

Fellows



Christopher Allen Berry
IFK_Senior Fellow

Duration of fellowship
01. March 2011 bis 30. June 2011

Christopher Allen Berry

PROJECT-TITLE

Digital Publics: The Online Negotiation of Urban Transformation in Postsocialist China

PROJECT-DESCRIPTION

Does the Internet mean the death of public life, or its revival? Is the future of modernity a Chinese combination of corporate capitalism and the one-party state that stifles and manages debate? This interdisciplinary project brings these questions together by examining selected web projects by

Chinese activists and artists (such as Anson Mak, Cao Fei, and Ou Ning), which address the rapid urbanization and "marketization" transforming the Chinese life-world and undermining its old certainties. Are these projects more evidence of the retreat from the public real world into a virtual world of privatized and anomic consumption, a postmodern version of the distraction that Kracauer saw in early twentieth-century modernity or the disenchantment that worried Balazs? Or are they evidence of a new re-enchantment, to continue Balazs's terminology? Are they re-inventing Habermas's public sphere online? Using online textual analysis and, where appropriate, participant observation, this project draws on critical theory, film and screen studies, internet ethnography, urban studies, Chinese studies, and postcolonial theory to engage with current internet studies work that goes beyond the false virtual/real division. It aims to understand how new digital publics are emerging; even in states like China where explicit opposition is foreclosed upon.

CV

Chris Berry worked in the 1980s for China Film Import and Export Corporation in Beijing. His academic research is grounded in work on Chinese cinema and other Chinese screen-based media, as well as neighboring countries. He is especially interested in queer screen cultures in East Asia; mediatized public space in East Asian cities; and national and transnational screen cultures in East Asia. Prior to his current appointment, he taught at La Trobe University in Melbourne and The University of California, Berkeley.

Publications

with Lu Xinyu and Lisa Rofel (eds.), *The New Chinese Documentary Film Movement: For the Public Record*, Hong Kong 2010; with Kim Soyoung and Lynn Spigel (eds.), *Electronic Elsewheres: Media, Technology, and Social Space*, Minneapolis 2010; with Nicola Liscutin and Jonathan D. Mackintosh (eds.), *Cultural Studies and Cultural Industries in Northeast Asia: What a Difference a Region Makes*, Hong Kong 2009; with Ying Zhu (eds.), *TV China*, Indiana 2008; (ed.), *Chinese Films in Focus II*, British Film Institute, 2008; with Mary Farquhar, *China on Screen: Cinema and the National*, New York and Hong Kong 2006; with Feii Lu (eds.), *Island on the Edge: Taiwan New Cinema and After*, Hong Kong 2005; *Postsocialist Cinema in Post-Mao China: The Cultural Revolution after the Cultural Revolution*, New York 2004; with Fran Martin and Audrey Yue (eds.), *Mobile Cultures: New Media and Queer Asia*, Durham 2003.