

A precedence of this is the trucking situation in the U.S.A. I did many thousands of miles on the back of a 22 ton 62ft. tractor trailer from North to South of the United States, mid-West to the East coast, touring with all sorts of bands and meeting all sorts of truckers and the environs on which they operate and live.

A sense of pride all those years ago was instilled by the usual American flair of pomp and spectacular splendour and so forth. I'm not suggesting a commercial onslaught and a total flamboyant or spectacle of the Black Taxis Association members' vehicles, I am only trying to make an analogy with a similar situation that involved transport and vehicles.

Annual massive prizes for the best trucker, the best truck, the best interior, the best sound system, the best customised servicing and most hauls, etc. - all contributed/contribute to a safety factor of where pride and place are put into some competitive <sup>PERSPECTIVE</sup> but more conscientising (if I may?) of peoples, their environment, their means of transport and the ways in which they earn their living - safekeep.

Having tried to justify my position here, may I get on with the idea as promised ...?

'Customising' - the Black Taxis with designs of their own and offering them a really good spray-paint/airbrush service would be a start to something, I believe.

We would have to approach manufacturers of parts and even the vehicles ~~themselves~~ for possible assistance and even guidelines in this area of making the taxis look colourful, competitive, whatever.

Even advertising could go a long way towards paying for the upkeep of the cabs/minibuses - in other words, a firm who would want to advertise on a combi/minibus wouldn't simply go and splash their name all over the place. What they would do is get or commission an airbrush artist to actually draw a design that would/ or could incorporate their logo or product or whatever, but essentially just to paint and customise the van exterior and interior - for example, a little bar or drinking place, fur-lined seats etc. etc.

There could be prizes for the best sound systems and the best interiors - I must let you read my book - 'Van People'. It concerns the van/combi/minibus hippie sort of caravanners that traverse the USA and their vehicles/competitions/concerts that they organise.

Again, I'm not suggesting any Americanisation but I just think that a colourful and a whole new world of art could exist on the sides of taxis, of these minibuses. Instead of the white drab usual taxi, let's try and create something new that would involve the - if I may? - mechanic artists - is there such a thing?