

Artist-In-Residence @TDA

Announcing our 3rd Artist

Ms Thitaku Kushonya Maphaha

A Master Basket Weaver



We are very pleased to announce that Ms Thitaku Maphaha is our third Artist-In-Residence at The Dow Academy.

Ms Maphaha is a talented master basket weaver who offers hands-on workshops at Botswana Quality Baskets, her studio near Maun. The Etsha 6 born woman's vision is to see women succeed through building women cooperatives for self-sustenance. In the past, Ms Maphaha has supported quality control and product development training for women through Travel for Impact. To date, she has founded 5 Basket Weaving Cooperatives for Botswana women in the Ngamiland area. Ms Maphaha's fine artwork, under Weave a Dream Basket Near Maun, has been listed on the Top 10 Travel Experiences in Botswana. Ms Maphaha's quality work has been appreciated by organisations such as Nhaba Museum and Kalahari Conservation Society.



While traditionally taught by her mother from the age of 5, Ms Maphaha's functional and household craft are used to store seeds and winnow grains. Traditional basket shapes or forms depict their different functional uses as follows:

- a. *Leselo* - A flat basket used for winnowing.
- b. *Tlatlana* - A flared basket used for gathering and carrying.

Courage.Creativity.Community.

www.thedowacademy.org



- c. *Sesigo* - A grain storage basket used to store the harvest.
- d. *Motlhotlho wa bojalwa* - A beer basket is used to strain traditional beer
- e. *Letloa* - A fish net basket, used to catch live fish
- f. *Setlatla* - A traditional door



Basket weaving by hand is considered high art by Bayeyi, Basubiya and Hambukushu communities, located primarily in the Ngamiland and Chobe regions of Botswana. Through cooperatives, women hone their artistry to weave fibres from palm reeds known as *mokolwane* into intricate and durable baskets and lidded bowls using 100%

natural raw materials from the region.

Under Ms Maphaha skillful guidance, The Dow Academy Village will learn how to prepare palm fibres, dyeing them into a variety of brown hues through boiling [click here](#) for an example. In areas where there are no palm leaves, craftswomen use a variety of locally occurring grasses such as *motsikiti* and *mosegaselo* and select other fine sustainable materials for color, texture and uniqueness such as sisal, cane, bamboo, creepers, papyrus reeds and banana fibres.



Other integral tools used in making baskets are a bowl of water to moisten material, a knife or a pair of scissors to cut materials and a stone for flattening the material.

Courage.Creativity.Community.

www.thedowacademy.org



We **@TDA** have commissioned Ms Maphaha to create 3 big natural woven baskets-*ditlatlana* (a single basket is called *tlatlana*); one for each of our campuses embodying our 3 school values, ***Courage, Creativity and Community.***

Please join us in welcoming Ms Maphaha and her apprentice to the TDA community.

#Creativity

#Community

#PushaBW

#ArtistInResidence@TDA

01 June 2021

Courage.Creativity.Community.

www.thedowacademy.org