ARCHITECTURE

SEA REGION

Singapore, Indonesia and Malaysia

PROJECT 2

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TEAM — Hans Hortig, Stefanie Krautzig
PROGRAM — Design Research Studio, Fieldtrip and Integrated Discipline Planning
WHERE — Future Cities Lab, Singapore
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PLACES — 10 Students
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In maritime cultures, the sea is sometimes seen and imagined as the land: the source of livelihood, the space of everyday life and connections among people, activities and settlements, which gravitate toward it as the centre. Archipelagic life and structures, such as the Malay world along the Straits of Malacca and the Straits of Singapore, have evolved around the sea and relied on exchange over the water. Once part of a sea region, unified through maritime culture and trade, disparities and differences today characterize the trinational space of Singapore, Malaysian province of Johor and Indonesian Riau Archipelago. Though Singapore is an island city-state, it also represents the densely populated core and the economical focal point of the larger territory. Since the 1970s, Singapore’s economy began to expand and incorporate productive hinterlands over the national boundary. As a result, two fast-growing industrial cities of over one million each, Johor Bahru and Batam, lie at Singapore’s borders, in its shadow. The trinational space is today a de-facto emerging metropolitan region of around eight million inhabitants. Despite the shared maritime culture and history, and the high degree of economic synchronization among the three sides, the lack of common visions and regional steering still remain a reality. The HS 14 Sea Region will propose territorial design strategies leading to stronger metropolitan connections in the currently divided territory. The Singapore Strait, one of the most intensely urbanized seas of the world, has always been the lifeline of the region. In the project, we aim to return the extraordinary sea of the Strait into the centre of public discourse and imagination about the future of the trinational region.

Architecture of Territory investigates phenomena and processes of urban transformation of contemporary territories. It comprises a shift of interest from cities to broader territorial frames and to what was once considered as the non-urban realm or the city’s “constitutive outside”: the nature, the ocean, the rural, the wild. The HS 2014 project builds on the research of the hinterlands of contemporary cities since 2011, where Singapore and its multiple territorial imprints have served as the paradigmatic research case.