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PRESS RELEASE

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proSolve370e AT THE 2008 VENICE BIENNALE

elegant embellishments, presents a new prototype of *proSolve370e*: decorative, depolluting architectural tiles, at the 11th **International Architecture Exhibition, Venice Biennale 2008**. *proSolve370e* is featured in “*Updating Germany: Projects for a Better Future*”, an exhibition at the German Pavilion curated by commissioners Friedrich von Borries and Matthias Böttger (Raumtakik, Berlin). The show presents research projects, design experiments and pilot projects that explore sustainability beyond green building, corresponding with Director Aaron Betsky's overall theme for the Biennale: “Out There: Architecture Beyond Building”.

The *proSolve370e* prototype is composed of approximately 55 photocatalytic tiles, to form a 10m² suspended screen. The tiles are produced at 40% of their intended size, indicating their primary use: as a building facade element. The installation will be shown in Venice from 14th September to 23rd November 2008, and will travel with the exhibition to several successive venues in Germany.

proSolve370e is a decorative architectural tile that can effectively reduce air pollution from traffic in cities when installed near traffic ways or on building facades. The tiles are coated with SigmaCoating's *Siloxan NOx*, containing superfine titanium dioxide (TiO₂), a pollution-fighting technology that is activated by ambient daylight. This is the nano photocatalytic version of conventional TiO₂ commonly used as pigment and already known for its self-cleaning and germicidal qualities. It requires only small amounts of naturally occurring UV light and humidity to effectively reduce air pollutants into harmless amounts of carbon dioxide and water. When positioned near pollution sources, the coated tiles break down and neutralize NO_x (nitrogen oxides) and VOCs (volatile organic compounds) directly where they are generated. As a modification to existing architectural surfaces, *proSolve370e* essentially “tunes buildings” to respond better to their immediate environments.

The design of the tiles is generated to maximize the coating technology, achieving new levels of surface area and complexity, capturing omni-directional light where light is dense or scarce. The sculptural surfaces maintain an inherent synergy between design form and the molecular technology, each informing the other in the process. As a result, the tiles incorporate an elegant technology, while remaining, formally, a decorative apparatus.

Derived from a five-fold symmetric pattern, the underlying substrate is a mathematical grid that appears irregular, yet is made of only two constituent parts. The new, non-orthogonal grid produces a seemingly non-repetitive, tiled pattern, resulting in visual randomness, a desirable aesthetic that is typically achieved through bespoke design and expense. While it resembles an organic growth pattern, the system is still composed with only two repeating modules.

As a modular system, *proSolve370e* can expand and contract according to environment, reaching the endless varieties of physical structures in the city. (*continued*)

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(continued)

Considerations for use are:

- as depolluting facade panels, particularly suited to NOx-producing car park structures with edge-lit, deep floor plates
- in the regeneration of building facades where developers and architects are searching for decorative, high-impact ecological solutions
- as an uncoated lightweight panel for interiors as decorative screens or ceiling installations
- in traffic environments, particularly at entrances to traffic tunnels where pollution is high and light is scarce
- along urban circulars, currently generating up to half of many cities' air pollution
- directly accessible to the hands of communities, wishing to quickly change their environments without the hierarchy of complex building permissions

"The physical design of the tiles is itself meant as a visual provocation; the resulting grid resembles a kind of crystalline ivy, sculpturally attached to the otherwise bare walls of urban downtowns, where it assumes "endless varieties of physical structures." *Geoff Manaugh, BldgBlog/ Senior Editor, Dwell Magazine*

proSolve370e is currently seeking a manufacturing partner.

ABOUT US

elegant embellishments was formed in 2006 to investigate and develop new materials and methods for the quick modification of existing buildings and spaces. These modifications are used to 'tune' buildings, converting previously inert surfaces into active surfaces that can meet new challenges set by a rapidly changing world. A key aspect of our work is the visual articulation of innovative technologies that have the potential to alleviate the ecological impact of cities but often require a re-examination of current practices, in particular the slow institutional processes of architecture.

Our first functioning product, *proSolve370e*, is an example of our interest in new, complex topographies for smart surfaces. We seek new processes that can transcend the current reliance on tooling, and derive new forms for innovative technologies that occur on a molecular level, yet are significant enough to transform spaces. Our projects attempt to envision future urban landscapes in the post-production era of smart materials and environments.

elegant embellishments is a design bureau, interested in systems for buildings and cities that respond to a new set of invisible criteria for physical space. Our 'prototypes for building' act as catalysts for the re-interpretation of interstitial spaces in architecture.

elegant embellishments is Daniel Schwaag and Allison Dring.

INFORMATION

Duration of the exhibition: 14 September to 23 November 2008

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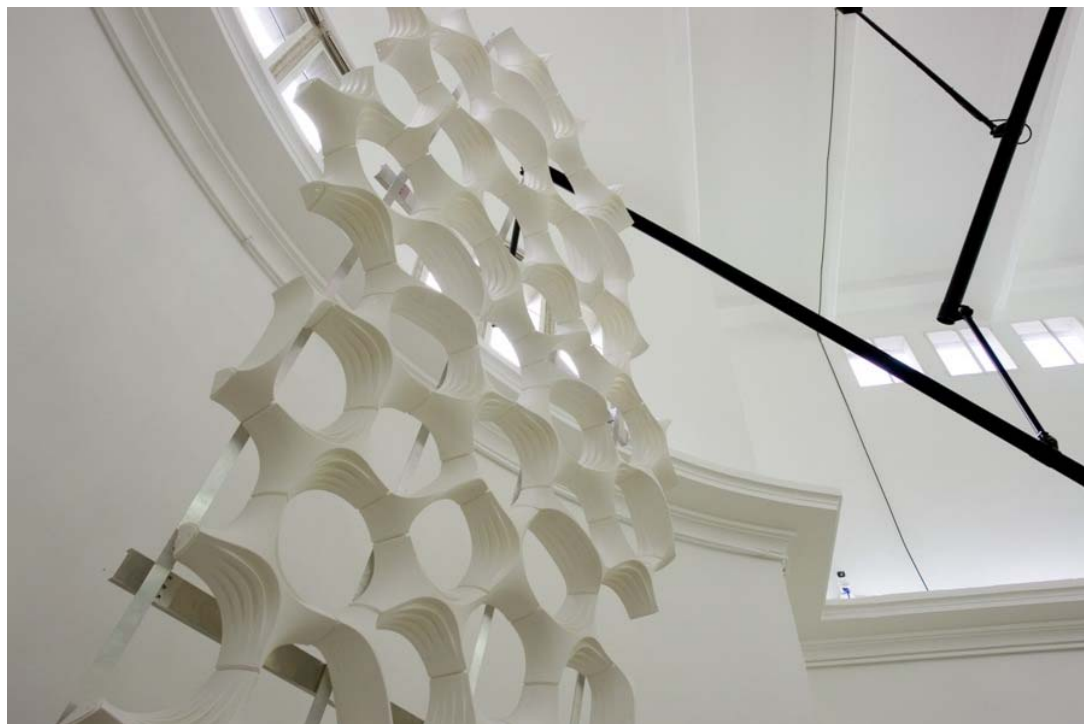
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