Studio Information:
Urban Creek Landscape – Relational Space for Agency

Studio Abstract

The Norman Creek catchment, located near Brisbane's inner city, stands as the city's most urbanised creek, characterised by complex flood risks. The Great Flood of 1974 revealed the limitations of post-war flood mitigation based on artificial structures. Since the 1990s, community-led initiatives have consistently worked towards the rejuvenation of its waterways. Today, under the pressure of further urbanisation and densification, the catchment has become a focal point for rapid population growth and intensive redevelopment. This shift presents a unique opportunity to envision communities defined by a more intimate engagement between urban life and ecosystems.

The creek environment encompasses multiscalar spatial dimensions—from local vegetation to regional hydrological cycles—while simultaneously operating on its own temporal rhythms. Historically treated as an urban periphery, the studio aims to redefine the creek as a strategic anchor. It explores incremental urban development schemes that mediate the spatio-temporal dynamics of the creek with the complexities of everyday urban life.

In this studio, we conceptualise the creek landscape as a field of networks where actors, humans and non-humans (nature, objects, technology) shape one another. By synthesising diverse media to map networks of the past and present, students will analyse transformations and envision a future network that fosters richer interactions among diverse actors. This involves identifying pivotal nodes within the broader catchment and proposing tactical sites, programs, and spaces.

The studio proposes a Relational Space which offers opportunity for actors to find agency. The final submission will present a Strategic Urban Design Framework for the specific sites at the Norman Creek Catchment. This framework will respond to the research developed through the semester and the design questions raised during the analysis phase. In the framework, you will present a compelling argument for Relational Space – a space that offers opportunity for actors to find agency. It will demonstrate how that space will evolve over time, interacting with the catchment's environment and catalysing positive change throughout the networks. The work will be presented in a range of techniques and media including images, text, diagrams and mappings at various scales.

Course Staff

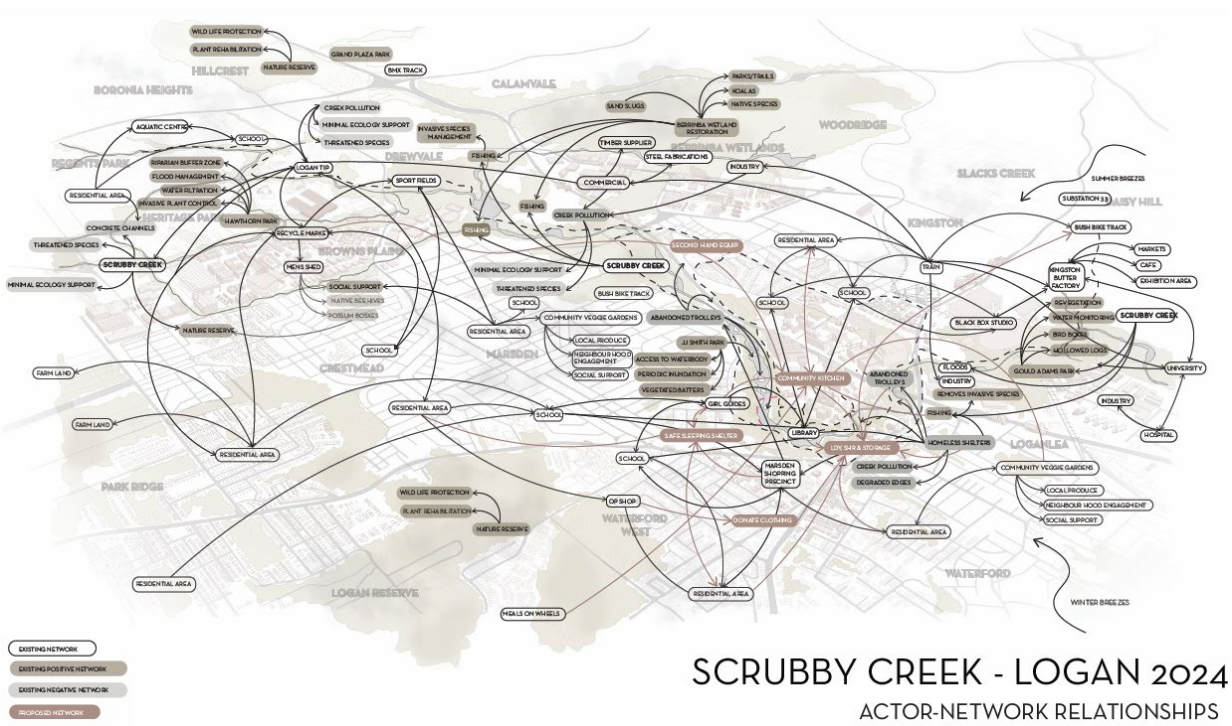
Yohei Omura is an architect and co-director of the architectural practice Parafeeld, along with Ayano Toki. Since graduating from the University of Queensland, he has gained professional experience such as Atelier Bow-Wow in Japan and Phorm Architecture + Design in Australia. His work at Phorm A+D has been recognised at both national and state levels. Yohei's practice is driven by an interest in architectural pluralism—an approach that accommodates multiple actors, conditions, and experiences. This attitude extends into his academic involvement at the University of Queensland. Throughout his career, he has received numerous accolades, including RAIA Brisbane Region House of the Year (2016, 2018), RAIA Queensland State Awards (2016, 2017, 2018), and a RAIA National Commendation (2016). His teaching experience includes course coordination for the Master's Design Studio *Suburban Creek Landscape* (2024), the Master's Research Studio *Medium Hybrid-ness* (2022), and *Future of Hardwood Timber Framing?* (2018), as well as an ongoing role as a teaching assistant at the University of Queensland since 2013.

Ayano Toki is a designer, researcher and educator. After she received her PhD from the University of Tsukuba, she taught design and research at Tohoku University in Japan. She played a pivotal role in the reconstruction efforts following the Great East Japan Earthquake as a government advisor and project manager, leading diverse projects ranging from master planning and architectural design to community revitalization. Her work also extends to international academic collaborations, particularly in organising workshops focused on rural development. These professional experiences underpin her research into how nature, space, and memory intersect to form a sense of place. Throughout her career, she has received a number of accolades, including the Tohoku University Education Award (2020), the Sasakawa Scientific Research Award (2017), the DSA Design Award (2017), the Good Design Award (2016), and the ISAIA Academic Session Award (2016).

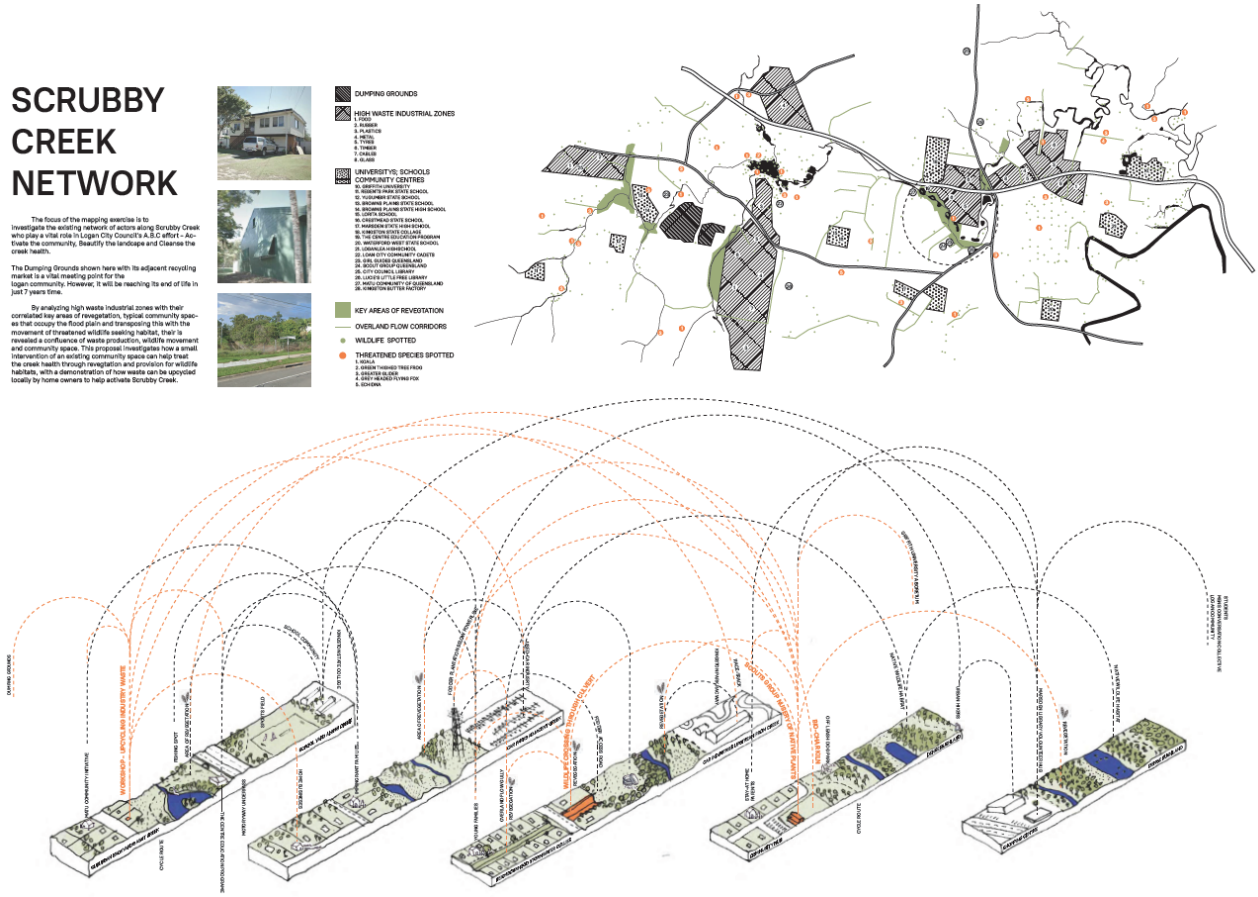
The outcomes of their collaborative university studio were selected for "Unsettling Queenstown" at the Australian Pavilion during the 18th Venice Biennale International Architecture Exhibition 2023.

Guest Speakers

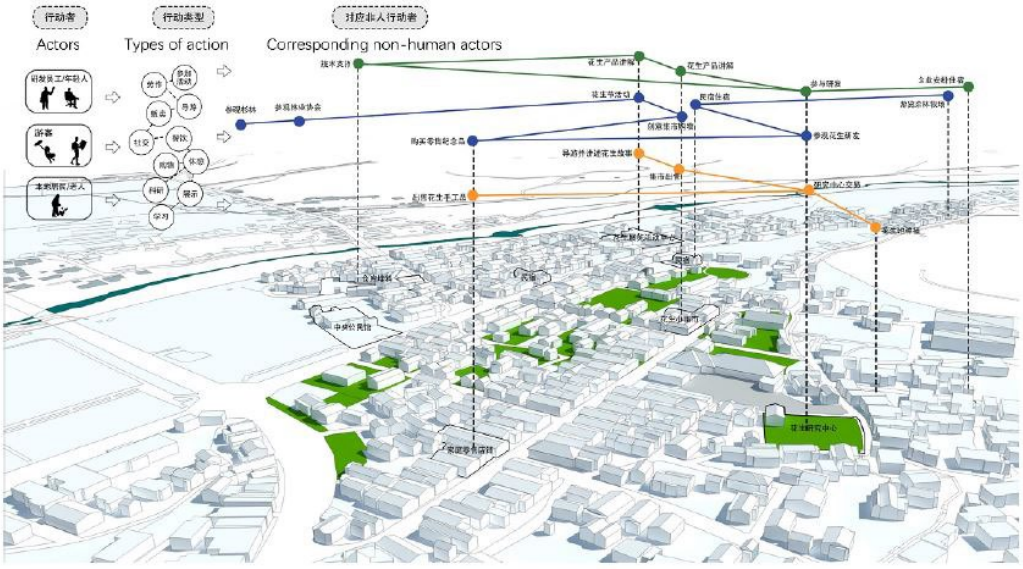
The studio incorporates invaluable lectures from local stakeholders, landscape designer, urban planner, and architect, including Stephanie Ford (N4C), Damian Thompson (LatStudios), Cass Gaisford (Brisbane Sustainability Agency), Kali Marnane (Urbis), Tess Martin (Reddog Architects).



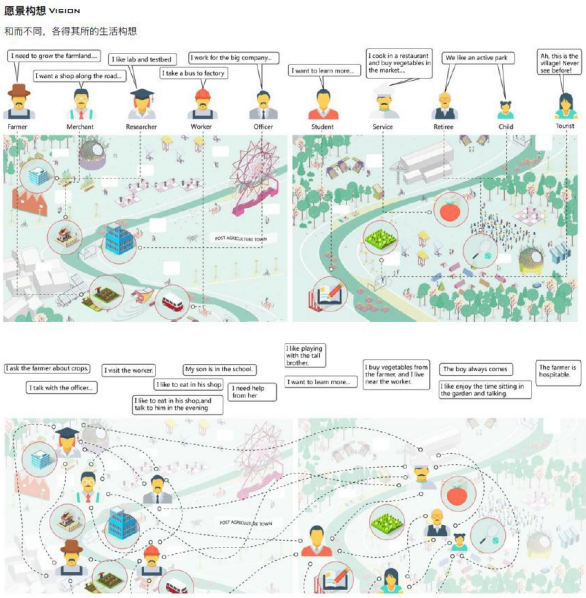
Actor-Network Diagram for Scrubby Creek in Logan
Alisha Mandla // UQ ARCH7003, 2024



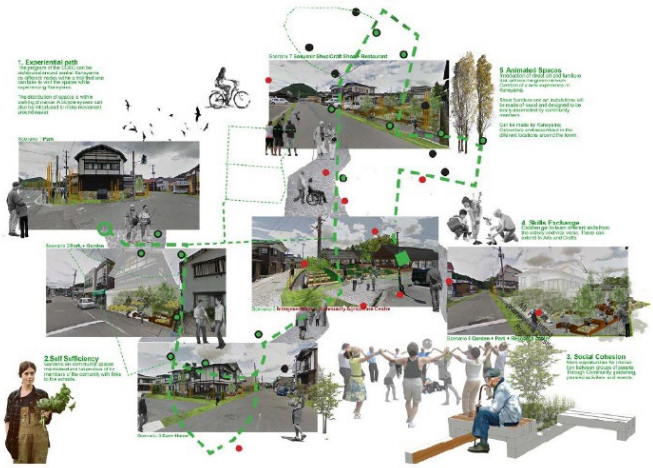
Actor-Network Diagram for Selected Area
Eloise Whittaker // UQ ARCH7003, 2024



Vision Mapping for Post-Agriculture Town // Huazhong University of Science and Technology & Tohoku University collaborative design workshop 2019



Urban Strategy for 'Integrational Community Agricultural Centre'// Huazhong University of Science and Technology & Tohoku University collaborative design workshop 2019



Site Proposition for 'Peanut Industry Drives Urban Vitality'// Huazhong University of Science and Technology & Tohoku University collaborative design workshop 2019

Site Proposition for 'New Urban Farm Community' // Shin Chien University & Tohoku University collaborative design workshop 2013