



Where the water once flowed  
Photo: Chang Kim Photography

# Los Angeles River

El Pueblo de Nuestra Señora la Reina de los Ángeles del Río Porciúncula

Operating at the intersection of architecture, infrastructure, and landscape, the 2018 fall design studio of the Chair of Professor Marc Angéllil will focus on the Los Angeles River – a water control channel in concrete (approximately 80 km in length) erected after major floods by the Army Corps of Engineering from the late 1930s to mid-1950s – and its potential revitalization as green corridor and integration within the urban fabric, or what historian and architectural critic Reyner Banham called in the early 1970s “the Plains of Id” in his book *Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies*.

Acknowledging that the dry riverbed of the Los Angeles River has been repeatedly used as a backdrop for a number of Hollywood movies, including *Chinatown* (1974), *Grease 2* (1982), *To Live and Die in L.A.* (1985), *Terminator 2* (1991), *Gone in 60 Seconds* (2000), and *The Italian Job* (2003), to mention just a few, all contributing in part to the myth of Los Angeles as an out-of-

the-ordinary place that transcends the everyday (by the way, a myth to which also Reyner Banham succumbed when exclaiming “I love Los Angeles”), the design studio exercise will focus on the ordinariness of everyday life, foregrounding reality as experienced by those living in the city day in and day out.

While addressing the role of a piece of infrastructure within city, one incidentally rarely perceived when traversing the urban terrain, the design studio intends to particularly address how architecture as a discipline can and must engage in framing and reframing the future of Los Angeles’s ‘architecture of the city’; in so doing, the studio will engage in a discourse on the relation between design method and design outcome, that is, between process and product, particularly considering that techniques deployed in any undertaking always have a determining effect on what is produced, constructed, fabricated, or made.

Los Angeles River  
Stadtarchitektur

ETH Zürich  
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**Marc Angéllil**  
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Team  
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Introduction  
Tuesday 18.09.2018  
13:30, ONA Studio