

FÉLIX CANDELA: A SYMPOSIUM



February 11, 2012; 1:00 – 8:00 pm; 501 Schermerhorn Hall

Free and open to the public.

Presented collaboratively by the Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery and the Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library, Columbia University. Presented in conjunction with the concurrent exhibition *Félix Candela* on view at the Wallach Art Gallery 11 February through 31 March 2012.

For more information please call 212-854-2877 or email wallach@columbia.edu

Symposium Overview

A keynote address by Prof. David Billington of Princeton University, co-author of *Félix Candela: Engineer, Builder and Structural Artist* will introduce the life and work of Candela.

The first of two panels will discuss the role of politics both in the work of Félix Candela and in design more generally. Candela was born and educated in Spain. He fought in the Spanish Civil War on the side of the elected government, crossed the Pyrennees on foot with the defeated army, and after a brief sojourn in a French concentration camp was exiled to Mexico. After a successful career building a great variety of hyperbolic paraboloids in Mexico, his last iconic work was the 'Palacio de los Deportes' for the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City. Panelists will examine the varied political arenas in which Candela's career developed.

The second panel will take up the discussion of Candela's legacy. During his career Félix Candela collaborated with both architects and engineers. He also formed a construction company "Cubiertas Ala" which build 'Hy-par' covers throughout Latin America. He often described himself as a builder, and in his writing, reclaimed the role of the architect as "master builder". Panelists will explore the continued debate on whether his extraordinary constructions are best described as engineering or architectural creations.

The afternoon's presentations will conclude with an overview of the concurrent exhibition provided by the project's lead curator, Juan Ignacio del Cueto Ruiz-Funes, of Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Mexico.

Following the symposium events a celebratory opening reception for the exhibition will take place in the gallery.

Schedule and Participants

1:00 – 1:30 pm – Welcome and introductory remarks by Barry Bergdoll, Philip Johnson Chief curator of Architecture and Design, MoMA.

1:30 – 2:15 pm - **Keynote Address:** David Billington, Gordon Y.S. Wu Professor of Engineering, Princeton U.

2:15 – 3:50 pm – **Panel: Politics and Architecture**

- Angela Giral (moderator), Former Avery Librarian
- Inés Sánchez de Madariaga, Professor of City Planning, Madrid School of Architecture
- Maria Gonzalez-Pendas, Ph. D. candidate in the Program in History and Theory of Architecture, Columbia U.
- Luis Castañeda, Assist. Professor of Art History, Syracuse U.

3:50 – 4:10 – Coffee Break

4:10 – 6:00 pm – **Panel: Candela's Legacy—Architect or Engineer**

- Mary McLeod (moderator), Professor, Graduate School of Architecture and Planning, Columbia U.
- Maria Garlock, Assoc. Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Princeton U.
- Guy Nordenson, Professor of Structural Engineering and Architecture, Princeton U. and Principal, Guy Nordenson and Associates, New York
- Juan Miró, School of Architecture, Professor of Architecture, U. of Texas at Austin and Principal, Miró Rivera Architects

6:00 – 6:30 - **Presentation of the Exhibition** by the curator, Professor Juan Ignacio del Cueto Ruiz-Funes, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

6:30 – 8:00 pm - **Reception** at the Wallach Art Gallery