress in a comedy series for “A Black Lady Sketch Show.” She recently wrapped production on the Netflix Originals feature film “Damsel,” opposite Millie Bobby Brown, and is currently in production on the animated film “Wildwood.”

Apple Original Films announced the documentary feature “Number One on the Call Sheet: Black Leading Women in Hollywood,” which is to be directed by Shola Lynch with Bassett and Halle Berry on board as executive producers and will debut globally on AppleTV+. Bassett has been nominated for multiple Emmy® Awards. She is the recipient of a Golden Globe Award®, a SAG Award®, 11 NAACP Image Awards® and a Black Girls Rock! Icon Award. She holds a coveted star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Bassett was also nominated for a Directors Guild of America Award for her directorial debut of the Whitney Houston biopic “Whitney.” She also showcased her directing talents in the popular horror anthology series “American Horror Story.” The actress graduated with a B.A. in African American studies, an M.F.A. in drama, and an honorary doctorate from Yale University. She also has honorary doctorates from Morehouse College and Old Dominion University.

Bassett and her husband, Courtney B. Vance, are the principals of their production company, Bassett Vance Productions, which has a partnership with Paramount’s MTV Entertainment Group’s development program for BIPOC and women filmmakers. Their first project, “One Thousand Years of Slavery” aired in February 2022 on the Smithsonian Channel.

TENOCH HUERTA MEJÍA (Namor) is a Mexican actor and producer. He is an Ariel Award-winner for best actor from the Mexican Academy of Motion Picture Arts and

Sciences. In addition to being bilingual, he also holds a degree in communication and journalism from the National Autonomous University of Mexico.

Additionally, in 2022, Huerta served on the jury of the Alfred P. Sloan Feature Film Prize at the 2022 Sundance Film Festival. In 2021, he starred in the Blumhouse film “Madres” that Amazon released in Oct. 2021. He also starred in the independent film “Son of Monarchs,” which premiered at the 2021 Sundance International Film Festival. The actor also starred in “The Forever Purge,” which was released in July 2021.

Among the more than 60 cinematographic productions in which he has starred, “Dias de Gracia,” “Mexican Gangster” and “Güeros” stand out. He is also well known for his work in the acclaimed Netflix series “Narcos: Mexico.”

MARTIN FREEMAN (Everett Ross) is an Emmy® and BAFTA award-winning actor with an illustrious career spanning film, television and stage. His versatility and ability to excel in his craft, regardless of the genre, have led to him being considered one of the industry’s most revered talents.

Earlier this year, Freeman was seen leading the cast of five-part BBC drama “The Responder.” Freeman plays Chris, a police officer who is tackling a series of night shifts on the beat in Liverpool. Whilst trying to keep his head above water both personally and professionally, Chris is forced to take on a new rookie partner, Rachel (Adelayo Adedayo). Both soon discover that survival in this high pressure, relentless, night-time world will depend on them either helping or destroying each other. Following its success, BBC have announced that they will be commissioning series two of “The Responder.”

May saw Freeman in Peacock’s limited series “Angelyne,” playing the owner of a printing company who partners with the infamous Angelyne (Emily Rossum) on her early billboard campaigns. The series is directed by Lucy Tcherniak and is based on the Hollywood Reporter’s investigative article about LA’s mysterious billboard icon.

The third series of “Breeders” was released in July. The second season returned to FX (US) and SKY One (UK) in 2021 with Freeman reprising his role of Paul, Daisy Haggard returning as Ally, and new, older children in the roles of Luke and Ava. The story centers around the parenting paradox; that although you would die for your children, you quite often also want to kill them. The first series of the show premiered in spring 2020.

2019 was a very exciting year for Freeman. Early in the year, he appeared in “Pinter Seven,” in the two final plays in the Harold Pinter season Pinter at the Pinter, presented by The Jamie Lloyd Company. Freeman starred opposite Danny Dyer in “A Slight Ache” and “The Dumb Waiter.” In summer 2019, he was also seen leading the cast of Jeff Pope’s six-part ITV drama “A Confession” with Imelda Staunton, which has been acclaimed amongst critics and audiences alike. The series tells the story of how Detective Superintendent Steve Fulcher (Freeman) deliberately breached police procedure and protocol to catch a killer, a decision that ultimately cost him his career

and reputation. Freeman also appeared in feature film “Ode to Joy,” from “Modern Family” director Jason Winer and “The Colbert Report” writer Max Werner. He was also seen in Yuvel Adler’s “The Operative” alongside Diane Kruger, who plays a woman recruited by the Mossad to work undercover in Tehran; the film premiered at the Berlin Film Festival earlier in 2019.

2018 was another notable year for Freeman. He was seen in Ryan Coogler’s critically acclaimed sci-fi drama “Black Panther,” alongside Danai Gurira, Michael B. Jordan, Andy Serkis, Forest Whitaker and Lupita Nyong’o. Freeman also appeared in the big screen adaptation of Jeremy Dyson and Andy Nyman’s “Ghost Stories.” He also starred in the feature film adaptation of award-nominated short “Cargo” for Netflix. The post-apocalyptic thriller also starred Anthony Hayes, Caren Pistorius and Susie Porter. Prior to this, Freeman was seen reprising his role of Dr. John Watson in the much anticipated fourth series of “Sherlock” on both BBC One in the UK and PBS in the U.S. On stage, he also starred in James Graham’s comedy “Labour of Love,” alongside Tamsin Greig at the Noel Coward Theatre.

In 2016, Freeman was seen in Crackle’s new drama “StartUp,” alongside Adam Brody and Edi Gathegi. He also starred in Glenn Ficarra and John Requa’s “Whiskey Tango Foxtrot.” The screen adaptation of Kim Barker’s 2011 memoir “The Taliban Shuffle: Strange Days in Afghanistan and Pakistan.” Freeman also was featured in Marvel Studios’ latest edition to the Captain America franchise “Captain America: Civil War.” In addition, he was seen on television screens in the “Sherlock” special episode “The Abominable Bride.”

2015 saw Freeman in several television productions. He started in BBC Two’s “The Eichmann Show,” which follows the televising of Adolf Eichmann’s 1961 trial and was part of the BBC’s commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

In 2014, Freeman starred in the award-winning Coen brothers’ television adaptation of “Fargo,” for which he was Golden Globe® and Emmy®-nominated in the category of best actor for his role as Lester Nygaard. 2014 saw him win the Emmy® for best supporting actor for his portrayal of Dr. John Watson in “Sherlock.” The show also saw Freeman win best supporting actor at the 2011 BAFTA Awards and receive an additional nomination in 2012. In December of the same year, Freeman was seen in cinemas reprising his role of Bilbo Baggins in the final installment of Peter Jackson’s “The Hobbit” series, “The Hobbit: The Battle of The Five Armies.” He also took to the stage to play the title role of “Richard III” at the Trafalgar Studios as part of the Trafalgar Transformed season.

One of Freeman’s most notable television credits remains his role as Tim Canterbury in the hugely successful and much-loved series “The Office,” for which he also received BAFTA nominations in 2002 and once again in 2004.

Freeman’s film credits are extensive. He has appeared in many comedies, starring opposite Joanna Page in the box office success “Love Actually” in 2003. Following this, Freeman briefly appeared in spoof horror comedy “Shaun of the Dead,” reuniting with

writing duo Simon Pegg and Edgar Wright for cult hit “Hot Fuzz” in 2007, and again in 2013 for “The World’s End,” starring opposite Pegg and Nick Frost. In 2007, Freeman starred opposite Jessica Hynes in the mockumentary-style film “Confetti.” One of Freeman’s most well-known film roles remains that of the lead Arthur Dent in “The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy.”

Freeman’s stage credits also include: “Clybourne Park” and “Kosher Harry” at the Royal Court Theatre and “Blue Eyes and Heels” at the Soho Theatre.

A Brooklyn, New York, native, **DOMINIQUE THORNE (Riri Williams)** got her start on stage, starring in several productions during her time as a drama student at NYC’s Professional Performing Arts High School (PPAS). In 2015, she was named a National Young Arts Winner for Spoken Theater. Thorne also won the 2015 United States Presidential Scholar in the Arts, a prestigious award appointed by White House Commission that selects one young woman and one young man from each state who demonstrate community service, artistic excellence and leadership. As part of the MCC Theater’s Youth Company, she performed in their annual show “Uncensored.” The program showcases the most original and thought-provoking work of NYC youth in the dramatic arts. Thorne co-wrote and performed a piece about her heritage, titled “19th Century Gazelle.”

Thorne made her feature film debut in Academy Award®-winning writer/director Barry Jenkins’ “If Beale Street Could Talk,” playing the role of Sheila Hunt, the petulant younger sister of Fonny Hunt (Stephan James). The film, which premiered at the 2018 Toronto Film Festival, received critical acclaim and accolades, including AFI Award’s Movie of the Year, Independent Spirit Award’s Best Feature,” NAACP Image Award® Outstanding Independent Motion Picture and one of National Board of Review’s Top Ten Films of 2018. She next starred opposite Daniel Kaluuya and LaKeith Stanfield in Warner Bros.’ “Judas and the Black Messiah,” directed by Shaka King. The film follows the story of Fred Hampton, Chairman of the Illinois Black Panther Party, and his fateful betrayal by FBI informant William O’Neal. Thorne played Judy Harmon a fictional character who is a member of Hampton’s security team. With Ryan Coogler, Charles D. King and Shaka King as the producers, the film premiered at the 2021 Sundance Film Festival and went on to be nominated for five Academy Awards®, including the first best picture nomination with an all-Black producing team.

In fall 2023, Thorne will star in Marvel Studios’ “Ironheart” series on Disney+, which brings to screen the comic book character Riri Williams, a brilliant inventor who built her own version of the Iron Man suit in an MIT dorm.

FLORENCE KASUMBA (Ayo) was born in Kampala, grew up in Germany and studied in the Netherlands. She earned her degree in acting, singing and dancing from the Fontys Hogeschool voor de Kunsten. Kasumba performed in musicals such as “Chicago,” “West Side Story,” “Cats,” “Mamma Mia,” “Aida,” “The Lion King” and many more. Her TV and film credits include “Emerald City,” “Deutschland 86,” “Deutschland 89,” “Black Panther,” “Criminal: Germany,” “The Lion King,” “Kitz” and “The Falcon and

the Winter Soldier.” Kasumba’s passion lies in martial arts, including Shaolin Kung Fu, Tai Chi Chen and Tai Chi Yang.

Emmy® and BAFTA Award-winning actress, playwright, screenwriter, director, showrunner, poet and author, **MICHAELA COEL (Aneka)** is one of the UK’s leading stars. Having won numerous awards for her hit TV series, “I May Destroy You,” Coel is the first black woman to win an Emmy® for outstanding writing for a limited or anthology series and she was featured in Time magazine’s 100 Most Influential People of 2020.

Coel’s phenomenally successful and groundbreaking HBO/BBC dark comedy-drama, “I May Destroy You,” which she created, wrote, co-directed and starred, premiered in June 2020. The series is fearless, frank and provocative, offering refreshing insight into the contemporary lives of young people and the complex issues they face while living, working and building relationships in London. Coel plays the central role of Arabella, a self-assured, carefree Londoner whose identity is called into question upon being spiked with a date-rape drug. The series was met with across-the-board praise from both critics and audiences alike and won a host of prestigious awards, including two Emmys®, five BAFTAs, three Royal Television Society awards, a Peabody Award®, two Independent Spirit Awards and a GLAAD Award, among many others. There also were multiple nominations globally.

Coel recently finished shooting the “Mr. & Mrs. Smith” series for Amazon alongside co-creator, executive producer and star of the show, Donald Glover.

Coel’s first book, “Misfits: A Personal Manifesto,” was released in September 2021 and received wide acclaim. It was described as “comic and devastating” by the New York Times; “your self-help bible of 2021” by the Sunday Times and “a perfect truth teller of our time” by Elle. The book is a passionate and inspired declaration against fitting in. It is based on the prestigious MacTaggart lecture Coel gave in 2018 at the Edinburgh TV Festival, where she was the first black woman to take the lectern.

In 2018, Coel played the lead role in “Been So Long,” a movie-musical written by Che Walker and directed by Tinge Krishnan. The film was released on Netflix and Coel was nominated for most promising newcomer at the British Independent Film awards. That year, the actress also starred in the BBC Two/Netflix drama “Black Earth Rising,” receiving rave reviews for her performance as Kate Ashby, a woman who as a young child was rescued during the Rwandan genocide and brought to Britain. Written and directed by Hugo Blick, the show explored issues of justice, guilt and self-determination across Europe, the UK, Africa and the USA.

In 2017, Coel was picked as one of the Screen International Stars of Tomorrow and made the Forbes magazine 30 Under 30 list, celebrating the brightest young entrepreneurs, breakout talents and change agents across the globe. She was also selected as one of the European Shooting Stars at the Berlinale Film Festival.

In 2017, Coel was featured in series four of Charlie Brooker’s award-winning dystopian drama series “Black Mirror” for Netflix. She had previously appeared in the third series

of “Black Mirror” in Joe Wright’s episode, “Nosedive,” and also made a surprise cameo appearance in the 2017 film “Star Wars: The Last Jedi.”

Coel first came to prominence in her debut series “Chewing Gum,” based on her sensational play, “Chewing Gum Dreams,” which ran at the National Theatre in 2014. The success of “Chewing Gum” led to several awards, including two Royal Television Society awards for best comedy performance and breakthrough performance. She also was the recipient of a BAFTA Television Craft Award for breakthrough talent, the best female performance in a comedy programme award and a Broadcast Digital Award for best scripted programme.” Other TV credits include E4 comedy-drama “The Aliens”; BBC espionage drama “London Spy,” starring alongside Ben Whishaw and Jim Broadbent; and the award-winning, raw and gripping C4 drama “Top Boy.”

Coel’s theater credits include roles in “Home,” directed by Nadia Fall at the National Theatre; “Medea and Blurred Lines,” directed by Carrie Cracknell at the National Theatre; and “Three Birds” at the Bush Theatre and Manchester Royal Exchange, directed by Sarah Frankcom.

With a career that spans nearly two decades, actor **ALEX LIVINALLI (Attuma)** is consistently elevating his performances across film and television.

Livinalli has appeared in many television series and feature films. Some of his most popular credits include “Ozark,” “Longmire,” “The Walking Dead,” “American Horror Story” and “Alita: Battle Angel,” among others.

A native of Venezuela, Livinalli moved to the United States at 10 years old to live the American dream. He is fluent in Spanish and English, and also learned some Portuguese, Comanche and Mayan for film projects. He attended Miami Dade College, where he majored in drama. In the following years, he worked on short films and student films, honing his craft, before booking his first series.

Livinalli currently resides in Miami.

MABEL CADENA (Namora), a film, theater and television actress, graduated from CasAzul Escenics Arts in 2011 and has since appeared in more than 20 theatrical plays, TV shows and films. She has appeared in several series, films and short films, including “The Dance of the 41,” directed by David Pablos for Netflix, for which she received a best actress nomination from the Mexican Academy of Cinematographic Arts, and the Julian Hernández-directed “The Goddess of Asphalt,” earning her second nomination, now as a supporting actress, by the Mexican Academy of Cinematographic Arts. There also was TV’s “Hernán” for Amazon; “Monarca,” produced by Salma Hayek; “Miss 89” for Starz; and “The Envoys” for Paramount+.

On stage, her credits include “Class Enemy,” directed by Sebastián Zurita; “Oedipus’ Tears,” directed by Hugo Arrevillaga; “Manual De Desuso,” directed by Edurne Goded; “Nora Cierra la Puerta,” directed by Adrián Daro; “In Memoriam,” directed by

José Caballero; “Los Motivos del Lobo,” directed by Rodolfo Obregón; and “Gardenia Club,” directed by Lila Áviles.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

RYAN COOGLER (Director/Screenplay by) is a writer, director and producer known for his inaugural feature film, “Fruitvale Station,” which won the top audience and grand jury awards in the U.S. dramatic competition at the 2013 Sundance Film Festival. He has since co-written and directed the seventh film in the “Rocky” series, “Creed,” was the executive producer for “Creed II,” and has returned to produce “Creed III,” each starring Michael B. Jordan. He also co-wrote and directed Marvel’s critically acclaimed “Black Panther,” which became the most successful domestic release of 2018. “Black Panther,” starring the late Chadwick Boseman, is the first and only Marvel Studios film to have ever been nominated for best picture at the Academy Awards®.

Last year, Coogler founded Proximity Media, alongside Zinzi Coogler, Sev Ohanian, Ludwig Göransson, Archie Davis and Peter Nicks, with a mission to create event-driven feature films, television, soundtracks and podcasts that look to bring audiences closer together through stories involving often-overlooked subject matters. Proximity’s “Space Jam: A New Legacy,” the 2021 sequel to the hit 1996 film, was released by Warner Bros. in theaters and on HBO Max. The film came in No. 1 at the U.S. box office, earning an estimated \$32 million domestically during its opening weekend. In the same year, Coogler was also the executive producer for Hulu’s “Homerom,” which was an official selection at the 2021 Sundance Film Festival. “Homerom” is the final chapter in a trilogy of films examining the relationship between health care, criminal justice and education in Oakland, CA over the past decade.

Proximity recently announced their exclusive five-year television deal with Disney, allowing them to develop television for all divisions of the company. Proximity is in production on Marvel Studios’ “Ironheart” and is developing a television series for the studio — a drama based in the Kingdom of Wakanda for Disney+.

Proximity’s first film, Shaka King’s “Judas and the Black Messiah” won two Academy Awards® and was nominated for six, including best picture.

JOE ROBERT COLE (Screenplay by) is a filmmaker committed to crafting smart, rich, character-driven journeys as well as creating tent-pole, world-renowned projects. Along with Ryan Coogler, Cole co-wrote the Academy Award-nominated “Black Panther,” for which he received an NAACP Award®. His critically acclaimed feature directorial debut for Netflix “All Day and a Night,” starring Ashton Sanders (“Moonlight”) and Jeffrey Wright, was released May 1, 2020. Cole produced the Emmy®-winning FX series “American Crime Story: The People vs. O.J. Simpson,” for which he also received an Emmy® nomination for writing the episode “The Race Card.” He is attached to write, direct and executive produce a new series adaptation of “In the Heat of the Night” for MGM. Cole co-directed the pilot and directed the final two episodes of the new series

“Class of ‘09” for FX, starring Brian Tyree Henry and Kate Mara, for which he was also an executive producer.

KEVIN FEIGE, p.g.a. (Produced by), producer, president of Marvel Studios and chief creative officer of Marvel, is the driving creative force behind several billion-dollar franchises and an unprecedented number of blockbuster feature films, all connected within the Marvel Cinematic Universe.

A hands-on producer, Feige oversees Marvel Studios’ feature film productions, with 29 film releases that have all opened No. 1 at the box office and collectively grossed more than \$27 billion worldwide. Ten of the MCU films have crossed the \$1 billion threshold at the global box office, including “Avengers: Endgame,” which garnered almost \$2.8 billion at the worldwide box office and was the fastest film in cinematic history to reach \$2 billion, and most recently the record-breaking “Spider-Man: No Way Home,” the highest-grossing film of 2021.

The Marvel Cinematic Universe is currently the highest grossing film franchise of all time. Feige is building on that success with a host of new series that streamed on Disney+ in 2021, including “WandaVision,” “The Falcon and The Winter Soldier,” “Loki,” “What If...?” and “Hawkeye.” Four Disney+ series have premiered thus far in 2022: “Moon Knight,” starring Oscar Isaac and Ethan Hawke; “Ms. Marvel,” starring Iman Vellani as Kamala Khan; “I Am Groot,” starring Vin Diesel as the voice of Baby Groot; and “She-Hulk: Attorney at Law,” starring Tatiana Maslany as Jennifer Walters.

“Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness” opened on May 6, 2022, and has garnered more than \$955 million in box office globally. “Thor: Love and Thunder” premiered on July 8, 2022, and has earned more than \$760 million in global ticket sales thus far.

An Academy Award® nominee for “Black Panther,” Feige was honored with the 2019 David O. Selznick Achievement Award from the Producers Guild of America, as well as the Albert R. Broccoli Britannia Award for Worldwide Contribution to Entertainment from BAFTA (British Academy Film Awards).

Feige is a graduate of the University of Southern California, School of Cinematic Arts.

NATE MOORE (Produced by) is an executive in development and production at Marvel Studios. He is currently producing Marvel Studios’ “Black Panther: Wakanda Forever,” which opens in theaters on Nov. 11, 2022. Moore returns to the incomparable world of Wakanda, having produced 2018’s “Black Panther” alongside writer and director Ryan Coogler. “Black Panther” grossed more than \$1.3 billion worldwide, picked up seven Oscar nominations, including best picture, and went on to win three Academy Awards: best costume design, best production design and best original music score. The film also won the Screen Actors Guild Award® for outstanding performance by a cast in a motion picture.

Moore served as producer for Marvel Studios' 2021 feature film "Eternals," which introduced an ensemble of Super Heroes in an epic story that spans thousands of years. Directed by Chloé Zhao, "Eternals" featured an outstanding ensemble cast, including Richard Madden, Gemma Chan, Kumail Nanjani, Lauren Ridloff, Brian Tyree Henry, Salma Hayek, Lia McHugh, Don Lee, Barry Keoghan, Kit Harington and Angelina Jolie.

Moore was executive producer for Marvel Studios' "The Falcon and The Winter Soldier," starring Anthony Mackie and Sebastian Stan. Directed by Kari Skogland with Malcolm Spellman serving as head writer, the series debuted on Disney+ in March 2021.

Prior to that, he worked on "Captain America: The Winter Soldier" and "Captain America: Civil War." He also helped develop the script for "Guardians of the Galaxy" in the Marvel Writer's Program.

Moore received a bachelor's degree in communications studies from the University of California at Los Angeles. He resides in Los Angeles with his wife and two daughters.

Marvel Studios Co-President **LOUIS D'ESPOSITO (Executive Producer)** served as executive producer on the blockbuster hits "Iron Man," "Iron Man 2," "Thor," "Captain America: The First Avenger," "Marvel's The Avengers," "Iron Man 3," "Thor: The Dark World," "Captain America: The Winter Soldier," "Guardians of the Galaxy," "Captain America: Civil War," "Avengers: Age of Ultron," "Ant-Man," "Doctor Strange," "Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2," "Spider-Man: Homecoming," "Thor: Ragnarok," "Black Panther," "Avengers: Infinity War," "Ant-Man and The Wasp," "Captain Marvel," "Avengers: Endgame," "Spider-Man: Far From Home," "Black Widow," "Shang-Chi and The Legend of The Ten Rings," "Eternals," "Spider-Man: No Way Home," "Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness," "Thor: Love and Thunder," and most recently, "She-Hulk: Attorney at Law."

D'Esposito also served as executive producer on the Disney+ shows "The Falcon and The Winter Soldier," "Loki," "What If...?," "Hawkeye," the Emmy® award-winning "WandaVision," "Moon Knight," "Ms. Marvel," "I Am Groot" and "She-Hulk: Attorney at Law."

Upcoming productions, on which D'Esposito is collaborating with Marvel Studios President Kevin Feige, include the feature films "Ant-Man and the Wasp: Quantumania," "Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3," "The Marvels" and "Blade," as well as the Disney+ shows "Armor Wars," "Ironheart" and "Secret Invasion."

As co-president of the studio and executive producer on all Marvel Studios features and streaming shows, D'Esposito balances running the studio with overseeing each project from its development stage to distribution. In addition to executive-producing Marvel Studios' films and shows, D'Esposito directed the Marvel One-Shot "Item 47," which made its debut to fans at the 2012 San Diego Comic-Con International and was featured again at the LA Shorts Fest in September 2012. The project was released as an added feature on the "Marvel's The Avengers" Blu-ray disc. D'Esposito also directed

the second Marvel One-Shot, “Agent Carter,” starring Hayley Atwell, which premiered at the 2013 San Diego Comic-Con to critical praise from press and fans, and is an added feature on the “Iron Man 3” Blu-ray disc. The One-Shot’s popularity led to development of the TV series “Marvel’s Agent Carter.” D’Esposito began his tenure at Marvel Studios in 2006.

Prior to Marvel, D’Esposito’s executive-producing credits include the 2006 hit film “The Pursuit of Happyness,” starring Will Smith; “Zathura: A Space Adventure”; and the 2003 hit “S.W.A.T.,” starring Samuel L. Jackson and Colin Farrell.

A native of Buenos Aires, **VICTORIA ALONSO (Executive Producer)** moved to the U.S. on her own at the age of 19. She worked her way up through the industry, beginning as a PA before working at the VFX powerhouse Digital Domain. She served as VFX producer on a number of films, including Ridley Scott’s “Kingdom of Heaven,” Tim Burton’s “Big Fish,” Andrew Adamson’s “Shrek” and Marvel’s “Iron Man.” She won the Visual Effects Society (VES) Award for outstanding supporting visual effects/motion picture for “Kingdom of Heaven,” with two additional shared nominations (best single visual effects, outstanding visual effects/effects driven motion picture) for “Iron Man.”

Alonso joined Marvel as the company’s executive vice president of visual effects and post production, doubling as co-producer on “Iron Man,” a role she reprised on “Iron Man 2,” “Thor” and “Captain America: The First Avenger.” In 2011, she was upped to executive producer on the blockbuster hit “Marvel’s The Avengers,” a role she has maintained on all Marvel Studios’ releases since then, including “Iron Man 3,” “Captain America: The Winter Soldier,” “Captain America: Civil War,” “Thor: The Dark World,” “Avengers: Age of Ultron,” “Ant-Man,” “Guardians of the Galaxy,” “Doctor Strange,” “Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2,” “Spider-Man: Homecoming,” “Thor: Ragnarok,” “Black Panther,” “Avengers: Infinity War,” “Ant-Man and the Wasp,” “Captain Marvel,” “Avengers: Endgame,” “Spider-Man: Far From Home,” “Black Widow,” “Shang-Chi and The Legend of The Ten Rings,” “Eternals,” “Spider-Man: No Way Home,” “Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness” and “Thor: Love and Thunder.”

During her tenure at the studio, Marvel films have amassed over \$27 billion in global box office. In addition to executive producer, Alonso also serves as the studio’s president, physical and post production, visual effects, and animation production. Upcoming projects for which Alonso serves as executive producer include the feature film “Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3,” “Ant-Man and The Wasp: Quantumania” and “Fantastic Four,” as well as a slate of programming for Disney+, including “Secret Invasion,” “Ironheart,” “Werewolf by Night,” “Armor Wars” and the second season of “Loki,” among others. Most recently, Alonso was executive producer on the original series “Hawkeye,” “Loki,” “Moon Knight,” “Ms. Marvel,” “I Am Groot” and “She-Hulk: Attorney at Law.” In 2021, Alonso received multiple Emmy® nominations in a variety of categories for both “The Falcon and The Winter Soldier” and “WandaVision.”

Alonso has become an important voice in Hollywood as a producer, a Latina and a senior female executive. She was honored with the Visionary Award at the 2021 Outfest Legacy Awards. For the last three years, she has been named one of People en

Español Magazine's top "Poderosa" Most Influential Hispanic Women. On multiple occasions, she has been named to Variety's Power of Women L.A. Impact Report and The Hollywood Reporter's Women in Entertainment Power 100.

Alonso was honored in 2015 with the Muse Award for Outstanding Vision and Achievement from the New York Women in Film & Television. She was also the first woman to be presented with the Harold Lloyd Award from the Advanced Imaging Society, which is given to a filmmaker who has created a body of work and specific achievements in 3-D that advanced the motion picture art form. In 2017, she was the first woman to be honored with the Visionary Award at the 15th Annual VES Awards for her advancement of unforgettable storytelling through visual effects.

BARRY WALDMAN (Executive Producer) is one of the most respected and sought-after executive producers of major motion pictures. Most recently, Waldman served in that capacity on "Venom: Let There Be Carnage," the large-scale follow-up to the 2018 hit "Venom" about the infamous anti-hero. Previously, Waldman worked on "Bad Boys for Life," his third in the franchise, reuniting Will Smith and Martin Lawrence. He helped bring the immortal monster to a new generation of international moviegoers with "Godzilla: King of the Monsters." Prior to that, Waldman worked on the highly successful "Divergent" series of films based on the best-selling novels. Waldman's long-time collaboration with producer Jerry Bruckheimer includes such films as: "Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides," "The Sorcerer's Apprentice," "National Treasure," "National Treasure: Book of Secrets," "Bad Boys," "Bad Boys II," "Pearl Harbor," "Gone in 60 Seconds," "Armageddon," "Kangaroo Jack" and "The Rock." Waldman also frequently worked with the late director, Tony Scott, on projects including "The Taking of Pelham 123," "Déjà Vu" and "Domino," among others. His production manager credits also include "Batman & Robin" and "The Craft."

Born and raised in New York, Waldman moved to Florida to complete his studies at the University of Miami. Upon graduation, he paid his dues as a production assistant before quickly moving up the ranks to become an assistant director on various independent films and television programs. He first met producer Jerry Bruckheimer and director Michael Bay when he worked on the second unit of the original "Bad Boys," which sparked a long-running association with both entertainment moguls.

Waldman has also worked in television, producing and production managing popular television series including the pilot for Jerry Bruckheimer Television's "Without A Trace," as well as "Key West" and "Dead at 21," which garnered a Genesis Award and a CableACE nomination. He also produced a documentary shot on location in Nicaragua, Honduras and Costa Rica depicting the war between the Sandinistas and Contras.

AUTUMN DURALD ARKAPAW, ASC (Director of Photography) is a visionary feature and commercial cinematographer and heralds a new wave on the cinematographic scene, working with very visual directors to create lush celluloid landscapes. She attended Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles where she received a Bachelor of Arts in art history. She went on to receive her Master of Fine Arts at the American

Film Institute in cinematography in 2009. Durald Arkapaw was selected as one of the 2014 Variety's 10 Cinematographers to Watch, one of 2014 Variety's Up Next in their Below The Line Impact Report and Indiewire's On The Rise 2014: Cinematographers to Watch.

Written and directed by Gia Coppola from James Franco's short stories, Durald Arkapaw lensed "Palo Alto," her breakout work, starring James Franco alongside Emma Roberts. "Palo Alto" screened at Telluride, with its world premiere at the 2013 Biennale di Venezia. Variety's Peter Debruge applauded "the striking Steadicam lensing by gifted female DP Autumn Durald [which] buffers everything from harsh realism, allowing a slightly dreamlike quality into the proceedings." Durald Arkapaw also lensed Coppola's second feature "Mainstream," starring Andrew Garfield and Maya Hawke.

Durald Arkapaw lensed Max Minghella's debut feature film "Teen Spirit" starring Elle Fanning, which premiered at TIFF and made its theatrical release in April 2019. In his review of the film, David Ehrlich praised Durald Arkapaw as "the unsung genius who shot 'Palo Alto' and a bevy of killer music videos for the likes of Janelle Monáe and Solange Knowles, is instrumental in helping Minghella to thread the needle between those two modes. She inflects Violet's world with glossy accents and dashes of epic drama".

She also worked alongside director Spike Jonze to film Apple TV+'s "Beastie Boys Story," a documentary film. Collaborating once again with Spike Jonze, she lensed comedian Aziz Ansari's Netflix comedy special "Aziz Ansari: Right Now," which they filmed on 16mm film stock.

For Marvel Studios, Durald Arkapaw lensed the acclaimed first season of the television series "Loki." The series was released on Disney+ in June 2021.

Durald Arkapaw is a member of the American Society of Cinematographers and recently was nominated for an Emmy® in the single-camera one hour drama category for her work on the Marvel series "Loki."

HANNAH BEACHLER (Production Designer) is a prolific production designer with an affinity for evocative designs and visuals. She crafts unique emotional landscapes for every story. Most recently, Beachler designed Todd Haynes' docu-narrative feature film "Dark Waters," and the pilot for "Y: The Last Man," an FX TV series. She also collaborated with Beyonce on visuals for her OTRII Tour and on her latest visual album "The Gift" for Disney's live-action film "The Lion King." Beachler made history as the first African American to be nominated for and win an Academy Award® for her work on Marvel Studios' "Black Panther" directed by frequent collaborator Ryan Coogler. "Black Panther" became the sixth highest-grossing film of all time domestically. She previously collaborated with Coogler on: "Creed," the spinoff from the "Rocky" film series starring Sylvester Stallone, and "Fruitvale Station," the 2013 Sundance Film Festival winner of The Grand Jury and Audience Award, and winner of the Prix de L'Avenir in the Un Certain Regard competition at the 2013 Cannes Film Festival. Beachler collaborated with director Barry Jenkins on the 2017 Oscar®-winner for best picture, "Moonlight," a

coming-of-age tale that transcends traditional genre boundaries. The film was named one of the top 25 movies of the 21st century by the New York Times. In 2016, Beachler designed Beyoncé’s stunning visual concept album “Lemonade,” taking home the 2017 Art Directors Guild Award for excellence in production design for awards or event special and earning a 2016 Emmy® nomination for outstanding production design for a variety nonfiction event or award special. Current collaborators include Academy Award®-winning director Steven Soderbergh, Academy Award®-nominated directors Todd Haynes and Dee Rees, Grammy® and Emmy®-nominated directors Khalil Joseph and Beyonce Knowles-Carter, Academy Award®-nominated cinematographers Ed Lachman and Rodrigo Prieto, prolific cinematographers Maryse Alberti and Malik Sayeed, and legendary Academy Award®-winning costume designers Ruth E. Carter and Colleen Atwood. She is based in New Orleans.

Originally from Rhode Island, editor **MICHAEL P. SHAWVER (Editor)** developed an early working relationship with director Ryan Coogler as M.F.A. students at USC’s School of Cinematic Arts. Shawver co-edited Coogler’s 546 short film, “Fig,” and later his feature debut, “Fruitvale Station.” Other credits include “Creed,” “Black Panther,” “Godzilla: King of the Monsters,” and “A Quiet Place Part II.”

KELLEY DIXON, ACE (Editor) counts among her recent credits “Obi-Wan Kenobi,” “The Falcon and The Winter Soldier,” “The Goldfinch,” “The Passage,” “Castle Rock” and “Better Call Saul,” among others. She’s been nominated six times for a Primetime Emmy®, winning in 2013 for her work on “Breaking Bad.”

The first feature film for **JENNIFER LAME, ACE (Editor)** was “Frances Ha” with director Noah Baumbach, whom she has continued to collaborate with on many subsequent movies— most recently, “Marriage Story.” Lame also edited Kenneth Lonergan’s “Manchester by the Sea,” for which she was nominated for an ACE Eddie, BAFTA and Indie Spirit Award. Other credits include Ari Aster’s “Hereditary” and Christopher Nolan’s “Tenet.” She is currently working with Nolan on “Oppenheimer,” which will be released in 2023.

RUTH CARTER (Costume Designer) is the Academy Award®-winning American film costume designer known for turning the “Black Panther” Super Hero into an African king and making history as the first Black person to win in the category, earning Marvel Studios one of their first Oscar® recognitions.

Carter pays tribute to the people of Africa through the costumes in “Black Panther.” She fuses traditional and contemporary while incorporating technology to deliver fashion and function, creating Afrofuturistic pieces that empower the female form, honor ancient cultures and invoke a deep sense of representation unlike any other costumes experienced on screen.

Over three decades in film, television and theater, Carter has earned 70 credits and collaborated with prolific directors, including Spike Lee, Steven Spielberg, Ava DuVernay and Ryan Coogler. Carter's costumes, based on real and imaginative characters, provide an arc to the narratives of African Americans. With credits such as "Do the Right Thing," "Malcolm X," "What's Love Got to Do with It," "Amistad," "The Butler," "Marshall," "Selma," "Dolemite Is My Name," "Coming 2 America" and "Black Panther," her devotion to retraining the eye to see beauty through costume design and telling stories that enrich the humanity of the Black experience cements her legacy as a preeminent voice and expert on period genres and Afro aesthetics.

Carter's outstanding costume design work has been honored with Academy Award® nominations for "Malcolm X" (1993) and "Amistad" (1998) and an Emmy® nomination for the miniseries reboot of "Roots" (2016). The impact of her career in filmmaking has been recognized with the Costume Designers Guild's Career Achievement Award (2019) and a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame (2021). Carter is a member of the board of governors for the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences.

GEOFFREY BAUMANN (Visual Effects Supervisor) is a freelance visual effects supervisor whose most recent credits include Marvel Studios' "Black Widow," "X-Men: Dark Phoenix," "Black Panther," "Doctor Strange," "Avengers: Age of Ultron," "In the Heart of the Sea" and "Captain America: The Winter Soldier."

Before joining the production side, Baumann spent 15 years at Digital Domain with credits on over 18 feature films, including "Oblivion," "Real Steel," "Percy Jackson & The Olympians: The Lightning Thief," "Iron Man 3" and "Marvel's The Avengers," among others.

NICOLE ROWLEY's (Visual Effects Producer) passion for visual effects spans over 15 years, working with some of the industry's top talents on the films, including Marvel Studios' "Black Widow," "Alpha," "Black Panther," "Pixels," "Seventh Son" and "Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides." The visual effects producer's most recent credits include "Shaft" and "Aquaman."

LUDWIG GÖRANSSON (Music by/Score Produced by/Songs Produced by) has earned extensive global recognition in both the recording and motion picture industries as a sought-out composer and musical collaborator, having received an Academy Award®, two Emmy® Awards, three Grammy® Awards, amongst other nominations.

Beyond these accomplishments, Göransson stands out in his field as an artist who accepts the responsibilities of his craft. By immersing himself in the traditions and musical cultures of those his music represents with a curious and collaborative spirit, he has managed to bridge and reflect worlds honestly and vividly. Treating each score as an opportunity to connect with and learn from others, approaching projects with curiosity, and embracing a broad spectrum of sounds and styles are just a few of his creative trademarks.

In 2020, Göransson experimented with achieving—both with music theory and technology—innovative ways of depicting entropy, palindromic sequences and the very human consequences of time inversion through music in his score for “Tenet,” his first collaboration with Christopher Nolan. Göransson is now scoring Nolan's upcoming film, “Oppenheimer,” which premieres July 21, 2023.

Göransson co-wrote and produced “Strangers by Nature” with Adele for her fourth studio album, “30,” a major worldwide success in 2021. This followed his two-time Emmy® Award-winning score for “The Mandalorian” on Disney+, Lucasfilm’s first *Star Wars* live-action streaming series helmed by director Jon Favreau. Göransson released eight full-length, space Western-inspired albums for this project, one album per episode, with recurring themes throughout the season. This last year, Göransson composed the score for Disney and Pixar's “Turning Red,” which showcased his broad range of musical styles and his ability to embrace unique instruments and sounds.

Göransson got his first big break writing music for the NBC television series “Community.” This project sparked a lasting friendship and collaborative partnership with artist Donald Glover, known under the stage name Childish Gambino, on several studio albums: including “Because the Internet” and “Awaken, My Love!” Göransson has since been nominated for six Grammys® with Childish Gambino, having won two in 2019 for the Billboard Hot 100 No. 1 hit song “This Is America,” which became a cultural phenomenon that garnered worldwide acclaim.

While pursuing his master’s degree in film scoring at USC, Göransson first met another longtime collaborator, writer and director Ryan Coogler, when he scored his short film, “Locks.” Over the next nine years, Göransson would score all three of Coogler’s feature films. Coogler’s diverse filmography has allowed Göransson to showcase his range as a composer: combining understated melodies with found Oakland sounds for “Fruitvale Station,” hyping up audiences for “Creed,” and weaving a wholly unique sonic fabric for “Black Panther” that embodies traditional African music, hip hop and Western orchestra. His score for “Black Panther” earned Göransson multiple awards and nominations, including a Golden Globe® nomination, a Grammy® Award for best score soundtrack, and an Academy Award® for best original score.

Alongside Coogler, Göransson is a founding partner at Proximity Media: a company with a mission to create event-driven feature films, television, soundtracks and podcasts that strive to bring audiences closer together through stories of oftentimes overlooked subject matters.