

Documenting the African public transport story

On 16 March 2017, South African documentary photographer, Yasser Booley embarked on a public transport journey, from Cape Town, South Africa to Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Booley will be utilising various forms of public transport including, trains, busses and taxis.



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His mission is to document the journey with a view to learning about the countries and the people who travel across the borders on a regular basis.

The two-week journey is part of a project called *Afrikanist in Motion*, and is about unfolding the public transport human story. Booley's work is focused on the interconnectedness of people, and he believes that through bringing this world to the broader African public he may inspire others to the idea of traveling within Africa as a norm.

The free movement of people he believes is a catalyst for opportunity, growth and prosperity. This in his words forms the backbone of the "real" African Union, where he sees people, goods, stories and ideas crossing borders and making an impact. These are the narratives he would like to bring back and share to promote the idea of an interconnected and accessible Africa. The inaugural Cape to Dar leg will be the first episode in telling this story.

Booley will be departing from the Cape Town Station Shosholoza Meyl platform. His journey will be regularly updated on the *Afrikanist in Motion* Instagram and Twitter pages, as well as the projects' website. His latest artwork 'South Africa at Liberty' is currently exhibited at 9 Spin Street, Cape Town, where his book is up for sale as well.

Yasser Booley explains: "Why everyone counts is, because like me, we are the centres of our 'experiencing' the universe and in photographing the overwhelming variety of this 'experiencing' in the places and people I have encountered slowly tease out the notions, values, beliefs from a constant flux of impressions I contend with daily. I believe that this distillation has resonance across 'isms' and schisms and beckon to a common humanity. I want my work to act as the signage that will eventually arrive at this point of departure."

This project is being supported by Aurecon, a global engineering and infrastructure advisory company which is deeply rooted in Africa. According to Abbas Jamie, director of transformation and innovation at Aurecon: "Few organisations have adopted a human-centred approach to design that taps into the realities and aspirations of the vast numbers of citizens of our continent and this project aims to do that."

Afrikanist in Motion is also supported by data partner WhereIsMyTransport, a company focused on providing open,

integrated transport data for emerging cities in Africa and beyond. WhereIsMyTransport co-founder, Devin de Vries: “We know that wherever there are people, there is transport. In Africa, though, these journeys are often obscured. *Afrikanist in Motion* will help reveal both the opportunities and challenges for mobility in this region, and highlight some of the human ingenuity that has helped people get where they want to go, even when formal infrastructure is limited.”

The project is also endorsed by The World Design Organization.

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