

## Teaching American Style Education in Kuwait

Maryam Hosseinnia, Associate Professor, The American University of Kuwait

Bethany Armstrong, Assistant Professor, The American University of Kuwait (former)

This presentation is the outcome of a semester-long project in the level two typography course at the American University of Kuwait (AUK) in spring 2012. Using questionnaires, feedback, peer and teacher led critiques, we show the outcomes of our graphic design program methodology.

As educators at an American university in the Middle East, we are challenged in our daily practice to connect with our students despite language barriers and cultural differences. In Kuwait, we teach students who are accustomed to learning by rote memorization. And because copyright infringement is a routine exercise in the region, many of our students are unfamiliar with the concept of designing original work.

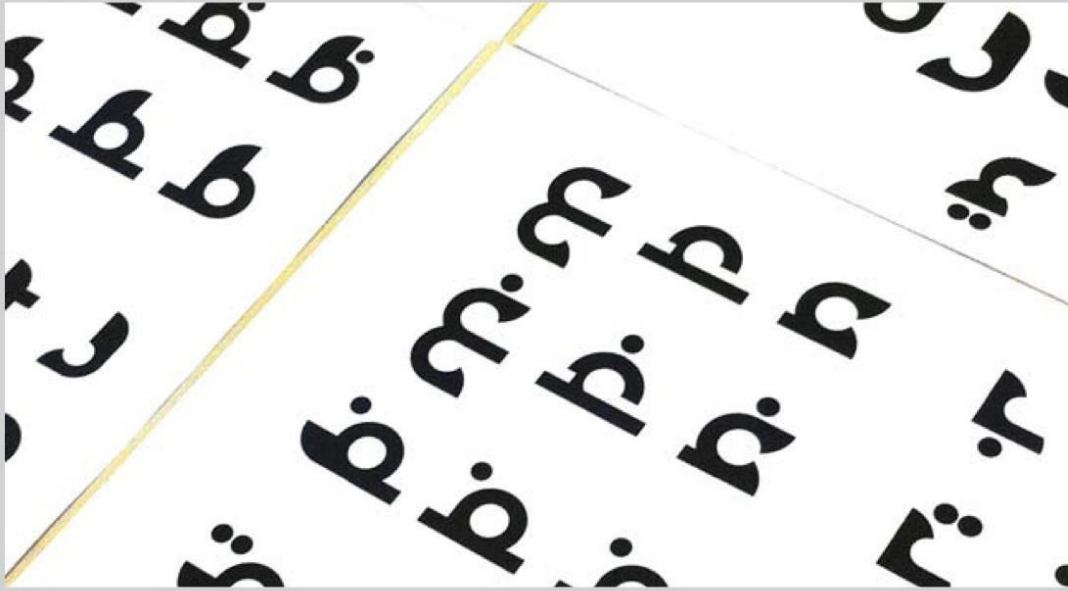
How do we as educators engage our students in the creative process? How do we motivate them to visually conceptualize their ideas through form and content in a cross-cultural setting? How do we teach and address design in a language/culture that is not our own, and remain flexible to allow for the cultural exchange of ideas? We are developing a hybridic curriculum that addresses narrative and language in order to teach our students to think critically about communication, representation and their visual heritage. Through our course, we engage students in the design of primitive-shape typographic alphabets for both Roman and Arabic letterforms and in the application of student's personal histories as content in the application of design.

All semester-long, we present exercises and projects centered on communication of content through self-authorship, language, and typography. This is done in part by engaging our students in writing, information design, and through the creation of typographic systems. Our goal is for students to develop a personal voice (identifying their roots, identity and history) through critical thinking and design process and to begin questioning the rules and practice of how language is set, shaped and understood.

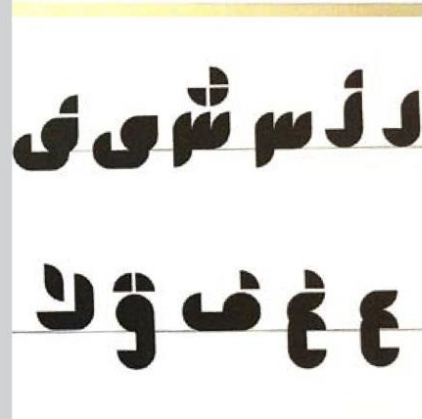




Aisha M Al-Jiran  
PRIMITIVE TYPEFACE ARABIC



Lamis M Al-Nazer  
PRIMITIVE TYPEFACE ARABIC & ENGLISH



Behnaz Rahmi  
PRIMITIVE TYPEFACE ARABIC & ENGLISH

**AUK**  
TYPOGRAPHY  
TWO  
Primitive Typefaces,  
English & Arabic  
ONGOING

