# Biographies

**Abidin Abidin and D. Bondy Valdovinos Kaye**

Crystal Abidin is the founder of the TikTok Cultures Research Network. She is a digital anthropologist and ethnographer of vernacular internet cultures, and researches internet celebrity, influencer cultures, and social media pop cultures. She has published 5 books and over 60 articles and chapters on various aspects of internet cultures. Crystal is Associate Professor of Internet Studies, Principal Research Fellow, and ARC DECRA Fellow at Curtin University. For her public scholarship and continuous engagements with industry, Crystal was listed on ABC Top 5 Humanities Fellows (2020), Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia (2018), and Pacific Standard 30 Top Thinkers Under 30 (2016). Reach her at [wishcrys.com](http://wishcrys.com/).

D. Bondy Valdovinos Kaye is a postdoctoral fellow at L’Université Sorbonne Paris Nord, a research associate at Curtin University, and a sessional researcher at the Digital Media Research Centre at Queensland University of Technology. His research interests include digital music, cultural policy, and platform studies. Recently, he has extensively researched the short video platform, TikTok, with several articles published in peer-review journals and a book under contract with Polity Press to be published in 2022. He has also published research on creative labor in India, digital nationalism in China, and cultural policy in Myanmar.

**Anirban K. Baishya**

Anirban Baishya is an Assistant Professor at the Communication and Media Studies Department, Fordham University. His current research examines selfies and the rise of digital selfhood in India. His research interests include New Media and Digital Cultures, Social Media & Politics, Media Aesthetics, Surveillance Studies, and South Asian Film & Media. His work has been published in *International Journal of Communication*, *Communication, Culture & Critique*, *South Asian Popular Culture*, *Porn Studies*, *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* and *Media, Culture and Society.*

**Aarushi Bapna and Ajitesh Lokhande**

Aarushi Bapna is a visual communicator, designer, and researcher from India. She graduated with a Bachelor's in Design (Graphic Design) from the National Institute of Design – Ahmedabad in 2020. Her interests include critical design, decolonizing design, and designing for social impact, especially in the realm of the socio-cultural implications of technology. She is a recipient of the Core77 Speculative Design Award 2020 in recognition of her project ‘Speculative Stories from Shahpur Jat’.

Ajitesh Lokhande is a graphic designer and visual researcher from India. He is a graduate of the National Institute of Design – Ahmedabad, with a specialization in Graphic Design. Originally from Mumbai, India, he currently works as a brand identity designer and art director based out of Paris, France. He is deeply interested in transcultural design, languages, non-western visual cultures, and music. He is a co-author of the paper ‘Prosumeristic Publications: alt+yd’, a project that explores the future of phygital publication practices, presented and published in the DeSForM 2019 conference organized by the MIT Design Lab.

Both Aarushi and Ajtesh are a part of the Critters' Collective.

**Grant Bolmer**

Grant Bollmer is the author of three books, *Inhuman Networks: Social Media and the Archaeology of Connection* (2016), *Theorizing Digital Cultures* (2018), and *Materialist Media Theory: An Introduction* (2019), and is a co-editor, with Yiğit Soncul, of a special issue of the journal *parallax* on ‘Networked Liminality’ (2020). He is currently completing a book on the history of technologies used in psychological research on emotion. He is an Associate Professor of Media Studies at North Carolina State University, where he teaches in the Department of Communication and the Ph.D. Program in Communication, Rhetoric, and Digital Media (CRDM).  
  
**Stephanie Boulding**

Stephanie Boulding is a teller of stories. She is interested in the psychic togetherness afforded by the Internet as a new communication medium, and the intimately human stories that emanate from this fact. Her podcast, Ephemera, is an exploration of stories and theory, an attempt to situate the Internet and the Online within a framework of literary criticism. By the grace of God, she is neither an academic nor a Youtube video essayist.

‘Writers[…]are dissatisfied with the books which they could buy but do not like.’ –Walter Benjamin

**Lesley Braun**

Lesley Nicole Braun is a senior lecturer at the University of Basel at the Institute of Social Anthropology. Since 2008, she has been collaborating with researchers in Kinshasa, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) on various research projects ranging from the world of popular concert dance, to the transnational movements of women traders who travel between the DRC and China. Her book, *Congo’s Dancers: Women and Work in Kinshasa*, forthcoming with the University of Wisconsin Press, focuses on the ways that popular dance, in its embodied and symbolic forms, participates in the construction of an urban experience.

**Anthony Burton**

## Anthony Glyn Burton is a Ph.D. student and SSHRC Joseph Bombardier Fellow in the Department of Communications at Simon Fraser University. Anthony’s research is broadly concerned with the networked development of epistemologies and ideology in technological and datafied environments. He has published in *First Monday*, the *International Journal of Communications*, the *Canadian Journal of Communications*, and the *Harvard Misinformation Review*. He also co-convenes the Techne/Technics/Technology (3T) reading and research group with the Associação de Pesquisas e Práticas em Humanidades (Porto Alegre). He graduated from Ryerson and York University’s Master of Arts in Communication & Culture, where he wrote his thesis on involuntary celibacy, programmatic epistemology, and masculinity under neoliberalism. He is a researcher at the Digital Democracies Institute, the Infoscape Lab at Ryerson University, and affiliated with the Open Intelligence Lab at the University of Amsterdam. [https://anthbrtn.com](https://anthbrtn.com/).

**Caspar Chan**

Caspar Chan, originally from Macau, is a current Research Master student of Arts and Culture at the University of Groningen, following the track of Arts, Media and Literary Studies. His research interests lie in the relationship between the public sphere and identity construction, along with politics in popular culture, specifically in the contexts of Macau and Hong Kong. He studied Applied Musicology (M.A.) at Utrecht University, and Music Studies (B.A.) at the Hong Kong Baptist University. Raised as a music scholar and being a keen traveler, he also writes on music, travel, heritage, and culture on different local and international platforms, as well as in various journals and newspapers.

**Clusterduck**

[Clusterduck](https://clusterduck.space) is a collective working at the crossroads of research, design and transmedia, focusing on social media and internet related content.

**Åke Gafvelin**

Åke Gafvelin is a second year philosophy student at King’s College, Cambridge. He runs the podcast *The Metaphysical Laboratory* and has edited the book *Filosofi och Pandemi*, which is a collection of interviews with Swedish philosophers on the Covid-19 pandemic. Aside from meme-culture, Åke is interested in metaethics, pragmatism and the philosophy of religion.

**Idil Galip**

İdil Galip is a writer, researcher and maker. Her work explores the intersections of digital culture and labour, especially with relation to online communities. She is currently a PhD candidate in sociology at the University of Edinburgh, finishing up her thesis titled *Art Worlds Online: Memes, Labour and Politics*. She is also the founder and convener of the Meme Studies Research Network.

**Martin Hanßen**

Martin Hanßen is an art and visual historian. He works as an art educator for the Berlin State Museums and teaches art history online. After obtaining his B.A. from AMD Düsseldorf, where he specialized in costume history and fashion theory, he studied art and visual history at Humboldt University of Berlin. His research focus is the visual culture of late medieval and early modern Europe, particularly 15th century European painting and the origins of reproductive media. Currently, he investigates the contemporary perception of the Old Masters online and examines the new conception of late medieval and early modern visual culture in digital spaces by scrutinizing users’ interaction with and the migration of digital images of works of art from this period in network cultures.

**Geoff Hondroudakis**

Geoff Hondroudakis is a researcher in media theory and philosophy of technology, with a background in literary theory and philosophy. Currently he is a graduate research student at the University of Melbourne, where his work examines theories of scale and abstraction in philosophy and media.

**Max Horwich**

Max Horwich is a musician, designer, teacher and creative technologist based in Brooklyn, NY. His work explores the intersections of new media and folk art practices.

**Yasmeen Khaja**

Yasmeen Khaja is a designer and writer based in Kuwait. She currently works with creative studios including Sharaf Studio and Amna Alsalem. Previously, she has worked with the organizations Aerial Futures, AIA NY, SYPartners, the Arab Film & Media Institute, and more. She is interested in contemplating the overlapping spaces between the internet and everyday life. Yasmeen holds an MA in Design Research, Writing, and Criticism from the School of Visual Arts in New York. She was awarded the Paula Rhodes award for her MA thesis on memes and cultural identity in Kuwait. She also holds an honors BFA in Graphic Design from the California College of the Arts.

**Andy King**

Andy King is a media artist and researcher, whose satirical and political works focus on internet subcultures, loneliness and human relationships in the digital age. She explores the blurring of borders between truth and fiction, copy and original, private and public spaces. King often includes found images and videos in her works, photographing and manipulating them repeatedly in a way that mimics how information is disseminated and distorted online. In her free time, she infiltrates online far-right groups with the goal to investigate and document new developments, as well as anonymously engage with individual members in order to deradicalize them.

**Ivan Knapp**

Ivan Knapp was awarded his PhD in the History of Art by University College London in 2021 for a thesis entitled *Meme-work: Psychoanalysis and the alt-right*. His research focuses on questions of psychoanalysis and masculinity.

**Jacob Sujin Kuppermann**

Jacob Sujin Kuppermann is an interdisciplinary researcher and writer currently living in the San Francisco Bay Area. Their work focuses on the intersections between ecology and the history of science, with particular interests in historical ecology, information studies, and science communication. They also moonlight as a music critic at *The Singles Jukebox*.

**Anahita Neghabat**

Anahita Neghabat is a Cultural and Social Anthropologist and meme-making activist from Vienna, Austria. She is currently finishing her MA in Cultural and Social Anthropology at the University of Vienna, in the framework of which she also studied at the Gender Studies Department of the Central European University in Budapest. Anahita is working at the Institute for Human Sciences (IWM) as Academic Assistant to the Rector, Shalini Randeria. She is a board member of the *kontexte*.-network, a non-profit organization that connects and supports students and alumni of cultural and social science disciplines.

In her online-activist practice Anahita uses memes as a visual vocabulary, medium and tool for political commentary, reaching a broad and young audience of over 24 thousand people on Instagram. As @ibiza\_austrian\_memes she comments on Austrian interior politics with the aim of intervening in public political discourse from an intersectional feminist, anti-racist and anti-authoritarian perspective. Anahita creates and curates memes and posts them along with concise texts, providing additional background information and offering critical perspectives in accessible language. She founded her meme page in May 2019 as a reaction to the ‘Ibiza Affair’ in Austria, a political scandal that caused the collapse of the far-right governing coalition. Anahita is academically and politically interested in questions of social justice, postcolonial and decolonial perspectives and approaches, as well as intersectional feminism, particularly the genderedness of (anti-Muslim) racism in Austria and Central Europe.

**Sarp Özer**

Sarp Özer is a curator and researcher working in the field of contemporary art. He is the director of programs at AVTO, a cultural organization located in Istanbul. His research focuses on the role of digital affordances in engineering public opinion. Özer contributed to publications of L'Internazionale, SALT.TXT, Arter and so-far. He is among the producers of the Ahali Conversations, a podcast series inquiring on the future of cultural production by Can Altay.

**Saeeda Saeed**

Visual activist Saeeda Saeed has spent the last number of years developing guerrilla communication platforms that transgress Saudi state-controlled media. Her practice collectivizes power through incremental, joint collaborations with self-organized microstructures within her community. In 2015, Saeed set up a series of DIY Pirate Radio networks in tandem with underground musicians, erotic poets, nudist artists, members of the LGBTQIA community, and illegal immigrants transmitting over 270 hours of alternative narratives within the kingdom.

In her residency at the Jan van Eyck Academy, Saeed looks at different manifestations of her identity as an activist injecting play, performance, fiction and movement. In her more recent work, Saeed pivoted to design interventions within Twitter in response to recent legislations that reconstituted ‘the act of retweeting narratives that go against the state or religion’ as an act of terrorism. Saeed devised a series of counter posting strategies to drown out official state-run tweets and allow users to safely mask their IP locations. Among them is an Instant Meme Noise Reactor (2020), an object that spits out nonsensical, humorous insults to state-run accounts each time they post and a Portable Clickfarm (2019) that utilizes physical movement and the human body as a disruptive tool in gaining digital autonomy.

Saeed is currently working on WILD DAUGHTERS: A queer online publication developed in collaboration with two Saudi female activists. Saeed was awarded The Hartwig Art Production prize | Collection Fund special project 2020-21, for the acquisition of new artworks to be acquired by the Hartwig Art Fund and donated to the Dutch national art collection.

**Laurence Scherz**

Laurence Scherz (°1989, Belgium) is a writer, translator, tattoo artist, and meme lover. She currently works for The Hmm, platform for internet cultures. Aside from this, she's writing her first collection of short stories, ranging from tales of feminism fairy tales to dystopian, speculative fiction, and magic realism. One time, a boss asked her what a meme was, and she's never been more enthusiastic about anything ever since.

**The Trans Bears**

The Trans Bears are two gender non-conforming people of American and German-American origin, based in Philadephia and London. As artists, comedians and academics, they are interested in the radical potential of lols and using them to jinx the constraints of consensus reality.

**Marc Tuters**

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**Sabrina Ward-Kimola**

Sabrina Ward-Kimola is a Research Associate with the Infoscape Lab. She is currently a student at Ryerson/York’s joint program in Communication and Culture. She holds a SSHRC-funded position at Concordia’s PhD in Communication, and will be working with the Access in-the-making (AIM) Lab starting in September 2021. She is writing her thesis on the digital writing and interpretation practices of American Sign Language poets in North America. Her more general research interests include critical theory, post-hermeneutics, virtual embodiment and platform infrastructures.

**Scott Wark**

Scott Wark is a Research Fellow for the Wellcome-funded project, People Like You: Contemporary Figures of Personalisation. He is based at the Centre for Interdisciplinary Methodologies at the University of Warwick. He researches online culture, amongst other things.