

Always Moving Forward

Contemporary African Photography from the Wedge Collection

Curated by **Kenneth Montague**

GALLERY 44, TORONTO | PLATFORM, WINNIPEG | ART GALLERY OF PETERBOROUGH

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Contemporary African Photography
from the Wedge Collection

© 2010, Mohamed Bourouissa, Mohamed Camara, Calvin Dondo, Samuel Fosso, Hassan Hajjaj, Bouchra Khalili, Antony Kimani, Lebohang Mashiloane, Aida Muluneh, Dawit L. Petros, Zwelethu Mthethwa, Guy Tillim, Andrew Tshabangu, Nontsikelelo 'Lolo' Veleko, and Pamela Edmonds

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PLATFORM centre for
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Zwelethu Mthethwa,
Untitled, 2000

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Hassan Hajjaj, repeated detail from
Nido Bouchra, 2009

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Andrew Tshabangu, *Butchery,
Traders and Taxis* (detail), 2003

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MOHAMED BOURRISSA | Galeries les filles du calvaire, Paris

MOHAMED CAMARA | Galerie Pierre Brullé, Paris

CALVIN DONDO | Gallery MOMO, Johannesburg

SAMUEL FOSSO | Galerie Jean Marc Patras, Paris

HASSAN HAJJAJ | Rose Issa, London / Third Line, Dubai

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GUY TILLIM | Michael Stevenson Gallery, Cape Town

ANDREW TSHABANGU | Gallery MOMO, Johannesburg

NONTSIKELELO 'LOLO' VELEKO | Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg

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Mohamed Camara
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THIS CATALOGUE DOCUMENTS *Always Moving Forward: Contemporary African Photography from the Wedge Collection*, a new exhibition curated by Kenneth Montague. Featuring an impressive selection of contemporary photographic artists, the exhibition reveals a collection of empowering and timely stories of Africa and African identity. In the words of the exhibition's curator Kenneth Montague, "our aim is not to define an 'African' commonality, but rather to suggest that there exists a wealth of diversity and a strong desire to express individuality."

The photographic works presented are recent additions to the Wedge Collection produced by international contemporary artists: Mohamed Bourouissa, Mohamed Camara, Calvin Dondo, Samuel Fosso, Hassan Hajjaj, Bouchra Khalili, Antony Kimani, Lebohang Mashiloane, Aïda Muluneh, Dawit L. Petros, Zwelethu Mthethwa, Guy Tillim, Andrew Tshabangu, and Nontsikelelo 'Lolo' Veleko. It is a pleasure for us to co-present this exhibition, opening in 2010 at the CONTACT Festival of Photography, and touring to Winnipeg in 2011, and Peterborough in 2012.

We would like to acknowledge the support of the Consulate General of France in Toronto for providing travel funds to Paris-based artists. Thank you to the programming committee at Gallery 44, and a special thank you to Sally Frater for bringing this important exhibition for consideration. We also wish to thank our supporters, members, and volunteers in helping us to participate in the dialogue on contemporary art.

On behalf of the organizing galleries, we would like to thank Pamela Edmonds for her insightful essay about the works of the

fourteen participating artists. Thank you to David Schulman from Shapco Printing, Inc. for his financial support and expertise in the printing of this catalogue. Most importantly, thank you to Kenneth Montague and all the artists featured in *Always Moving Forward: Contemporary African Photography from the Wedge Collection* for bringing this fresh perspective on African photography to Canada.

LISE BEAUDRY, *Gallery 44*

J.J. KEGAN MCFADDEN, *PLATFORM*

CELESTE SCOPELITES, *Art Gallery of Peterborough*



MOHAMED BOUROUISSA,
'Le Téléphone,' from the series
Périphéries, 109 x 95.5 cm
digital print, 2006.

Always Moving Forward

Contemporary African Photography
from the Wedge Collection

by **Pamela Edmonds**

Time would pass, old empires would fall and new ones take their place. The relations of classes had to change before I discovered that it's not the quality of goods and utility that matter, but movement, not where you are or what you have, but where you come from, where you are going and the rate at which you are getting there.

— C.L.R. JAMES

Africa is a continent in constant mutation. A mountain in the making.

— SIMON NJAMI

IN CHAOS AND METAMORPHOSIS, the opening catalogue essay for *Africa Remix*, the largest survey exhibition of contemporary African art to date, curator Simon Njami articulates the incessant struggle to define and represent African life. "It is impossible to fully comprehend what Africa is. Like placing a bet that cannot be won." With an estimated population of one billion people, Africa is made up of over fifty nations with an estimated one thousand different languages spoken and as many distinct ethnic groups. It is perhaps the most linguistically and ethnically diverse of the entire world's continents.

Revealing the complexity and diversity of African heritage through the photographic image has been one of the goals of Wedge Curatorial Projects and its founding director Dr. Kenneth Montague, whose projects have been asserting or ‘wedge-ing’ a space for African diasporic creativity in the contemporary Canadian arts landscape for over a decade. Based in Toronto, Wedge exhibitions have been acclaimed features in the city’s annual international photography festival, CONTACT, premiering the work of some of the world’s most acclaimed photographers including Jürgen Schadeberg, Dennis Morris, Malick Sidibé, Seydou Keita, Rotimi Fani-Kayode, and J.D. Okhai Ojeikere.

Beginning as a private gallery in Montague’s home, a loft designed by Del Terrelonge (who also designed an extensive ten year Wedge retrospective publication *FLAVA* in 2007), Wedge has grown to include a range of innovative programming, including group exhibitions and focused solo projects, partnered presentations with Canadian and international arts institutions, community workshops, lectures and musical compilations.

Montague’s vision is driven by his

remarkably cohesive private collection, an impressive range of photographic portraits by both historic and contemporary artists taken in varied contexts and styles from archival, documentary and studio portraits, to street photography and conceptually staged tableaux. The works range from vintage Harlem Renaissance images, to documentary photographs of Africans in Latin America; from pictures taken in black British neighborhoods in the 1970s, to shots of urban street life in New York’s burgeoning 1980s hip-hop scene. These works are linked by the impetus to represent the complex, changing nature of identity within modernity, particularly as it relates to the global diasporic experience of ‘blackness’.

In the last decade, photography, video and installation have gained popularity as prime mediums of expression for an emerging generation of global artists exploring different dimensions of the African imaginary and African spaces. Major exhibitions including Okwui Enwezor’s *Snap Judgments: New Positions in African Photography*, the exhibition titled *Flow* at New York’s Studio Museum and the recent work presented at the renowned Biennial of

African Photography, the Bamako Encounters (held in Mali since 1994), have brought worldwide attention to a rising number of artists who have turned to lens-based practices to open up a critical ‘third space’ that counters the history of Western media as a purveyor of ‘Afro-pessimism’.

These critically praised exhibitions and representations are part of a larger shift away from western ideals and biases, toward an African identity defined by Africans and the diaspora. The significance of this shift cannot be underestimated: for Africa to move beyond the ever-present image in the media of “the wretched of the earth” (Frantz Fanon), we must turn toward those who know it, and Africans must tell their own stories. Against this backdrop, photography, one of the most democratic of mediums, has emerged significantly within post-colonial, post-apartheid and increasingly globalized locations as a strategic device to challenge the Western conceptions of Africa allowing the continent to speak for itself.

This group exhibition brings together new and recent works from the Wedge Collection by a cross-section of artists from throughout the African region, all of

whom were born during or after the years of independence in the 1960s. This group of emerging and established artists has gained visibility in Africa and throughout the international art world with work that reflects the current shift away from the commercial studio portraiture that predominated in Africa in previous decades, to reveal an increasing emphasis on conceptual art, documentary, and fashion photography. They also emphasize a modern and urban Africa, a place that’s responding to the myriad challenges of globalization.

The artists in *Always Moving Forward* are: Mohamed Bourouissa, Mohamed Camara, Calvin Dondo, Samuel Fosso, Hassan Hajjaj, Bouchra Khalili, Antony Kimani, Lebohang Mashiloane, Aida Muluneh, Dawit L. Petros, Zwelethu Mthethwa, Guy Tillim, Andrew Tshabangu and Nontsikelelo ‘Lolo’ Veleko. Living and working across Africa, North America and Europe they are a generation of savvy cultural observers, uniquely conscious of, and responsive to recent African history, global economics and their distinct local environment. Pinpointing what unites these disparate artists is difficult; each has their own “intuitive response

to the persistent pressure of our media-saturated society” says Montague. And yet there are commonalities: many works explore the challenges and upheavals imposed by twenty-first century life. As the exhibition title suggests, migration, exile, and displacement are part of the fabric of contemporary African life, and these upheavals are explored in subtle and complex ways.

It is important to make clear that this collection does not offer a definable contemporary African identity; in fact, the work points to the reality of African diasporic identities as being fluid, constantly in flux. Montague comments that “the aim is not to define an ‘African’ commonality, but rather to suggest that there exists a wealth of diversity and a strong desire to express individuality. These new voices are often a response to emerging technologies, transitioning landscapes, rampant globalization and forces of capitalism including the influence of advertising and new media.”

With an historical awareness, these artists force us to confront preconceived ideas of national and ethnic identities and elucidate the tensions that arise from

SAMUEL FOSSO, *The Golf Player*,
30.5 x 30.5 cm, chromogenic print, 1998

the underlying pressures of globalization. Playing with the viewers’ expectations, their imagery ranges from colourfully banal to starkly bizarre; from politically involved or compassionate, to objective or poetic. Beauty, street culture, immigration, memory, dreams, survival, and everyday life are among the themes addressed. Taken together they capture a spirit of strength and perseverance activated through creative resistance and unyielding invention.

Curator Simon Njami contends that the problem that confronts the contemporary African artist lies in the inadequacy of existing tools for expression. “It is a matter therefore of inventing, creating oneself, in the very sense of the term, of finding a language that reflects one’s aspirations.”² One artist who exemplifies the persistent drive to create oneself is Samuel Fosso, the celebrated Cameroonian-born Nigerian photographer who for over thirty-five years,



has transformed himself into multiple guises including sailor, pirate, drag queen, golfer, flight attendant, rock star, and African tribal chief, in his campy self-portraits. Fosso is often spoken of as Central Africa's answer to Cindy Sherman. But as Leslie Camhi points out, "Sherman's art evolved in the waning years of the American dream, amid the heady bohemia of late 1970s Manhattan. Fosso arrived at his signature style, while a teenage refugee living in Bangui, the remote capital of the Central African Republic."³

Urban street photographers Hassan Hajjaj and Nontsikelelo "Lolo" Veleko explore similar themes, employing clothes and fashion as props to deliberately challenge assumptions of identity based on appearances and historical background. Hassan dresses up Marrakech locals in self-made fashion brands, revealing his vision of the city through colourful and humorous narrative portraits, while Veleko's street shots of Johannesburg hipsters vividly dressed in eclectic, highly individualized styles, exude a stark confidence and cool rebellion.

Zimbabwean artist Calvin Dondo also situates his work in the urban landscape.



(LEFT) NONTSIKELELO "LOLO"
VELEKO, *Vuyelwa*, 30 x 39.9 cm
pigment print on cotton rag, 2004

(RIGHT) HASSAN HAJJAJ, *Nido*
Bouchra, 136 x 93.5 cm digital
chromogenic print, 2009

However, instead of spotlighting single subjects, Dondo's photographs plummet viewers directly into harried scenes full of anonymous crowds. His series *Charge Office Harare* (2000) presents myriad commuters threading their way through the city, and each other. They gaze at us, at others, or seem disconnected, suggesting an emotional alienation that becomes familiar in an urban city. The trope of the congested city is also explored by South African artist Andrew Tshanbangu. Renowned for his distinctive black and white photographs, his works explore and document the transitions taking place in his hometown of Johannesburg. Tshanbangu's Johannesburg is not beautiful or romantic, but aggressive and gritty, uneasily shouldering its burden of exploding wealth and mass immigration, constantly changing its shape, and never at rest. *Butchery, Traders and Taxis* (2003) (see pages 2-3) is an example of photographs the artist has





CALVIN DONDO, *Untitled* from the series *Harare Charge Office*, 40 x 60 cm chromogenic print, 2000

taken from inside moving taxis.

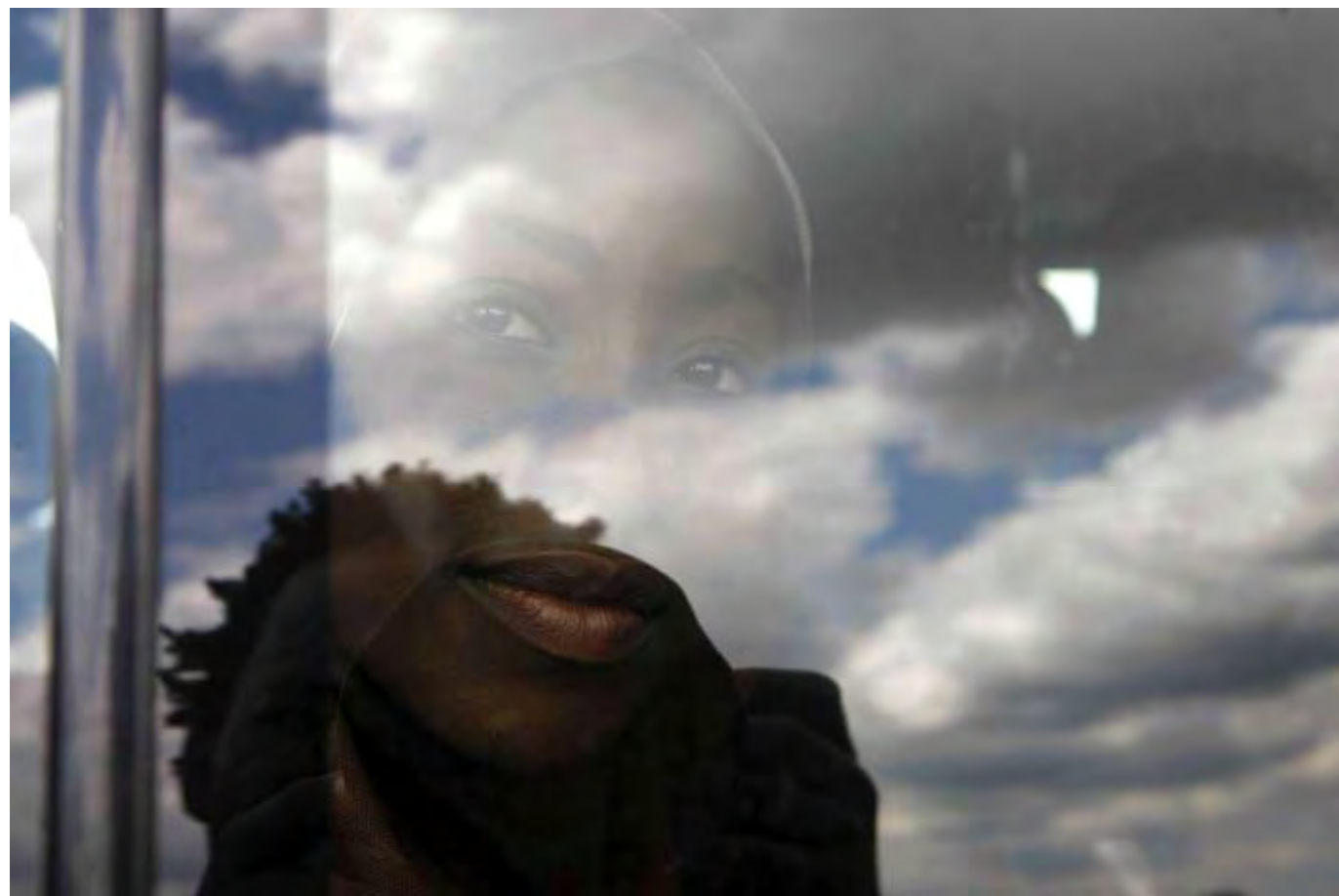
A more sombre, recurring theme is evident in the transcendental homelessness emanating from Guy Tillim's photographs of cell-like apartments in decaying high-rises in Johannesburg, or in Lebohang Mashiloane's documentation of Somali refugees in transit to South Africa in hopes of a better life. Their imagery speaks to the desire for self-determination and freedom, and the price that is sometimes paid for such dreams.

Tillim, who grew up in a South Africa when it was still under apartheid, began his career as a photojournalist with the collective Afrapix in the mid 1980s. He is one of South Africa's most celebrated photographers, and is known for his complex storytelling. For the photo essay *Avenue Patrice Lumumba* (2008), Tillim travelled throughout Africa, documenting city streets named after Patrice Lumumba, a leader in the African independence movement.

Lumumba became the first legally elected Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1960, but was assassinated in 1961.

Tillim explains, "Patrice Lumumba's dream, his nationalism, is discernible in the structures, if one reads certain clues, as is the death of his dream in these de facto monuments."⁴ He adds, "In the frailty of this strange and beautiful hybrid landscape struggling to contain the calamities of the past fifty years, there is an indisputably African identity. This is my embrace of it."⁵ The people in these powerful and poignant landscapes are often positioned as peripheral, located at the edge of the frame, or slightly out of focus, but there is an acute sense of their humanity and their strong will to survive.

Blurring the lines between cinema and the fine arts, documentary and experimental, French-Moroccan artist Bouchra Khalili explores borders, emigration, and displacement in her video and installation work. Shot from a single vantage point *Mapping Journey* (2008) reveals the disordered hidden maps that a migratory experience can yield as a path is traced back and forth on a map, following the



complicated journeys of migrants in several Mediterranean cities. The voice-overs and subtitles explain the dangerous attempts to slip across borders into safe havens. Because illegal immigrants are not offered straight itineraries and are set adrift by forced detours, their trips reconstruct the physical landscape, and produce an alternative mental geography built from the imagination.

South African artist Zwelethu Mthethwa is also concerned with the living conditions and experiences of the migrants who come from rural areas to the city to seek employment in the industrial centres of South Africa. His art addresses the cultural disorientation of newcomers in their search for survival as they create homes for themselves, recycling materials such as wood, corrugated iron, plastic sheeting and cardboard for shelter. In his large-format colour photographs, he captures the dignity and pride of his subjects in the modest interiors of their dwellings, which are often decorated with discarded consumer products. Says Mthethwa, “Art in our day is not really done for art’s sake; it questions issues related to global processes such as urban industrialization, contemporary cultures,

previous spread

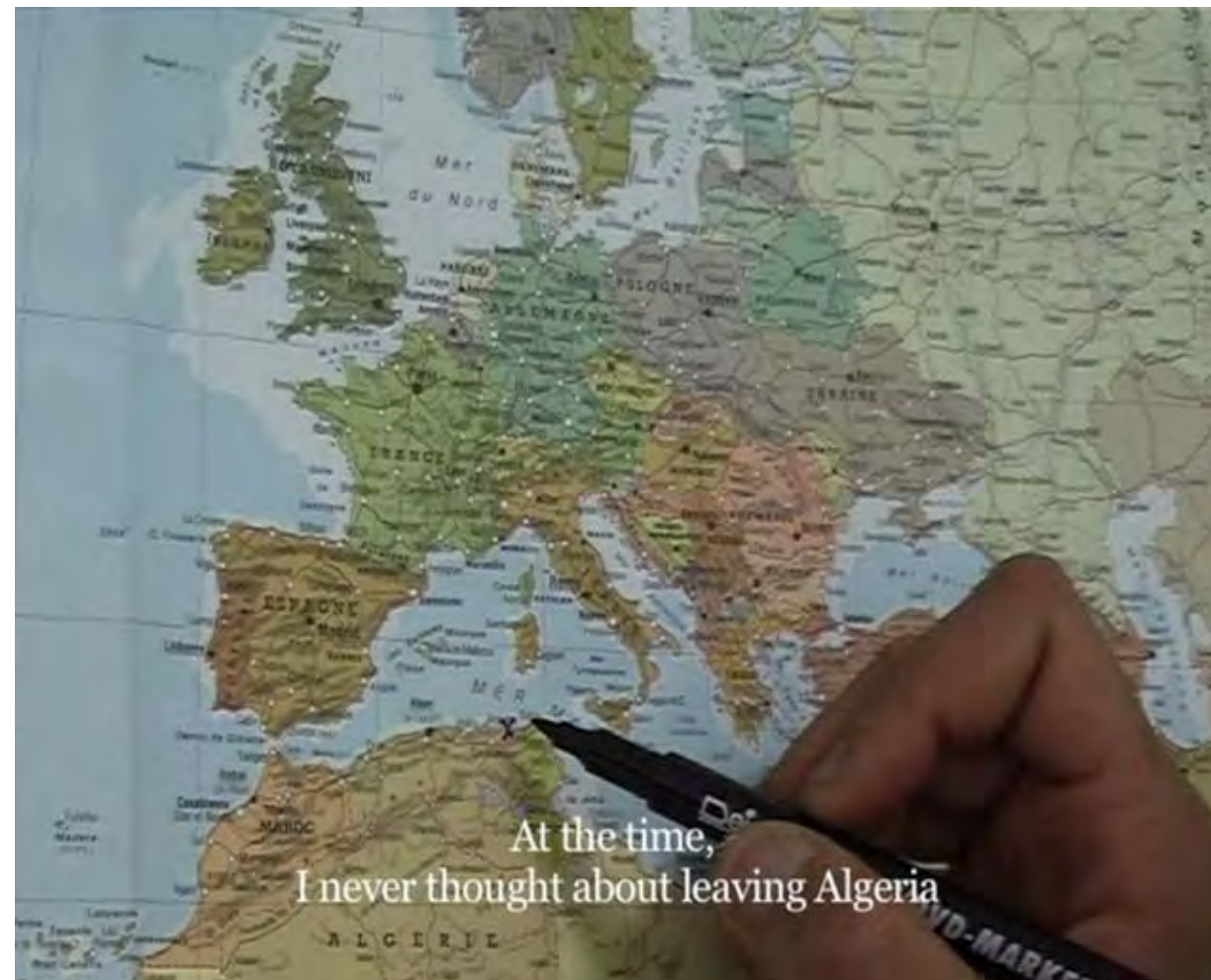
(LEFT) GUY TILLIM, *Apartment Building, Avenue Bagamoyo, Beira, Mozambique* from the series *Avenue Patrice Lumumba*, 91.5 cm x 131.5 cm archival pigment ink on cotton rag paper, 2008

(RIGHT) LEBOHANG MASHILOANE, *Untitled*, from the series *Somali Refugee*, 29.7 x 42 cm digital print, 2009

BOUCHRA KHALILI, *Mapping Journey #1*, video, 2009

identity crisis, gender, race and social imbalances.”⁶

The jarring inequalities between rich and poor become painfully apparent in Johannesburg, South Africa’s economic hub. Photojournalist Antony Kimani documents the lifestyle of the city’s upwardly mobile in his *Black Diamonds* series, a marketing term created to describe members of the new black elite. Most of this group have long abandoned the townships for the city’s upmarket northern suburbs, but many still return on weekends to drink in shebeens posing in designer clothes and flashy cars. These ‘Afropolitans’, to use another term coined by Ghanaian/Nigerian/British writer Taiye Tuakli-Wosornu, take pride in their Africanness while acknowledging that they exist in a cosmopolitan environment influenced by westernized preferences and





ZWELETHU MTHETHWA, *Untitled*, 96.5 x 129.5 cm
chromogenic print, 2000

consumption habits.⁷

Several artists engage with perceptions of difference, particularly with the notion of absence and presence in relation to the ‘othered’ body and the space surrounding it. Mohamed Camara’s satirical and ironic, staged self-portraits present him as a tourist in European ski resorts, while Dawit L. Petros’ conceptual landscapes connect disparate locations through ideas of movement and embodiment.

In Camara’s *Certain matins, je suis le cactus de Sibirie* (2005), the artist is surveying a monumental landscape; his contemplative pose enhanced by his natural surroundings. By isolating himself within a postcard setting, Camara becomes a metaphor for exile and loneliness. Describing his process, Petros states: “Living between geographical locations; Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, Canada and the United States, has required the navigation of myriad terrains. This

process has provided a set of expansive relationships; an awareness of the necessity of simultaneity; and the recognition of the contradictory ties that bind the dispersed to physical and psychic places.”⁸ Petros’ mixed-media installation *The Idea of North* (2007) was inspired by pianist Glenn Gould’s radio documentary of the same title. Gould’s documentary is a meditation on the relationship between the Canadian imagination and the vast northern frontier. By linking the American west, Kilimanjaro, and Canada’s north, Petros’ contemplation becomes frontier as an internal space, one informed by multiple locales.

Proposition 1: Mountain (2007) is a close-up vivid colour photograph of a hand holding what appears to be a pile of ice, positioned as a mountain set against a white background and blue sky. In actuality, this scene is not of a northern climate, but the arid salt flats of California and it is this very ambiguity that suggests how displacement can open up creative and emotional possibilities. As Simone White suggests, place is defined as much by our ideas and ideals as a physical landscape: “location is not a place, but a proposition.”



left

ANTONY KIMANI, *Berlin* from the series *Black Diamonds*, 29 x 42 cm digital print, 2009

right

MOHAMED CAMARA, *Certain matins, je suis le cactus de siberie*, 37.5 x 28 cm, inkjet print, 2005

Through his concept of the Black Atlantic, Paul Gilroy stressed the importance of understanding race as a phenomenon that both emerged and was resisted transnationally. Scholars like W.E.B. Du Bois, C.L.R. James and Frantz Fanon also examined the ways in which slavery and racism were pivotal to the formation of Western modernity. Each focused on the ways in which blackness was absolutely necessary for the construction of whiteness as an identity and documented the myriad ways in which the black diaspora communities, in their attempts to construct artistic and aesthetic responses to racism, contributed to an African identity that now informs the West.

Mohamed Bourouissa deconstructs these power dynamics through racially charged images within Paris' suburban housing projects in a photographic series called *Périphérique*. Home to large numbers of often impoverished immigrants, many from



Bourouissa's native Algeria, *les banlieues* have served as the centre for volatile debates surrounding the acceptance of immigrant communities in France. The pictures look like live-action reportage, but in fact the scenes are entirely staged and performed. The artist's models, whom he meets when scouting for locations, are asked to pose and play roles, in what becomes a collaborative event and a collective fiction.

Bourouissa describes his photographs as deriving from an 'emotional geometry', a way of placing a subject in space to create a moment of heightened tension, when anything, or nothing, could happen.⁹ Staged like cinema shots, his compositions reference grand European painters such as Caravaggio, Delacroix, Gericault, and conceptual photographers such as Jeff Wall. In *Le Téléphone* (2006) (see page 8), Bourouissa captures an intense stare-down between two young men. In the background, another youth is poised, cell phone in hand, ready to document a possible drama. Behind him another stares vacantly into the phone and not to the others, echoing perhaps our globalized preoccupation with social networking and virtual realities at the

DAWIT L. PETROS, *Proposition 1: Mountain*, 66 x 86.4 cm digital print, 2007

expense of real connection. Accordingly, the artwork's title points to the object of focus, *Le Téléphone*, as the mode of communication: technology trumps the individual. Here the artist re-appropriates subjects that have been made into clichés by the media and recontextualises them as actors in their own real-life dramas.

Conversely, Aïda Muluneh does not present staged scenes, but documents real lives of ordinary people in her native Ethiopia, as a drive to oppose Western mainstream ideas of the country. Moved by distorted media images of the Ethiopian famine, Muluneh took up the camera to present another side of the story. Her elegantly composed black and white scenes have a timeless quality, showing Ethiopian people in all their dignity. Her subjects are often women such as *Girl in the Light* (2001) and *Girl in Car* (2001), the quest in her work seems to be an effort to rediscover the landscape and people she left as a young girl. *Of Girl in Car*



(2001) she writes: “I shot this picture on my first trip to Ethiopia after I had been gone nearly 21 years. I had spent a few days walking and driving in Addis Ababa and it was by coincidence that I saw the little girl riding so proudly with her father... I wanted to show that regardless of our differences in the world we all share the same emotions that can transcend cultural boundaries.”¹⁰ In photography, Muluneh has found a medium of transformation.

Frantz Fanon wrote: “A national culture is not a folk-lore, nor an abstract populism that believes it can discover a people’s true nature. A national culture is the whole body of efforts made by a people in the sphere of thought to describe, justify and praise the action through which that people has created itself and keeps itself in existence.”¹¹

Thriving on contradiction, movement and the need to look back into the past and forward into the future, *Always Moving Forward* is a testament to the vibrancy and diversity of contemporary African photography and African life, a collection that reinvents with surprising possibility.

1 Simon Njami, “Chaos and Metamorphosis” in *Africa Remix: Contemporary Art of a Continent* (London: Hayward Gallery, 2005), 13.

2 Simon Njami, “Times of Confusion” in *Juxtapoz Arts & Culture Magazine: The African Art Issue* (November 2008, vol. 15, no. 11), 63.

3 Leslie Camhi “A Man of a Thousand Faces” in *New York Times* (Spring 2009), <http://www.nytimes.com/indexes/2009/03/08/style/t/index.html#pageName=08fasso>, accessed February 6, 2010.

4 Guy Tillim and Robert Gardner, *Avenue Patrice Lumumba* (New York: Prestel, 2008), 2.

5 Ibid.

AÏDA MULNEH, *Girl in Car*,
49.5 x 76 cm chromogenic
print, 2001

6 <http://www.rosekorberart.com/artists/mthethwa.html>, accessed February 6, 2010.

7 Taiye Tuakli-Wosornu, “What is an Afropolitan” in *The Afro Beat*, <http://theafrobeat.blogspot.com/2007/03/what-is-afropolitan-by-taiye-tuakli.html>, accessed February 6, 2010.

8 <http://www.alexandergray.com/Images/Files/Petros.Press.Release.10-15-2008.pdf>, accessed February 6, 2010.

9 Magali Jauffret, “The Suburbs as Visual Object” in *Périphérique: Mohamed Bourouissa* (Toulouse: Le Château d’Eau, 2008), 7.

10 Aida Muluneh, “Profile: Aida Muluneh” in *Juxtapoz Arts & Culture Magazine: The African Art Issue* (November 2008, vol. 15, no. 11), 44.

11 Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1968), 188.



MOHAMED BOUROUISSA

Born in Blida, Algeria, Mohamed Bourouissa describes his latest series *Peripheries* as derived from an 'emotional geometry', a way of placing a subject in space to create a moment of heightened *tension where anything or nothing could happen*. Bourouissa graduated from the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs in Paris and completed a Master's Degree at the Sorbonne. His work was featured in The New Museum's first triennial *The Generational: Younger Than Jesus* in New York. In 2010, among other group and solo exhibitions, Bourouissa will be participating in Manifesta 8, in Murcia, Spain. He lives and works in Paris.

MOHAMMED CAMARA

Born in Bamako, Mohamed Camara's resume boasts widely travelled shows including Bamako 03, Bamako 05, and *Snap Judgments: New Positions in Contemporary African Photography*. Camara has had solo shows in Paris, and at the Tate Modern in London. His work is featured in the collections of the National Museum of Modern Art, the Centre Pompidou, and the Maison Européenne de la Photographie. He began his career in 2001 as a self-taught photographer with a borrowed digital camera. Camara lives and works in Paris and in Bamako.

CALVIN DONDO

Calvin Dondo was born in Harare, Zimbabwe, where he studied photography at Harare Polytechnic College. Since 1988 he has worked as a freelance photographer and curator. He also teaches photography courses and works on international development projects. His work has been published by the Associated Press, Agence France Presse and Black Star USA, and is also found in international collections and museums. In 2003, he was curator for the National Exhibition devoted to Zimbabwe, and in 2007 he received the Grand Prix at the Bamako Encounters, African Photography Biennial. Dondo's work focuses on the effects of globalization, and he lives and works in Zimbabwe.

SAMUEL FOSSO

Born in Kumbain, Cameroon, Samuel Fosso is one of Africa's most celebrated photographers, and his art is a unique exploration of identity. After opening his own photography studio at the age of thirteen, he began making a series of self-portraits. The excitement of assuming new personas encouraged what has become his signature style. Fosso's work has been shown in venues such as the Photographers' Gallery, the Guggenheim Museum, and the Tate Modern. Fosso currently lives and works in Bangui, Central African Republic.

HASSAN HAJJAJ

Born in Morocco in the early 1960s, Hassan Hajjaj moved to London at the age of fourteen. Hajjaj created his own fashion label R.A.P. in the 1980s, which revealed his capacity to bridge British and Moroccan culture. His photographs combine stereotypical imagery such as the odalisque, a female slave sometimes seen as a 19th century symbol of oriental exoticism, with icons of contemporary fashion. Hajjaj is keen to explore the perception/reflection relationship between the Orient and the Occident. His work was recently included in the 8th Bamako Encounters, African Photography Biennial. Hajjaj currently lives and works between London and Marrakech.

BOUCHRA KHALILI

Born in Casablanca, Bouchra Khalili studied cinema at the Sorbonne Nouvelle and Fine Arts at the École Nationale Supérieure d'Arts de Paris-Cergy. A dedicated artist and activist, her work moves between fine art and documentary questioning physical and imaginary frontiers, displacement, territory and immigration. Her work has been shown internationally, at the African Photography Biennial, the New York Video Festival, at MACRO and Villa Médicis in Rome, the Biennial of Moving Images in Geneva, and the La Force de l'art at the Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais in Paris. Khalili is also a contributor to film magazines and catalogues, and the co-programmer of the Cinémathèque de Tanger in Morocco. She lives in Paris.

ANTONY KIMANI

Born in Nairobi, Antony Kimani has worked as a freelance photographer since 2005. He currently lectures part time at Witwatersrand University. Kimani has worked as editor and staff photographer for the Nation Media in Nairobi. In South Africa he freelanced with the Sunday Times and Reuters News Agency. He now prefers shooting features and stories at his own pace, taking the time to understand and engage with his subjects on a deeper level. Antony has been published in BBC Focus magazine, and in Africa Magazine among others. Kimani lives and works in Johannesburg.

LEBOHANG MASHILOANE

Born in the Free State Province in South Africa, Lebohang Mashiloane studied fine art photography at Vaal University of Technology, as well as photojournalism and documentary photography at the Market Photo Workshop in Johannesburg. His series on Somali refugees was exhibited at the 8th Bamako Encounters, African Photography Biennial in 2009. Mashilone lives and works in Johannesburg.

ZWELETHU MTHETHWA

Born in Durban, ZwaZulu-Natal, Zwelethu Mthethwa graduated in photography from the Michaelis School of Fine Art in Cape Town in 1985. He received a Fulbright Scholarship, which allowed him to study at the Rochester Institute of Technology in New York State. Mthethwa is renowned for his

powerful images of people living and working in post-apartheid South Africa. His work has received national and international acclaim, and he has had over thirty-five solo exhibitions in galleries and museums in the United States, Italy, Germany, Spain, France, Switzerland and South Africa. Mthethwa lives and works in Cape Town.

AÏDA MULUNEH

Born in Ethiopia, Aida Muluneh left the country at a young age and spent her childhood between Yemen and England. Muluneh received her BA in film, radio and television from Howard University, and worked as a freelance photographer for The Washington Post. She was chosen to be part of the groundbreaking show *Ethiopian Passages: Dialogues in the Diaspora* at the Smithsonian's National Museum of African Art in Washington. Recipient of the European Union Prize for her work on Ethiopia exhibited at the 7th annual African Photography Biennial in 2008, she is also the founder of D.E.S.T.A. FOR AFRICA that stands for Developing and Educating Society Through Art. Muluneh lives and works in Addis Ababa.

DAWIT L. PETROS

Dawit L. Petros was born in Asmara, Eritrea and currently lives and works in New York. He has exhibited his work in group shows throughout Canada and in the United States, including the Studio Museum in Harlem, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Detroit, Wedge Curatorial Projects, Prefix Photo, and the

Harbourfront Centre in Toronto. He has also exhibited at the Photographic Resource Center at the Massachusetts College of Art in Boston, and the the Maison de la culture Frontenac in Montréal. Petros has received Fulbright and J. Armand Bombardier Internationalist Fellowships, as well as an Art Matters foundation grant and he has participated in residencies at the Center for Photography, Woodstock, and the Studio Museum in Harlem.

GUY TILLIM

Born in Johannesburg, Guy Tillim started photographing professionally in 1986. He joined a collective of South African photographers called Afrapix, with whom he worked closely until 1990. Tillim's work as a freelance photographer in South Africa, for local and foreign media, included positions with Reuters Agency between 1986 and 1988, and Agence France Presse in 1993 and 1994. He has received many awards including the Prix SCAM (Société Civile des Auteurs Multimedia), Roger Pic in 2002, the Higashikawa Overseas Photographer Award (Japan) in 2003, the 2004 DaimlerChrysler Award for South African photography, the Leica Oskar Barnack Award in 2005 and the first Robert Gardner Fellowship in Photography from the Peabody Museum at Harvard University in 2006. Tillim lives and works in South Africa.

ANDREW TSHABANGU

Born in Johannesburg, Andrew Tshabangu's series *Johannesburg Transitions* captures the rituals of daily life in an African metropolis where the pleasures and tribulations of street life are simplified extensions of a complex politic. Tshabangu studied at the Alexandra Community Art Centre in Johannesburg, and in Stipendium Gasworks Art Studios in London. Tshabangu regularly participates in workshops abroad and was invited by the Nairobi Arts Trust and the Centre for Contemporary Arts of East Africa to conduct a photographic workshop in Nairobi titled *Amnesia: Platform III*. The workshop culminated in an exhibition at the National Museum Nairobi. Tshabangu lives and works in South Africa.

NONTSIKELELO 'LOLO' VELEKO

Born in Bodide, South Africa, Nontsikelelo 'Lolo' Veleko studied graphic design at the Cape Technikon in Cape Town and photography at the Market Photo Workshop in Johannesburg. In 2003, she was nominated for the MTN New Contemporaries award and was part of the 2006 group exhibition *Snap Judgments: New Positions in Contemporary African Photography* at the International Centre of Photography in New York. Her signature series, *Beauty is in the Eye of the Beholder*, was included in the 7th annual African Photography Biennial in 2008. Veleko lives and works in Johannesburg.

Curator**KENNETH MONTAGUE**

Kenneth Montague is an art collector and curator based in Toronto. Founder and director of Wedge Curatorial Projects, for over a decade he has been collecting and exhibiting photo-based work that explores black identity and the African diaspora. In 2007, Wedge published the catalogue *FLAVA* (D.A.P./Distributed Art Publishers, Inc.), a document of the projects, exhibitions and community workshops that Wedge had produced throughout its first decade.

Recent shows curated by Montague include *Becoming* at the Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit; *head room* at the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art, Toronto; and an upcoming exhibition at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto titled *Position As Desired* that investigates African-Canadian identity.

Montague sits on the Photography Curatorial Committee of the Art Gallery of Ontario, and the Advisory Board of the Ryerson Photography Gallery and Research Centre. He is a frequent lecturer and panelist at international art symposiums, including Bamako Encounters, African Photography Biennial in Mali, and at ARCO Madrid.

The Wedge Collection has grown to encompass both historical and contemporary photography, as well as non-photo based works that challenge notions of representation and identity.

Writer**PAMELA EDMONDS**

Pamela Edmonds is a visual and media arts curator originally from Montreal, Quebec. She received her BFA and an MA in Art History from Concordia University. The former co-editor of *KOLA*, a Black literary magazine based in Montreal, she is interested in developing and curating projects that focus on the creative production of African diaspora artists, and in work that deals with contemporary issues surrounding the ideologies of race, gender, cultural identity and representation. Edmonds is the former Program Coordinator of A Space Gallery, Toronto, and currently works as curator at the Art Gallery of Peterborough, Ontario.