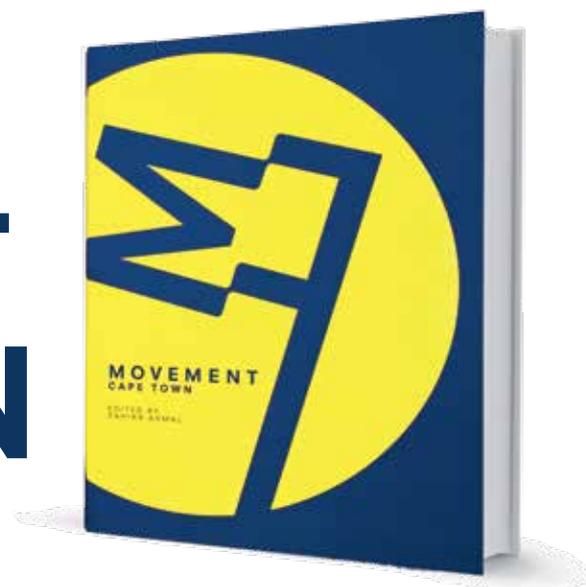


# MOVEMENT CAPE TOWN

EDITED BY ZAHIRA ASMAL (THE CITY, 2015)  
REVIEW MICHELLE MATTHEWS



**M**ovement *Cape Town* is a curiosity cabinet of a book: A collection of quirky musings on Cape Town that, at first glance, are charmingly disparate. What holds Movement's essays, photographs, maps, interviews and a recipe for snoek bobotie together is editor Zahira Asmal's view that all these pieces can live in the same space: The curiosity cabinet that is Cape Town.

Movement, of course, is the key theme. In some essays it is literal movement, sometimes writ large – "When people are free to move... a city can truly maximise its economic, social and ecological potential," says Cape Town mayor Patricia de Lille in an interview on breaking down apartheid-era transport routes and modes – but often painfully small. Brett Petzer goes on a self-conscious bicycle ride through the Cape Flats – "These wheels and my legs say I can afford the vulnerability because I can afford... the medical aid" – while Dinika Govender writes letters to her parents about the catcalls she receives while cycling the city.

Unavoidably, most of the pieces include an exploration of social and cultural mobility. For many Capetonians, wheels are a luxury: In her article on the economy of the Grand Parade, Bettina Woodward records how Tanzanians have cornered the market on pushing stall-holders' trolleys from an overnight storage facility at R30 a trip for their labour. In one of the more refreshing articles, 'Afrikaans in Odd Places', Saarah Jappie writes about discovering a letter tucked away in an imam's old book collection. It was written in Arabic script, but the words were Afrikaans – a surprising hybrid that

could only happen in Cape Town.

*Movement Cape Town* includes the expected Cape Town bits and bobs – writings on the Werdmuller Centre, that abandoned Claremont modernist mall everyone loves to hate-love; photographs of the safely inclusive Sea Point public pool; and a guide to what's hot in Woodstock. But there are also moments where the contributors move out of their comfort zones. "Technically I am in someone's home... So this is what it feels like to be a probe on Mars," writes Dave Southwood in the introduction to his photographic essay on the people living under one of the bridges in the centre of Cape Town.

As long as Cape Town can offer a variety of people pockets where they belong (no matter that others feel uncomfortable there), the city won't stagnate. In 'Moving Through the Scene' fashionista Malibongwe Tyilo wonders why more people don't gatecrash art openings: "This is one scene with... no access control whatsoever and free *dop* (drinks) – one would think these things would fill up to capacity." He gently chastises the "white cube" and its "magical barrier". But it is in this microcosm that he has found his home: "This is a community, a support system... Their passion for what many consider frivolous makes them outcasts in some communities, and stars in this one."

*Movement Cape Town* gives an eclectic view of the city, with curiosities sitting, sometimes awkwardly, side-by-side – just as they do in reality. ◉

At the time of going to print, *Movement Johannesburg* had rolled fresh of the presses too.  
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