



# MAPPING IDENTITY

## **Artists**

Fariba Alam

Zoulikha Bouabdellah

María Magdalena Campos-Pons

Lalla Essaydi

Gonkar Gyatso

Mona Hatoum

Glenn Kaino

Daniel Kojo Schrade

Zineb Sedira

Shahzia Sikander

Do-Ho Suh

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Carol Solomon and Janet Yoon

March 19 – April 30, 2010

Cantor Fitzgerald Gallery  
Haverford College, Haverford, Pennsylvania



## Daniel Kojo Schrade

German/Ghanaian

B. 1967, Schienen-Konstanz, Germany; lives and works in Amherst, Massachusetts

I am painting from a space in-between.<sup>1</sup>

The son of a Ghanaian father and a German mother, Daniel Schrade was born and raised in a small German village where his hybrid identity was an ever-present mark of difference. Identity issues were to become a central concern of his art. From 1987 to 1993, Schrade studied painting and graphic art in Munich and Cuenca, Spain. In 1993, he received a Master of Arts Diploma from the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich. In the following years, he worked or taught in Oaxaca, Mexico, Kumasi, Ghana, and Gaggenau, Germany, before moving to Amherst, Massachusetts in 2007. Schrade creates works in series using motifs originating from various contexts but linked to questions of identity and cultural roots. Combined with purely gestural, non-representational elements, these motifs – fragments of figures, letters, words, text – become ciphers of identity. As each series progresses, the artist repeats and transforms the motifs that have become his personal iconic archive.

“Afronauts,” the artist explains, “are dis-located characters who create and control their own image spaces, where they claim the power to define themselves and to re-negotiate identity ascriptions.”<sup>2</sup> As in *Afronauts 08C01*, these figures dress in a kind of space suit costume with various head coverings (helmets, hats, caps). The Afronaut character was inspired by Lee “Scratch” Perry, a Jamaican record producer and musician who was known to perform in such a costume. According to Schrade, “the figurative presence of the Afronauts generates disturbances in what is primarily a homogeneous way of painting, and it transforms my work into what has been called ‘painting from the spaces in between’ (Jochen Meister, *Afronauts*, Karlsruhe, 2007, 14).”<sup>3</sup> Schrade’s Afronaut figures follow in the tradition of the Ghanaian trickster Anansi the Spider and his modern equivalents: Felix the Cat, El Ahrairah, and Wile E. Coyote. Schrade began the *Afronauts* cycle in 1999; in *Afronauts 08C01*, the artist makes use of fragments from the word “Afronaut” and an actual Ghanaian wheat sack to particularize the African identity of his two trickster Afronauts.

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel Kojo Schrade, from conversation with the artist, January 28, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Statement provided by the artist, July 3, 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.



Cat. 9  
*Afronauts 08C01*, 2008, acrylic, oil, collage on canvas, 52 x 72 in., anonymous loan

This catalogue is published in conjunction with the exhibition **MAPPING IDENTITY**.  
March 19 – April 30, 2010

Cantor Fitzgerald Gallery  
Whitehead Campus Center  
Haverford College  
Haverford, PA 19041  
[www.haverford.edu/exhibits](http://www.haverford.edu/exhibits)

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ISBN: 0-9789199-8-X



Design by Mike Stevenson  
Printed by Quality Concepts, Inc.

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