“Should buildings have expiration dates? What is the mortality rate of our buildings? And how does that correspond to the life expectancy of its occupants/programs?”

Through a case study approach and reading, this seminar postulates a framework for a short lifespan and temporal architecture. How does architecture emerge, aggregate, assimilate, modulate, then disassociate, dissipate and back to nothingness? What phenomenological forces (social, organizational, material, spiritual, cultural and otherwise) trigger architecture to grow, thrive and then voluntarily euthanize?

Students will examine responsive agile and temporal habitations suitable to accommodate urgent and temporal programs in refugee and displacement camps, as well as other impermanent human settlements. Students will question how architecture metabolizes and dissolves across human settlements. To speculate on “architecture euthanasia” - an architecture that stems from the ground and is ultimately subsumed by it, the class develops a workflow and research spanning theory and craft (short essays, speculative drawings and technical representations).

The class culminates by designing small projects that leverage emerging construction technologies, systems and rudimentary, ubiquitous, and traditional building materials such as dirt, sand, bamboo, straw, fiber, etc.