

College of Fellows Young Researcher Award
CITATION
Dr Tebogo George Mahashe, Michaelis School of Fine Art

Dr Tebogo George Mahashe works in the wider field of photography, particularly at the intersection of artistic practice, archives and anthropology. His research takes *khelobedu* as a central idea, drawing on its capacity for complicating ways of knowing through its demand for multi and trans-disciplinarity. This focus on *khelobedu* drives both a reach for the culture's complex history, mythology and material culture, but also the possibilities brought by debates around 'Artistic research', the curatorial and the exhibitionary as key transdisciplinary methodologies. Within this context Mahashe looks to the growing field of Art, Science and Technology as a way of asking new questions about indigenous Knowledge and representation practices like photography.

His current projects include —*defunct context* and *Modjadji le Dikolobjana* of which he is the lead researcher for both projects. Within —*defunct context*, he investigates the creative potential of a pavilion (as an exhibitionary platform) for exploiting the gaps inherent in popular approaches to transforming institutions like ethnographic museums' approach to the inclusion of previously marginalised people. This process has led to a prototype timber pavilion for hosting exhibitions like the installation 'Camera Obscura #0, Thabana Ya Dafida' in his grandmother's Village. Owing to the *Modjadji le Dikolobjana* project begun at the Geneva Observatory in 2018, Mahashe is currently convenor of 'Connect South Africa's residency programme initiated through a collaboration between CERN, SARAO, SAAO and Pro Helvetia. In this capacity he is curating the residency's 2021/22 programme in South Africa, facilitates the two selected artists' interactions with scientist based at South Africa's astronomical observatories (SARAO and SAAO).

His latest Camera Obscura installation 'Lebitla la Ngaka' is on show at Javett-UP (University of Pretoria) as part of the exhibition Interfacing New Heavens open until March 2022. On 4 October 2021 Mahashe was featured on SABC 2 series *Imvelo* where he shared his research on Balobedu, the importance of formalising the *Khelobedu* Language within South Africa and his plans for devising a planetarium in Bolobedu. His recent publications include the peer reviewed journal article 'Walking Towards a Camera Obscura' (2020) in the Journal Critical African Studies, as well as 'Mashogojo, Mašokošoko, le Boshokhoshokho: notes for a story that is yet to be written' accompanying the installation 'Makhalaka' featured in the exhibition *Handle with Care* currently on at Javett UP until 31 January 2022. Mahashe is one of UCT's 2021/22 Black Academic Advancement Programme recipient. He serves on the board of the research project 'INSPIRE' based at the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO).

Mahashe's projects, which include collaboration with University of Geneva and Zurich University of Arts, and are funded by the NAC, NRF, NIHSS, UCT and Pro Helvetia Swiss Art Council.