

## **Abstract**

Can there ever be a space for radical Black performativity, by which I mean, a type of Black performance that is a challenge to, and not just a reiteration of (including in others' enjoyment of it) the anti-Blackness of the world? This project – film and conceptual essay - investigates the limits and boundaries of this question and it does so through kwaito: a uniquely South African post 1994 musical and cultural phenomenon that is specifically born from the experiences of township life and of Blackness in South Africa. It does so as a way to think about the validity of the proposition put forward by Black Studies (mainly in Afro-pessimism) that violence in the modern world underwrites the Black person's capacity to think, act, and exist spatially and temporally, this is in opposition, say, to Fred Moten's Black Optimism, that holds that 'objects', that is to say Blacks, can and do resist and they do so through performance.

This project then enters the debate in Black Studies through a questioning of the 'authenticity' of Black radical performativity and cultural practices and it reads kwaito as a Black cultural performative practice that is a form of fugitivity. This paper looks at some of the more hopeful, humanistic interpretations of Black aesthetics and proposes as a challenge that we rather think about and read kwaito as something close to a deranged apocalyptic response to anti-Blackness, that does not offer answers, and is a movement that operates as a form of fugitivity that unveils the quotidian and banal subjectivity of Black township life in South Africa post 1994.