Paper/Proposal Title: It's Elemental: Working Water into The Rising Studio

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Abstract (300 words):
Water has the unique capacity to define and undo places. With eight of the world’s ten largest cities near a coast and almost 40 percent of the United States population living in coastal areas, in an era of climate change and sea-level rise, the interplay between the built environment, people and water (and the changing nature of these relationships) is an urgent challenge architects, among others face, today and for the foreseeable future. Given water’s potential as either friend or foe and the inevitable role it will play in shaping future communities to what extent should educators consider water to be as foundational a ‘material’ as wood, concrete, and steel?

Engaging the example of the Rising Studio, this paper presents the unfolding of a graduate design studio where water is the protagonist. By utilizing Elizabeth Rush’s Rising: Dispatches from the New American Shoreline as an anchoring text, traveling to compelling places, and employing William Burrough’s The Cut-up technique, the studio challenges students to construct a narrative and intervention which registers change in a dynamic world impacted by the abundance or absence of water. The studio stems from the instructor’s six years with Ripple Effect Water Literacy Project, an education nonprofit which envisions a future where all teachers and students have the knowledge, skills and ethical grounding they need to strengthen communities in an era of climate change and sea-level rise. Through selected assignments, the paper explores and
advocates for embedding water and water-related issues into beginning design architecture curricula, in hopes that if foregrounded it will better prepare students for the world they will be called to design in the future.


**Author(s) Biography (200 words each):**
As a licensed US architect (Louisiana) with over a decade of experience teaching architectural design, Kristen Kelsch is passionate about architecture and beginning design education. She is a Professional-in-Residence and Undergraduate Coordinator at Louisiana State University School of Architecture where she teaches students fundamental design principles and methods of representation. Her research focuses on architectural pedagogy and teaching. She is also Director of Operations and Strategic Partnerships for Ripple Effect, an education nonprofit that provides interdisciplinary, environmental science instruction about real communities and places impacted by climate change in order to educate and empower the next generation of water-literate leaders.