

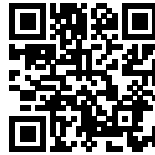
LECTURE

## Design Activism

by Malkit Shoshan

## DESIGN ACTIVISM

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Masterclass by Malkit Shoshan held at [ETSALS](#) for the Master in Integrated Architectural Design on the 25th of January 2023.

Malkit is the founder and director of FAST: Foundation for Achieving Seamless Territory, an architectural think tank that uses research, advocacy, and design to investigate the relationship between architecture, urban planning, and human rights in conflict and post-conflict areas. Its cross-disciplinary and multi-scalar work explores the mechanisms behind, and the impact of, displacement, spatial violence, and systemic segregation on people's living environments, designing projects that promote spatial justice, equality and solidarity.

She talks about [Blue: Architecture of UN Peacekeeping Missions](#) (Actar Publishers, 2022), a book that is part of FAST's ongoing activism, research, design, and advocacy work. It builds on earlier presentations, including the exhibition for the Dutch Pavilion of the 15th Venice Architecture Biennale. UN peace missions operate today inside hundreds of cities across the world. Planned and

engineered with the logic of security regimes, using single-purpose infrastructure, and dependent on extractive global supply chains, these 'Islands of Blue' generate a massive carbon footprint, profoundly impact local livelihoods, and leave mostly waste after decommissioning. Focusing on two missions and four cities in Liberia and Mali, BLUE: Architecture of UN Peacekeeping Missions charts and uncovers spatial realities produced by the UN in mission areas. It traces the complex processes and mechanisms behind the conduct of missions and the various spatial tools and architectural technologies that make them possible. BLUE questions the international, spatial, and cultural structures we put in place to support communities across the world in times of crisis.

At the intersection of architecture, urban planning, international relations and activism, BLUE: Architecture of UN Peacekeeping Missions seeks not only to change UN missions but also to open up and expand the operative realm of architecture. It combines research and projects involving policymakers, military engineers and officers, anthropologists, local inhabitants, activists, rebels, diplomats and ministers, architects and planners. BLUE offers examples of how entrenched institutional bureaucracies can be confronted by using more inclusive models of engagement, and it shows how designs rooted in local cultures and empowerment can address a history of violence.

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