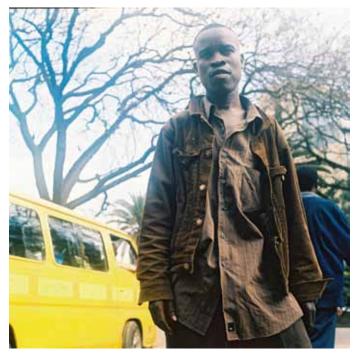
AYANA V JACKSON



In Pursuit of Mobility



Transient and Incongruous.



Coyote



Encouraging Alliances

COMMUTER VANS AND NO MAN'S LAND: NAIROBI CITYSCAPE

The function of a nation-state and by extension the purpose of its borders is to delineate a community united by political and cultural exclusivity. Globalisation has challenged the significance of these borders by encouraging alliances along the lines of trade networks and cultural solidarity rather than national identity. In response, frontiers are traversed by citizens, migrants, refugees, and tourists who at times find themselves occupying common territory without the requirement of allegiance to the state. In this reality, public space becomes a no man's land whose occupants are transient and incongruous. Accountable only to its own logic, the commuter van and the city centre it services transforms into an ambiguous space between border posts and the driver becomes a smuggler of passengers between virtual perimeters. For brief moments individuals who otherwise would never find themselves in tandem achieve solidarity in the pursuit of mobility. In a 2008 opinion piece, theorist Achille Mbembe remarks, »In a world of rapidly expanding exploitation of a nomadic labour force, mobility is the precondition for securing livelihood ... Africa needs to free itself from the curse of the nation-state by learning to do without borders«. The commuter van, as native of no man's land, is pregnant with this knowledge. Their potential as equalizer democratises access, encourages mobility and – perhaps – makes the borders of the modern nation-state more porous.



Between Virtual Perimeters

Alle Abbildungen aus der Serie / all images from the series: Commuter Vans and No Mans's Land, 2008. C-prints, 100 cm x 100 cm.

Ayana V Jackson, born 1977, lives and works in Johannesburg (RSA) and New York City (USA). 1995 – 1999 Spelman College, 2005 Universität der Künste, Berlin (D). Solo exhibitions (selection): 2008 »Looking Glass Self«, Peter Hermann Gallery, Berlin; 2007 »African by Legacy, Mexican by Birth«, Mijares Gallery in conjunction with UCLA, Los Angeles (USA); 2006 »Viajes Personales«, Bluefields Indian and Caribbean University, Bluefields (NI); »African by Legacy, Mexican by Birth«, Guadeloupe Arts Center, San Antonio (USA); Galeria de la Raza curated by San Francisco Mexican Museum, San Francisco (USA); 2005 »Viajes Personales«, Instituto Universitario de Barlovento, Higuerote (VE); Biblioteca Virgilio Barco, Bogota (CO); UNAN-Leon, Leon (NI); Museo del Hombre, Santo Domingo (DO); »African By Legacy, Mexican by Birth (Series 1)«, Inter-America Foundation, National Council of La Raza, Inter-Agency Consultation on Race in Latin America, Washington DC (USA). Group Exhibitions (selection): 2009 8th Bamako Encounters / African Photography Biennial, Bamako (ML); 2008 »The Shoot Out: A Lonely Crusade, Homage to Jamel Shabazz«, The George and Leah McKenna Museum of African American Art, New Orleans (USA); 2007 »Post Millennial Black Madonna Paradise/Inferno«, Museum of Contemporary African Diasporic Art (MoCADA) and Skylight Gallery, Brooklyn (USA).