

# Ordinary/*extra* - Ordinary

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Throughout my career, I have been that kind of artist who constantly alternate between cultures as a result of numerous displacements via artistic projects. As an African, there are lots of factors both social and political which make such displacements a challenging one. Besides the short-comings of immigration policies as instituted by various nations, or the counter-productive tendencies of racial differences, there is also cultural diversity – one which proposes that what is ordinary to one group of people could be overwhelmingly extraordinary to the other. This in turn creates a fascination be it in a positive or negative sense. In earlier times, this fascination had been the basis for disparity between peoples; a tool for consolidation of power at the detriment of the other. But, in this new century, globalisation has redefined this phenomenon into something we could term as veering towards a global melting-pot. De-monopolisation of knowledge has made it possible to seek a common centre through sharing of knowledge and experiences, where one object could connote different meanings depending on who is putting it to use. In other words, the relationship between ‘ordinary’ and ‘extra-ordinary’ takes on an ambiguous undertone, one which can be resolved only by subjective evaluation : “In the ordinary, one could attain the extra-ordinary, and in the extra-ordinary one could extract the ordinary”

It is this line of thought that has informed a body of work I began putting together in 2008 which involve making photographic works at every city I visit. My approach is usually that of a calm observer, making sure that my emotion leads my eye, for at the moment everything is an image of which I have to reconcile it’s meaning from within me. It is not necessary to have an external knowledge of what I photograph. I wander around the city with my camera which being a bulky studio camera (a Mamiya RZ 67), allow for a definite frontal composition, laying emphasis on whatever I choose to photograph. This concept of ‘frontal confrontation’ is a way of asserting the importance of the subject, be it an object or a scene. The images produce usually have an uncanny quality to it, as if caught in between what could be defined, and what couldn’t.

So far, I have carried out these projects, in cities such as Paris (2008), Johannesburg (2009), Lagos (2009/10), Madrid (2010), Addis Ababa (2010) and Dakar (2010). I intend this project to be a book of compiled works from different cities which would be titled “Ordinary/ *extra* – Ordinary”.