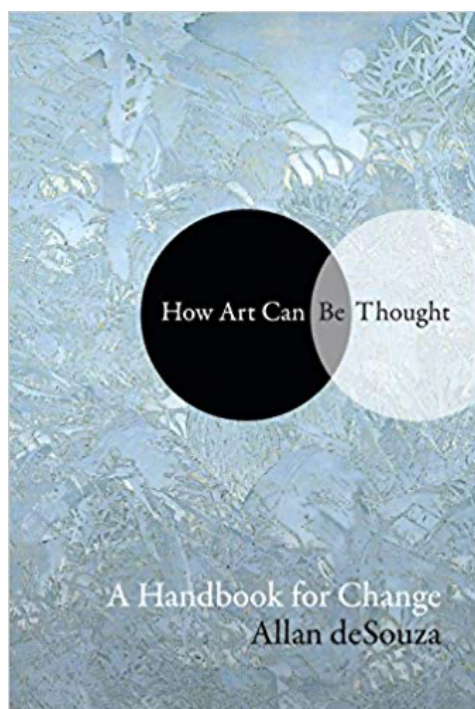


How Art Can Be Thought: A Handbook for Change

by Allan deSouza; Duke University Press, November 2018. 336 p. ill. ISBN 9781478000365 (h/c), \$99.95.

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With the bold declaration, “This book is intended as a handbook for change, which means that there will be no neutral reader” deSouza shatters the trope of the handbook as static, watered-down theory. Instead, we enter an electric dialogue steeped in the vein of Paulo Freire and bell hooks. deSouza deconstructs not only art education and the academy, but also calls out the euro-centric hegemony of the entire art industry. Centered in critical pedagogy and linguistic theory, deSouza argues the industry’s desire to shroud the art-making process (and critique of that process) in mystery plays into the widely cast shadow of colonialism. Deftly bridging theory and practice, this handbook assigns new language to decolonize the art education landscape.

The handbook is divided into six segments that function as back-and-forth dialogue punctuated with black and white images of deSouza and his students’ works. The introduction provides a framework based

on deSouza’s personal experiences as a student, artist, professor, and administrator and discusses identity as an intersectional concept. deSouza’s many roles across the industry present a multi-faceted and well-thought-out perspective. Chapter One “How Art Can Be Thought” examines definitions of art/art history as defined by European men. This euro-centric hegemony of defining and grouping art ripples across the entire text. Chapter Two “Entry Points” clarifies that a homogenous art curriculum produces art students and critics whom operate in a vacuum. Chapter Three “How Art Can Be Taught” tackles public art education and MFA programs, further building off of the issues of a foundation driven by capitalism and led by outside industries. Chapter Four “Critique As Radical Prototype” deconstructs the highly utilized crit session and delivers a fresh analysis perfect for restructuring a course and challenging

students to avoid neutrality. Chapter 5 “How Art Can Be Spoken” features an alphabetical glossary of terms. At 178 pages, the glossary is not only the bulk of the text but is undeniably the highlight of it as well: the glossary operates “not like a dictionary, more like a field of study”. The afterword “How, Now, Rothko?” closes with deSouza’s viewing of Rothko’s paintings tied to the action of remembering/forgetting.

With its accessible writing and contemporary perspective, *How Art Can Be Thought: A Handbook for Change* should be required reading for art educators, administrators, art historians, critics and those interested in critical pedagogy.