

# Course Syllabus

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## "Image Cities Circus" - Advanced Studio VI Spring 2017

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The history of the modern circus dates to the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the early circus included extraordinary displays of power over nature such as trick horse riding, displays of wild animals such as lions and elephants, and other types of performances intended for amusement and distraction during the Industrial Revolution in England and Belle Epoque in Paris (1871 – 1914). While the early circus was set in an amphitheatre and then later a permanent building within the city such as the London Hippodrome, the modern circus later developed as a series of itinerant events and performances that include the fanciful as well as the phatasmagoric. Shortly following the Russian revolution in 1917, Lenin nationalized the Russian circuses in order to become “the people’s art form” --- egalitarian regardless of class, education, language or race.

The circus is an unusual topic for architectural considerations. However in 1965, Henri Lefebvre’s *La Proclamation de la Commune* analogized the relationships between the Paris Commune 1781 and the carnival tradition. Lefebvre argued that the carnival like the Commune shatter the institutional framework within which they are traditionally contained. While the carnival and the circus are not necessarily synonymous there are a number of “circus” architecture precedents for our consideration:

- *Fun Palace*, Cedric Price’s (1964)
- *Ideas Circus*, Archigram (1969)
- *Instant City*, Archigram (1970)
- *Centre Pompidou*, Piano and Rogers (1971 – 1979)
- *Oase No. 7*, Haus-Rucker (1972)
- *New Babylon*, Constant Nieuwenhuys (1959 – 1974)

However, while these architectural circuses were born of revolt against a certain kind of hegemony, the circus is often a site of paradoxical juxtapositions of diversion, aesthetics, beauty, and seduction.

[Site and Program](#)

Our spring 2017 studio will explore the idea of the circus and relationships among paradoxical situations, contexts, and events. Each student will conduct preliminary research into the idea of circus with a contradictory set of conditions. The physical context for the circus will be in Dakar Senegal. The program for the circus will include a permanent intervention as well as temporal programs itinerant event-spaces.

### Travel

The studio will travel to Dakar, Senegal.

### Dates

January 18, 2017	Studio Lottery
February 20-24	Mid-term Review
March 6–10	Kinne Week
March 13-17	Spring Break
May 1-3	Final Review