Shenzhen, the first Special Economic Zone established in 1979 in southern China, has transformed from a global electronics manufacturing hub and counterfeiting capital into a UNESCO City of Design within the span of four decades. This talk examines three digital-imaging practices that emanate from the city. The first is six-generation auteur Jia Zhangke’s 2004 narrative film *The World*, based in part on lead actress Zhao Tao’s experience working in Shenzhen’s Window of the World theme park. The second is Shenzhen-based company Transsion’s design of smartphones for the African market, which have roots in the city’s Shanzhai (i.e. “knockoff”) mobile phone sector. The third is large-scale light shows around the city in 2018-2019 that turn the facades of high-rises into electronic screens, featuring LED-light imageries generated by algorithms. Utilizing digital media to illuminate Shenzhen as a networked place, these cases offer opportunities to explore the city’s multiple connections to globalization from above and globalization from below. Simultaneously engaging with and revealing the contradictions of transparency as a normative ideal for global tech giants and governments in maximizing data collection and communicative efficacy, they provide a distinctive window to discern China’s cultural and political dilemmas in the 21st century.

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**Details:**

Friday, February 28, 2020
5:00 - 6:30pm
Teleconference Room (4th floor)
Alexander Library
169 College Avenue
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

**Co-Sponsor**

SAS Signature Course “Global East Asia,” Department of Geography and Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy

There is a screening of the film, “The World,” in connection with Yang’s lecture on Thursday, February 27, 7:45-9:30pm, in Rutgers Academic Building Room 4225 (AB 4225), College Avenue.