PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME

As the Chinese city transforms, arts and culture are widely used instruments of regeneration and competitive place promotion, and serve as well in the struggle to upgrade from labour-intensive manufacturing to a knowledge-based economy. The distinctive spatial articulations of cultural production in the context of the transitional Chinese city are of critical interest to the ongoing retheorization of the role of cultural production in the twenty-first century city broadly, and point towards possible urban futures for a country in a dynamic state of cultural redefinition. But arts and culture are not just associated with regeneration; they may also be used to contest the meaning and identity of urban space, politicize questions of belonging, and/or resist the insistent displacement pressures that accompany accelerated urbanization.

Within this context, the proliferating artistic and cultural expressions themselves are also integral to the understanding of emerging China and its alternative urban imaginaries. Against the backdrop of cultural globalization and the homogenizing tendencies of the Western art market and international media circuits, Chinese arts and culture reassert the significance of internal visions, historical trajectories and endogenous capabilities. From the nascent cultural idioms of contemporary China we can draw insights into the negotiation of a shifting cultural identity and its relationship to new urban forms, political projections of the socialist state, and palimpsestic inscriptions of tumultuous Chinese cultural history.

This workshop seeks to initiate a dialogue concerning the reflexive relationship between culture and place in China from multiple disciplinary perspectives. Collectively, workshop papers will attend to two reciprocal research orientations:

《The role of arts and culture in the transformation of urban space in contemporary China》
《The representation and re-imagination of the urban in contemporary Chinese artistic and cultural expression》

Furthermore, we encourage each participant to reflect on how interdisciplinary exchange can enrich these investigations. We hope that the workshop will strengthen research networks and inspire new and innovative perspectives and methodologies.
Welcome: 9.30 – 10.00

Session 1: 10:00 – 11.15
Learning from urban China
Dr Hyun Bang Shin, London School of Economics

The (re)branding of Shanghai: why culture matters
Kristina Karvelyte, University of Leeds

Yuanshengtai branding, urban soundscapes, and everyday music
Dr Paul Kendall, University of Westminster

Coffee: 11.15 – 11.35

Session 2: 11.35 – 12.50
Cultural production, regeneration, and the Chinese city
Prof Andy Pratt, City University London

Urban reactivation through the creative industry: outlining a frame for selected contemporary case studies in China
Dr Nadia Bertolino, University of Sheffield
Dr Ioanni Delsante, University of Huddersfield

Sustaining culture: dialectic relationships with urban tourism
Dr Rui Su, Middlesex University

Lunch: 12.50 – 13.50

Session 3: 13.50 – 15.05
Cao Fei’s ‘Magical Metropolises’: Chinese video art and the city
Prof Chris Berry, King’s College London

Post avant-garde ‘movements’: from yundong to spatial change in 1990s Beijing
Christen Cornell, University of Sydney

The reappropriation of hutongs for art spaces: Arrow Space, Za Jia Lab, HomeShop
Julie Ren, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

Coffee: 15.05 – 15.25

Session 4: 15.25 – 16.40
Urban revolution and Chinese contemporary art
Dr Maurizio Marinelli, University of Sussex

Humour as détournement: Chinese artists mock the architectural spectacle
Angela Becher, SOAS, University of London

‘Everybody’s Donghu (East Lake)’ art project: resistance through representing urban space
Jian Xiao, Loughborough University

Final discussion: 16.40 – 17.00

For any enquiries, please contact the workshop organizers Murray McKenzie (murray.mckenzie.14@ucl.ac.uk) or Yixiang Sun (yixiang.sun.11@ucl.ac.uk). Please view this programme, and all abstracts, online at https://placingcultureinurbanchina.wordpress.com/