Mohau Modisakeng

Mohau Modisakeng (Johannesburg 1986) was born and grew up in Soweto, Johannesburg. He currently lives and works between Johannesburg and Cape Town. Modisakeng completed his undergraduate degree at the Michaelis School of Fine Art, Cape Town, in 2009.

The personal is political in Modisakeng's work. Informed by his experience as a young boy in Soweto, at the crossroads of a violent political transition, Modisakeng uses memory as a portal between past and present to explore themes of history, body and place within the post-apartheid context. His photography, films, performance and installation grapple with the conflicting politics of leadership and nationhood, whilst also attempting to unpack the legacy of inequality, capital, labour and extraction of mineral wealth in contemporary South Africa.

Modisakeng's oeuvre represents a poignant moment of grieving, catharsis and critical response to the historical legacy of exploitation and current lived experience of many black South Africans. Through his work, Modisakeng critically engages with the complex mechanisms of violence, power and subjugation as propagated, and to some extent internalized, through the course of the successive colonial, apartheid and post-apartheid regimes.

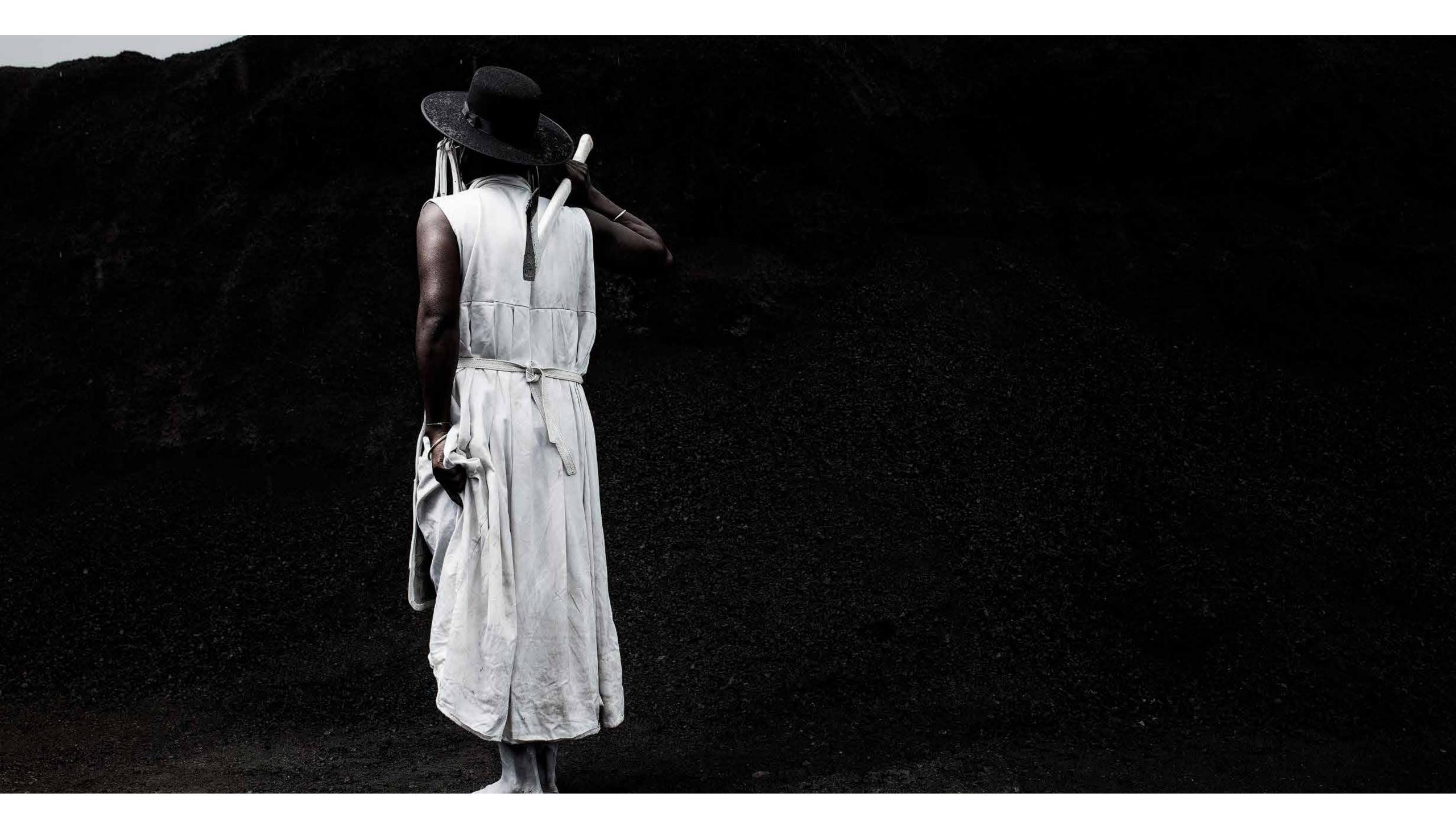


Click here to download Mohau Modisakeng's full biography as a PDF



Modisakeng uses a personal lexicon of ritual and symbolism in which his physical form becomes both a vessel and a signifier. His use of his own body is a significant shift away from the problematic depiction of the other and is a gesture of self-actualization and acknowledgment of subjective experience. Mohau Modisakeng *Endabeni 1* 2015 Ink-jet print on Epson Ultrasmooth 150 × 200cm ED of 6 + 2 APS

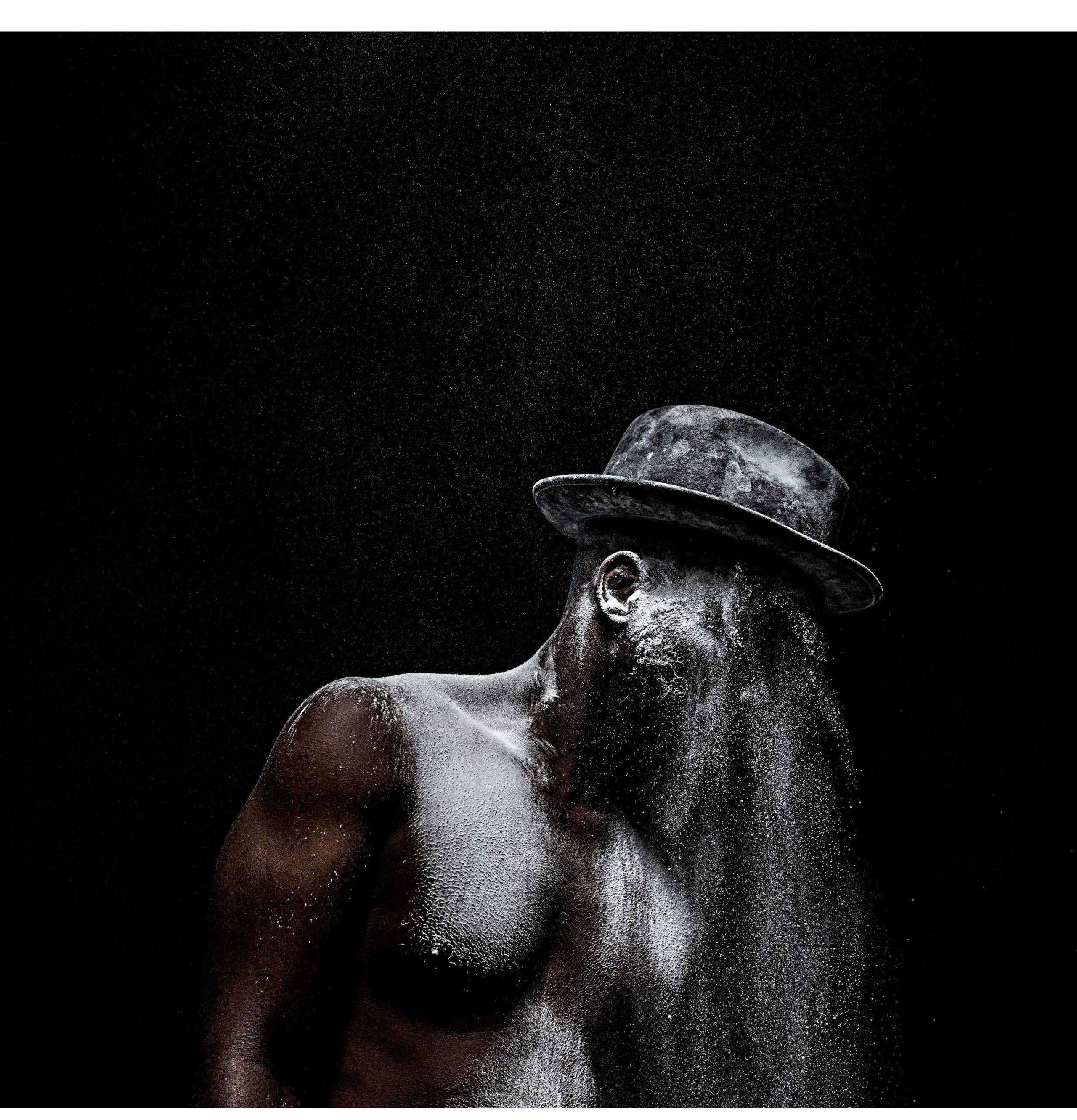
His work has been exhibited at the Laumier Sculpture Park, Saint Louis Missouri, Framer Framed Amsterdam, International Kurtzfilmtage, Oberhausen, 2016, 56th Venice Biennale (2015), MOCADA, Brooklyn New York (2015), Kunstraum Innsbruck, Austria (2015), the Museum of Fine Art, Boston (2014); 21C Museum, Kentucky, Massachusetts (2014); IZIKO South African National Gallery, Cape Town (2014); Saatchi Gallery, London (2012); and the Dak'Art Biennale, Dakar (2012). It has also been placed in numerous private collections, both locally and internationally, as well as public collections including the Johannesburg Art Gallery, IZIKO South African National Gallery, Saatchi Gallery and Zeitz MOCAA.



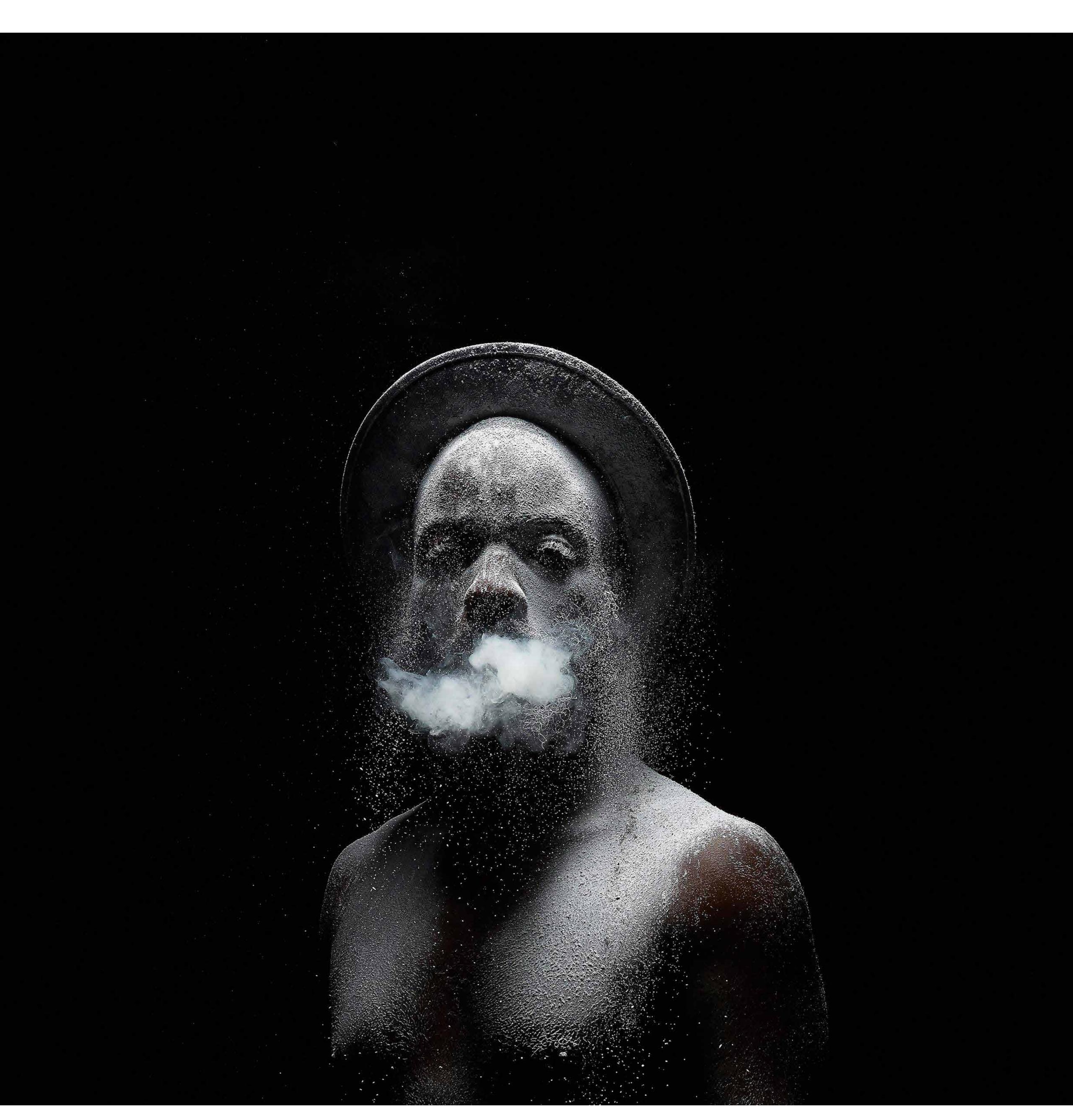
Mohua Modisakeng Endabeni 4 2015 Ink-jet print on epson ultrasmooth 150×200cm Edition of 6 + 2 APS



Mohau Modisakeng Untitled Metamorphosis 1 2015 Ink-jet print on Epson Hot Press Natural 120×120cm EDof 5 + 2 APS



Mohau Modisakeng Untitled Metamorphosis 3 2015 Ink-jet print on Epson Hot Press Natural 120×120cm EDof 5 + 2 APS



Mohau Modisakeng Untitled Metamorphosis 7 2015 Ink-jet print on Epson Hot Press Natural 120×120cm EDof 5 + 2 APS