"There are no separate systems. The world is a continuum. Where to draw a boundary around a system depends on the purpose of the discussion."

— Donella H. Meadows, Thinking in Systems

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Referring to cities, Nicholas de Monchaux stated in his book Local Code that “it is impossible to imagine physical resilience without social, cultural and economic resilience as well.” This also holds for the presence of nature in the urban realm. Unless landscape architects understand how social, cultural, and economic systems can affect and interweave with environmental systems, their role in shaping contemporary cities and the actual existence of urban natures will be at risk of becoming merely cosmetic.

The value of urban green infrastructure is beyond question today, and it will continue to grow exponentially in a rapidly urbanizing world. Green infrastructure can take many shapes, and its impact varies greatly depending on its scale, implementation, and purpose: stormwater management, heat-island effect, mental health, local ecosystems, urban comfort, food production, air pollution... Despite all these benefits, the ever-growing economic pressure in urban environments is a constant threat to the emergence of new bodies of nature. Consequently, understanding the multi-fold properties of green infrastructure and linking them to specific urban processes will be essential to guarantee their future existence.

This studio will focus on the study of symbiotic relationships between environmental, social, and economic phenomena in order to determine optimal locations for the potential design and development of green infrastructure within contemporary cities.