Central or peripheral, capital or megalopolis, the modern city is recognized for its socio-cultural dynamism, its geographical position and its importance within a national or international entity. Place of memory, desire, language and exchange, the city is also a reflection of its identity and of the cultural diversity of its territory. Between fascination and repulsion, the city provokes a different feeling in each person. Thanks to their poetic, heuristic, metaphysical and visionary approaches, the artist and the architect offer a complex image of the city. This synthesizes and amplifies the sometime passive perception of its inhabitants.

This conference is devoted to the study of Developing Countries' cities, of Latin America, Africa and Asia. The aim will be to confront different views of the city, viewed by the inhabitant, the artist and the architect as a living organism in perpetual transformation. These three views will be put in perspective in order to explore the methods of construction and deconstruction of the identities of urban space and its dwellers. This process will be enlightened through a comprehension of the city as an experimental laboratory, while insisting on the concepts of physical and cultural exchanges. This symposium will thus try to analyze the urban territory as a trigger for changes and will aim at revealing the various strategies of appropriation of public space. It also wish to highlight the resemblance and dissimilarities these « new » cities maintain with those of the United States and Europe, in particular concerning their way of envisioning fore-coming urban issues, in line with current reflections on the Grand Paris.

Launched by the Instead! research group (www.instead-art.org), this conference invites human sciences specialists, artists and architects to collaborate to map an artistic, cultural and social cartography of cities in Developing Countries.

The interventions will be articulated around the interaction of several axes exploring the relations of the city with art and politics, history and migration, imagination and utopia.
These topics and key words will direct the conference:

1 - Appropriation and documentation of the urban space
• urban artistic strategies: performances, happenings, events or any other form of actions and interventions of artists in the public urban space.
• the flâneur, the pedestrian, the walker.

2 - The city: a place of memory
• art, history, politics
• public and private art commissions.

3 - Image and representation of the city
• art and urbanism: dialogue between the architect and the artist
• relation between the artist and the environment
• esthetics of the urban landscape
• utopia

4 - City and migration
• concepts of transit and attrition
• urbanism and cultural identity
• globalization and urbanization (center/ periphery)

The proposals (300 words) are to be sent to the organizers before March 15th, 2010.

Julie Jones, ATER University Paris I : jjones@instead-art
Olivia Speer, allocataire moniteur University Paris I : ospeer@instead-art.org

Informations : www.instead-art.org