

Led by Danielle Peck,  
of Architecture Associates,  
Industry Fellow, MADA  
Semester 1, Friday's 9am - 4pm.  
(with lunch break)

# Caring #3



Image: Birrarung banks, Abbotsford

The Caring Culture series explores how spaces for culture become spaces of care. Architecture that houses, presents and engages with cultural content has a positive effect on our well-being, physiologically and socially - but, how can architecture amplify, augment, instigate and participate in these well-being effects beyond becoming simply a cultural repository? Caring Culture #3: River, is interested in the entanglement of environmental, social and cultural health.

Our site of study this semester is a carpark and related terrain adjacent to the Abbotsford Convent. Your research will inform the design of a small performing arts venue, cinema and production studio for Melbourne's growing film industry.

## 1. Narrative Development

To begin with, we will investigate the interwoven histories and site specific notions of care; as it might relate to communities, institutions, economies and environments. The site presents unique opportunities to address and counter architecture of hierarchy, of challenging and sometimes confronting pasts, and of environmental degradation and industrial misuse. It places us in an ancient and sacred territory of cultural significance to First Nations peoples, and a place of social gathering that weaves through community.

You will also explore more generally 'river culture' through film where river as protagonist depicts both cautionary and celebratory tales of river ecology, myth and transformation. Your research will conclude with the production of three distinct briefs:

- a cultural brief;
- an environmental brief;
- and a spatial return brief.

You will use these briefs to formulate a storyboard of 'architectural scenes'.

## 2. Architectural Project

Along with the technical aspects of performing arts venues, which you will become adept in spatially understanding, your architecture will explore an active role in a Riparian remediation strategy for the site and a social engagement strategy.

Your storyboards will bring to life large-scale physical models and a set of detailed drawings of your architecture revealing how your narratives have influenced material moments of intervention, connection and quantity which will mediate between human and non-human actors - and, where arguably exists the ultimate architect's agency. Rather than considering the detail an inevitable outcome of a set of design images, we will approach these as participants in a more caring architecture, recognising that they imply labour and consumption with environmental and geopolitical consequences.

Working collaboratively will be a component of the semester. This process demands dialogue, understanding and negotiating different points of view to ultimately present a co-authored project. There will be opportunities within larger group projects to lead particular areas of interest and develop work individually for components of your design.

Students can expect in this studio to develop skills in research, critical positioning and return brief execution. Students will be challenged with a complex array of socio-political contextual analysis, city-scale thinking and in juxtaposition, will learn how to scale these ideas into detailed architecture. The studio will introduce students to story-telling as an evocative communication tool, and will hone skills of craft and making through expressive, vibrant and technically ambitious physical models. There will be a site visit organised early in the semester to Abbotsford, we will travel in the usual class allocated time.