

Itah Sadu

February 2015

By Jess Gillis

Black History Month Special

COMMUNITY LEADER

In addition to having worked as a social worker, a fund raiser, a community developer, an educator, and an administrator, **Itah Sadu** is also a community leader, an entrepreneur, an author, a storyteller, and - it's safe to say - an inspiration to many.



A DIFFERENT BOOKLIST, INDEED

I'm supposed to be researching the wonderfully talented Itah for this bio, and naturally, I find myself on the ***A Different Booklist*** website - one of Toronto's favourite, longest-running, and most popular independent bookstores, and arguably, its most diverse. **Itah is the co-owner.**

AUTHOR & STORYTELLER

It's a sad fact that diverse, multi-ethnic children's stories are hard to find on corporate chain stores' shelves. **Itah Sadu's** numerous children's books are a welcome contrast to that, and truly represent the diversity of our culture.

Itah's books, all of which I'd recommend, include, but are not limited to the following:

TITLES

- *How the Coconut Got Its Face*, 1988
- *Name Calling*, 1992
- *Christopher Changes His Name*, 1996
- *Christopher, Please Clean Up Your Room*, 1996
- *Please Clean Up Your Room!*, 2006
- *A Touch Of The Zebras*, 2003

To put it mildly, I am *distracted*. Rather than compiling and editing the dozens of facts about, titles and stories by, acclaims and accomplishments of, and videos with Itah Sadu, I've switched from making a mental list, to making a paper list of books / *simply must read* (there are SO MANY), all winking at me from ***A Different Booklist's*** home page.

Just a few of the over fifteen titles I've written down thus far include: ***Americanah*** (Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie); ***Rhymes to Re-Education: A Hip Hop Curriculum*** (www.rhymestoreeducation.com); ***Bad Feminist*** (Roxanne Gay); ***Create Dangerously*** (Edwidge Dandicat); plus books about ***Jimi Hendrix, Gil-Scott Heron, Booker T. Washington, and Stokely Carmichael.***

See? Definitely **not** your average bookstore's lineup.

“...Women are natural entrepreneurs...”

- Itah Sadu

AWARDS & ACHIEVEMENTS*

- Marilyn Lastman Award, 2004
- BBPA Exchange, Woman of Honour, 2011
- Sesheme, Hero Amongst Us, 2013
- African-Canadian Achievement Awards, Excellence in Community Service, 2014

- Harry Jerome Scholarship, Trustee and Board Member
- Caribbean Canadian Literary Expo, Board Member

- Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science, York University

(*Not a complete list)

"...Because every single thing in the world has a book, or a book is written on it..."
– Itah Sadu

(Below: Inside the "A Different Booklist" store)



VIDEOS

Want to learn more about Itah Sadu, listen to her wonderful stories, or just enjoy some of her obvious warmth via video? Check out the links below:

- *Itah Sadu's Story of Belonging*
- *Itah Sadu Shares Her Stories*
- *Why Women are Natural Entrepreneurs (or "Never Wash A Man's Underpants")*
- *My Black Hero Is...*

Follow "A Different Booklist" online:



LINKS & REFERENCES

- <http://www.insidetoronto.com/news-story/19635-a-different-bookstore/>
<http://www.yongestreetmedia.ca/features/differntbooklist0714.aspx/trackback/>
<http://africanCanadianachievementawards.com/2014-awardees/2014-excellence-in-community-service-itah-sadu/>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dvOlRpwqZiU>
<http://www.cbc.ca/player/News/Canada/Toronto/Our+Toronto/ID/2438987108/>
<http://tvoparents.tvo.org/video/172876/itah-sadu-my-black-hero>
ITAH PHOTO SOURCE: <http://www.threeoclockpress.com/authors/itah-sadu>
STORE PHOTO SOURCE: http://www.yongestreetmedia.ca/galleries/Features/Issue_26/ISS25_feat_DiffBook06.jpg