PERMANENT CHANGE: PLASTICS IN ARCHITECTURE AND ENGINEERING

MARCH 30 — APRIL 1, 2011

COLUMBIA GSAPP
Plastics are becoming the most ubiquitous and increasingly permanent materials in construction. The material capabilities of plastics both as a generic material nomenclature and as the specific aspects of specific polymers and the processes that underlie them suggest a potential to reshape construction and the roles of architects and engineers in construction. While plastics are perhaps the most deeply engineered building materials today, they are still in their nascent stages of understanding in terms of their potential applications and uses. Permanent Change sheds new light on these materials and their implications for the fields of architecture and engineering. Materials that forecast easily molded, reformed shapes have become a permanent measure and control point in design.

Bringing together a wide range of leading architects, engineers and scholars, the Columbia Conference on Architecture, Engineering and Materials is a multi-year project to explore the dramatically changing limits of known and new materials. In an era of rapid urbanization and within unprecedented forms of technical measurement, coordination and production the boundaries of professions and of materials are increasingly blurred. Do contemporary means of structural and material analysis suggest a way of modeling material attributes such that analysis itself might produce a new material and new practices? Do new techniques create a virtual strain or quasi-alloy, leading to a new realm of coordinated material action and conceptual action?

This conference on plastics is the fourth in a series of conferences on architecture, engineering and materials. The conference explores the boundaries between architecture, engineering and materials science by mobilizing symposia, studios, exhibitions, books and films in an intensely focused investigation. How is a new generation of professionals and manufacturers fusing engineering and architectural practices, and how do new materials and material concepts change our professions?

— Michael Bell, Professor, Chair, Columbia Conference on Architecture, Engineering and Materials

The expanding list of participating architects, engineers, historians, and theorists includes: Hernan Diaz Alonso, Paola Antonelli, Johan Bettum, William Carroll, Beatriz Colomina, Winka Dubbeldam, Anna Dyson, Laurie Hawkinson, Steven Holl, George Jeronimides, Lydia Kallipoliti, Jan Knippers, Craig Konyk, Sanford Kwinter, Sylvia Lavin, Fabian Marcaccio, Michael Meredith, Christian Meyer, Michael Mos, Jorge Otero Pailos, Bill Pearson, Werner Preusker, François Roche, Hilary Sample, Yoshiko Sato, Rita Schencck, Matthias Schuler, Felicity Scott, Werner Sobek, Galia Solomonoff, Heiko Trumpf and Mark Wigley.

Conference Keynote Lecture — Greg Lynn, Architect, Los Angeles / Professor, UCLA
Honorary Keynote Lecture — Michael Graves, Architect / Professor Emeritus, Princeton University

The conference will be accompanied by installations designed by Rosana Rubio-Hernandez and Yoshiko Sato. On display in Avery Hall.

Permanent Change has been generously underwritten by the exclusive sponsor

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The Architect’s Newspaper, New York
www.archpaper.com

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