



WINNER OF THE

You are cordially invited to the

2025 Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) Humanities Book Award Lecture

on

Riotous Deathscapes

by

Prof Hugo ka Canham (Institute for Social and Health Sciences, University of South Africa)

Date: 24 October 2025

Time: 10:00 – 11:30

Platform: Zoom

RSVP: [Click here](#) to register (After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar)

About Prof Hugo ka Canham



Hugo ka Canham is a writer and professor at the Institute for Social and Health Sciences, University of South Africa where he directs the centre for Black Planetary Studies. He studies the phenomenology of black life at the margins of human value, suffering and death. His work is invested in dismantling the binaries between the human and the natural, multispecies world. It may be understood within the transdisciplinary framework of Black Planetary Studies. His book, *Riotous Deathscapes* is published by Duke University Press and copublished by Wits University Press.

In this groundbreaking work, Prof Canham introduces Mpondo theory, a framework rooted in indigenous and Black ways of knowing, exploring amaMpondo people's capacity to endure state abandonment in South Africa's Eastern Cape. He examines the intersections of life, death, and systemic oppression, emphasising ancestral connections and the natural world as sites of resistance.

Praised for its originality and interdisciplinary depth, *Riotous Deathscapes* weaves oral histories, historical narratives, and radical Black intellectual traditions. It challenges capitalist notions of land ownership, offering a powerful counter-narrative to Western paradigms.

The Review Panel described the book as:

"An extraordinary piece of scholarship that develops a theory of living and dying rooted in indigeneity without resorting to essentialism."

PROGRAMME

- 10:00 – 10:15 **Welcome and introduction to the Lecture**
Prof Candice Livingston, CPUT, Humanities Book Awards Panel Member
- 10:15 – 10:50 **Riotous Deathscapes**
Prof Hugo ka Canham, University of South Africa
- 10:50 – 11:25 **Discussions**
- 11:25 – 11:30 **Closing Remarks**
Mrs Susan Veldsman, ASSAf, Director of Scholarly Publishing Programme