

# UNIT2

## Press Release

All that it was...All that it is  
Recent photography by Andrew Jackson

30 January – 14 March 2009

Opening view: Thursday 29 January 2009, 6-8pm

"One morning in Cape Town, just before Christmas 2006, a man thirty-six years into his life, would die, and as is the want of the strange and arbitrary collisions of our world; a stranger from England would photograph his hand laid out upon a red blanket a few hours after his death. In the passing months since this time, I've often thought about this moment, about the stillness and silence of the room, and of the muted laughter outside in the sun beyond the slightly open door of the morgue. Of course, these images are indeed, as André Bazin cites, "...the death masks of a time that has gone forever..."; yet the feelings that I experienced as I wandered for two months through the city of Cape Town still remain and perhaps will never leave me." Andrew Jackson

Central to Andrew Jackson's photography is a desire to observe and portray what he refers to as "contemporary human existence and the inherent paradoxes found within the collisions, transactions and dislocations that reveal themselves within the built environment." *All that it was...All that it is* focuses on Jackson's accomplished documentary photographic series (2006/07) produced during his second visit to Cape Town, South Africa in 2006.

It is estimated that by 2010, nearly three quarters of South Africa's population will reside in its cities, and as Jackson opines "...for the first time the city will be the meeting place for the majority of its citizens and therefore the theatre where the nation's anxieties will be enacted and lived." These remarkable, and often disturbing, images are, amongst other things, concerned with extremes: extremes of violence, of wealth and of poverty. However, rather than seeking to merely dramatise or sensationalise his subjects, Jackson's photographs - of people, places and objects - elicit a profound sense of humanity and empathy. Writers Steve Edwards & John Timberlake have noted: "...these beautifully composed images give a sense of Jackson's careful sharing of space with the subject; his presence is communicated by his ability ...to give a sense of each portrait being a pause in a conversation, rather than a passing grab."

Reproduced at little more than postcard size, in the gallery, these austere and often disturbing images require viewing close-up, resulting in their diminutive scale intensifying, rather than diminishing this experience. Jackson's photographs of Cape Town, not only touch upon scars of this country's recent traumatic past, but also, his considered approach is such that it carefully draws attention to the politics of representation itself.

## Biography

Andrew Jackson studied photography as an undergraduate at Wolverhampton University and completed a Master of Arts in Documentary photography at the Centre for Photographic Research, Newport (University of Wales). During 2007 he had solo exhibitions at, Focal Point Gallery, Southend-on-Sea and New Art Gallery Walsall. A number of photographs from the series *All that it was... All that it is* were purchased for the permanent collection of the New Art Gallery, Walsall. Another series, *When the curtain rises* (1997) was purchased by the Birmingham Central Library City Archives. His photographs have been published in national and international journals. He lives in Birmingham. [www.writtenbylight.com](http://www.writtenbylight.com)

A free illustrated brochure with texts by Steve Edwards & John Timberlake and Andrew Jackson accompanies this exhibition.

Artist: Andrew Jackson  
Exhibition: All that it was...All that it is  
Opening Times: Tuesday - Friday 12 - 6pm and Saturday 1- 6pm  
Admission: Free  
Exhibition: 30 January – 14 March 2009

For further information please contact Richard Hylton or Reuben Thurnhill at [info@unit2.co.uk](mailto:info@unit2.co.uk) or on: +44 (0) 20 7320 1970.

## Unit 2 Gallery

Sir John Cass Department of Art, Media & Design  
London Metropolitan University  
Central House, 59-63 Whitechapel High Street  
London E1 7PF  
T: +44(0) 20 7320 1970  
[info@unit2.co.uk](mailto:info@unit2.co.uk) [www.unit2.co.uk](http://www.unit2.co.uk)