

ESSENTIAL READING

41

Danah Abdulla

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Danah Abdulla's ESSENTIAL READING LIST

Contemporary Arab Thought - Elizabeth Kassab, 2009

Neopatriarchy - Hisham Sharabi , 1993

Pedagogy of the Oppressed - Paulo Freire, 2017

Empowering Education - Ira Shor (via UGent)

Globalization and the Decolonial Option - Walter D. Mignolo, Arturo Escobar, 2013

Decolonising the University - Gurminder K. Bhambra, Dalia Gebrial and Kerem Nişancıoğlu, 2018

Being Arab - Samir Kassir, 2013

La crise des intellectuels arabes - Abdallah Laroui, 1974

Origines - Amin Maalouf, 2006

Making Art Global (Part 1): The Third Havana Biennial, 1989

Culture and Imperialism - Edward Said, 1994

Out of Place - Edward Said, 1999 (via UGent)

The Arab Rediscovery of Europe: A Study in Cultural Encounters - Ibrahim Abu-Lughod, 2011

The Responsible Object, 2016

Academic Diary - Les Back, 2016 (online)

Black Feminist Thought - Patricia Collins, 2009

Border Crossings: Cultural Workers and the Politics of Education - Henry Giroux, 2005

Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice to Freedom - bell hooks, 1994

Sentence to Hope - A Sa'dallah Wannous Reader, 2019 (online)

Essential Reading is a project that aims to enlarge, diversify and enrich Kunstenbibliotheek's book collection. Which books are, today, really indispensable for an art library? Guests of Essential Reading bring together and present in the library the books they consider most valuable in their life and work.

Danah Abdulla is a designer, educator and researcher interested in new narratives and practices in design that push the disciplinary boundaries and definitions of the subject. She is a Reader (Associate Professor) in Anti/Post/Decolonial Histories, Theories, Praxes at the Decolonising the Arts Institute at the University of the Arts London (UAL). Previously, she was the Head of Graphic Design at Camberwell, Chelsea, and Wimbledon Colleges of Art, UAL. Danah is a founding member of the Decolonising Design platform, and founded Kalimat Magazine. Her research focuses on decolonising design, possibilities of design education, design culture(s) with a focus on the Arab region, the politics of design, publishing, and social design. She is the author of *Designerly Ways of Knowing: A Working Inventory of Things a Designer Should Know* (Onomatopoe, 2022), and *Design Otherwise: Transforming Design Education in the Arab Region* (Bloomsbury, 2025).

Essential Reading tracht de boekencollectie van de Kunstenbibliotheek vanuit een andere blik te verrijken en te verruimen. Welke boeken zijn écht onmisbaar voor een kunstenbibliotheek? Gasten van Essential Reading verzamelen en presenteren hier de boeken die ze het waardevolst vinden in hun leven en werk.

Danah Abdulla is een ontwerper, docent en onderzoeker die geïnteresseerd is in nieuwe verhalen en praktijken in design die de disciplinaire grenzen en definities van het onderwerp verleggen. Ze is Reader (Associate Professor) in Anti/Post/Decolonial Histories, Theories, Praxes aan het Decolonising the Arts Institute aan de University of the Arts London (UAL). Daarvoor was ze hoofd grafisch ontwerp aan de Camberwell, Chelsea en Wimbledon Colleges of Art, UAL. Danah is stichtend lid van het platform Decolonising Design en richtte Kalimat Magazine op. Haar onderzoek richt zich op dekolonisatie van design, mogelijkheden van designonderwijs, designcultuur(en) met een focus op de Arabische regio, de politiek van design, publiceren en social design. Ze is de auteur van *Designerly Ways of Knowing: A Working Inventory of Things a Designer Should Know* (Onomatopee, 2022), en *Design Otherwise: Transforming Design Education in the Arab Region* (Bloomsbury, 2025).

Danah Abdullah presents her new book *Design Otherwise: Transforming Design Education in the Arab Region* in Kunstenbibliotheek. She will be in conversation with researcher Sofie Verclyte. The book presentation is an initiative of Design Museum Gent and the Department of Design of KASK & Conservatorium in collaboration with Kunstenbibliotheek.

Design Otherwise: Transforming Design Education in the Arab Region

How can we study and teach design in a way that is critical, socially engaged and relevant to place? In this timely book, Danah Abdulla challenges us to imagine a design education and culture that moves beyond blindly borrowing Eurocentric models and frameworks. Drawing on learnings from work with design students, educators and designers in the Arab region, with a particular focus on Jordan and featuring examples from Lebanon, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates, Abdulla creates a dialogue with those who have most at stake in education to imagine how we can develop a collaborative, contextually based and socially relevant design education.

By first contextualizing higher education and design education in the region and examining the issues and challenges that are pertinent to the development of curricula and pedagogy, such as power, bureaucracy, language and access, Abdulla considers the purpose and relevance of design education in contemporary postcolonial societies. She explores how regional identities and class divisions shape the development of design cultures, as well as different perceptions of design and its value. Abdulla highlights design's role in society and the models of curricula and pedagogy appropriate for developing contextually situated design education. Outlining skills and strategies for equipping future designers, she proposes new possibilities for forms of practice and an actionable framework for developing design education.

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