PROVOCATION.

“How often have I lain beneath rain on a strange roof, thinking of home.”

William Faulkner, As I Lay Dying

This studio will explore the physics and metaphysics of water as an essential generative consideration for urban dwelling. How can we rethink our wasteful habits of intensive water use through the design of more regenerative systems of flow, form, and life? The studio will interrogate the socio-cultural conventions of habitation through a liquid lens — from source to sink to stream, and back again. How can we rekindle an awareness of dwelling as being part of a larger cycle — more than imperious bodies and buildings shedding water but as symbiotic stewards of a pervious watershed?

PROJECT AND PROCEDURE.

The third-year studios during spring semester will introduce fundamental principles of urbanism and focus upon the city as a site for architecture. Mixed use programs of 50,000 – 100,00 square feet will be embedded in and responsive to distinct urban conditions, and an emphasis upon housing will propel the shaping of public and private domains. Social, cultural, and ecological considerations will be foregrounded through urban analysis and in the development of typological and tectonic strategies of form and use.

This studio will focus on MARTA’s East Lake Transit Station near Decatur, GA and its extended Druid Hills milieu. The investigation will unfold in a series of discrete phases of research and design by analytically mapping and modeling multi-scaled systems and flows in order to develop a comprehensive contextual awareness. Specific areas of research will include:

- thematic concerns of the Living Building Challenge, especially those concerned with Water (responsible water use, net positive water) and Place (ecology of place, urban agriculture, human scaled living).
- Case studies of Transit Oriented Development, including the historical example of the locally adjacent Olmsted Linear Parks (below).
- Exemplars of contemporary housing, especially those innovative schemes being advanced by firms such as BIG.

Emphasis will be placed on two sets of reflexive relationships: between program and site, each informing and being informed by the other; and the reciprocity between representation and construction as a motive force propelling design. The studio will treat inquiry and design as co-extensive activities rather than as disjointed means and ends. Students will critically frame the issues through guided readings, historical research, contextual and diagrammatic mapping, digital and physical modeling, and speculative design investigations in multi-media as modes of creative research.