



PAYAL ARORA

Payal Arora is an Associate Professor at Erasmus University Rotterdam and Founder and Executive Director of Catalyst Lab, a center that reignites relations between academia, industry and the public via innovative social media campaigns. Much of her research work focuses on digital economies and cultures in the global South and new media activism. She is the author of several books including *Dot Com Mantra: Social Computing in the Central Himalayas* (Ashgate, 2010), *The Leisure Commons: A Spatial History of Web 2.0* (Routledge, 2014; Winner of the EUR Fellowship Award), and *Poor@Play: Digital Life beyond the West* (in contract with Harvard University Press). She is the co-editor of *Crossroads in New media, Identity & Law: The Shape of Diversity to Come* (Palgrave, 2015). She has published over forty papers in her field and has given almost a 100 presentations in 60 cities and 24 countries. Arora sits on several boards including The Earth Institute, Columbia University's Connect to Learn, Technology, Knowledge & Society Association, The South Asian Media, Arts & Culture Research Center in University of North Texas and The World Women Global Council in New York. She has held Fellow positions at NYU Steinhardt, General Electric, and Rio's Institute of Technology and Society. She has degrees from Harvard University (Masters in International Policy) and Columbia University (Doctorate in Language, Literacy & Technology) and a Teaching Certification from the University of Cambridge.



YADESA BOJIA

Born in Ambo, Ethiopia, Yadesa immigrated to the United States in 1995. His first exposure to art was as a child gazing at church murals painted using line drawings filled with bold and vibrant colors to communicate religious stories. When he was in the sixth grade, his school commissioned him to paint a mural called “Enem Ende Ababa (*lit.*: Me in Dad’s Footsteps).” The mural remained in display until he immigrated to the United States. In the US, Yadesa studied art at the Seattle Pacific University earning a Bachelor’s degree in Visual Communication. He also attended the Seattle Central Design Academy from which he received an Associate of Arts degree in Graphic Design. In 2010, Yadesa won a worldwide competition to design the flag of the African Union when a panel of experts selected his design out of 106 entries from around the world. Yadesa believes his work is the by-product of the cultural differences he experienced in Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia, and in Seattle, Washington. His exposure to both African and Western art provides him a unique opportunity to understand their relationship as well as their differences. He also believes artists have unique opportunity and responsibility to work for justice and equality and communicating it to their respective communities. Yadesa's work in print and social media highlighting the human rights violations of Oromo people in Ethiopia is drawing global attention to the plight of his people.