



Design Activism: Beautiful Strangeness for a Sustainable World

Alastair Fuad-Luke

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Design academics and practitioners are facing a multiplicity of challenges in a dynamic, complex, world moving faster than the current design paradigm which is largely tied to the values and imperatives of commercial enterprise. Current education and practice need to evolve to ensure that the discipline of design meets sustainability drivers and equips students, teachers and professionals for the near-future. New approaches, methods and tools are urgently required as sustainability expands the context for design and what it means to be a 'designer'. Design activists, who comprise a diverse range of designers, teachers and other actors, are setting new ambitions for design. They seek to fundamentally challenge how, where and when design can catalyse positive impacts to address sustainability. They are also challenging who can utilise the power of the design process. To date, examination of contemporary and emergent design activism is poorly represented in the literature. This book will provide a rigorous exploration of design activism that will re-vitalise the design debate and provide a solid platform for students, teachers, design professionals and other disciplines interested in transformative (design) activism.

Design Activism provides a comprehensive study of contemporary and emergent design activism. This activism has a dual aim - to make positive impacts towards more sustainable ways of living and working; and to challenge and reinvigorate design praxis,. It will collate, synthesise and analyse design activist approaches, processes, methods, tools and inspirational examples/outcomes from disparate sources and, in doing so, will create a specific canon of work to illuminate contemporary design discourse.

Design Activism reveals the power of design for positive social and environmental change, design with a central activist role in the sustainability challenge. Inspired by past design activists and set against the context of global-local tensions, expressions of design activism are mapped. The nature of contemporary design activism is explored, from individual/collective action to the infrastructure that supports it generating powerful participatory design approaches, a diverse toolbox and inspirational outcomes. This is design as a political and social act, design to enable adaptive societal capacity for co-futuring.

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