



*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 democratizes 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.*

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