



Mobility and Impermanence: Temporary Environments

SPRING 2021 SEMINAR | Arch 3819/5819/4408/6408

Thursdays 9:05 –11:00AM | ONLINE

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The history and theory of design has tended to champion permanence and to relegate the temporary environment to the margins, as if a lesser imitation of a more permanent ideal. This course will consider a history of temporary environments with the aim of opening up design possibilities and investigating these considerable biases and challenges in our history, our practices, and our institutions. How might a focus on mobility and impermanence reveal new opportunities for thinking, writing, designing, and building that is more agile, more sustainable, and more just? How are the categories of “permanent” and “temporary” challenged today, when forced displacement affects more people than any crisis or conflict, and when the average time families remain in emergency accommodation is 17 years? What can we learn from the history of temporary environments that might help us imagine buildings and structures that can be truly recyclable, reusable, adaptable to new demands, able to solve new and emerging challenges? What creative, even radical opportunities might temporary structures afford us? And how do contemporary examples of successful temporary environments, help us enlarge and enrich the categories of “architecture” and “built environment”?

Image: Francois Dallegret, *The Environment-Bubble. Transparent Plastic Bubble Dome in AirConditioning Output* in Rayner Banham’s Essay “A Home is Not A House” *Art in America*, 1965.