How can we think today about the nature of an broader context of architectural ‘school,’ when most 21st century terrains are heterogeneous environments in which transportation corridors, industrial complexes, housing, and other infrastructures, commingle with ecological and cultural sites, revealing layers of urban transformation often at odds with each other? As part of the Global Studio of the Seoul Biennale of Architecture and Urbanism, this studio asks questions, and makes propositions about the future of the ‘school’ in the specific context of the Han River South Korea. The studio includes a two-week intensive study trip to Seoul involving site studies, workshops, and engagements with local communities.

As a pivotal instrument of urban development, the Han River, which divides the city, will be the focus for developing a more sustainable and integrated model of urban planning. By exploring the architectural, ecological, and social aspects of this complex river-scape, the studio leads to the proposal of a new ‘bridging structure’ designed for future habitation of the site. Methodologically, the studio applies a transdisciplinary approach, drawing on practices from architecture, landscape design, and urban planning to develop a site-specific approach that considers the whole space, not just its components. Particularly we consider how non-physical, or social acts of in/habitation, ‘the distance between two persons in conversation, the seating arrangement around a room or a table, the place of entry into a room, the shape of gathering around an event’, can give clues to designing a built environment.