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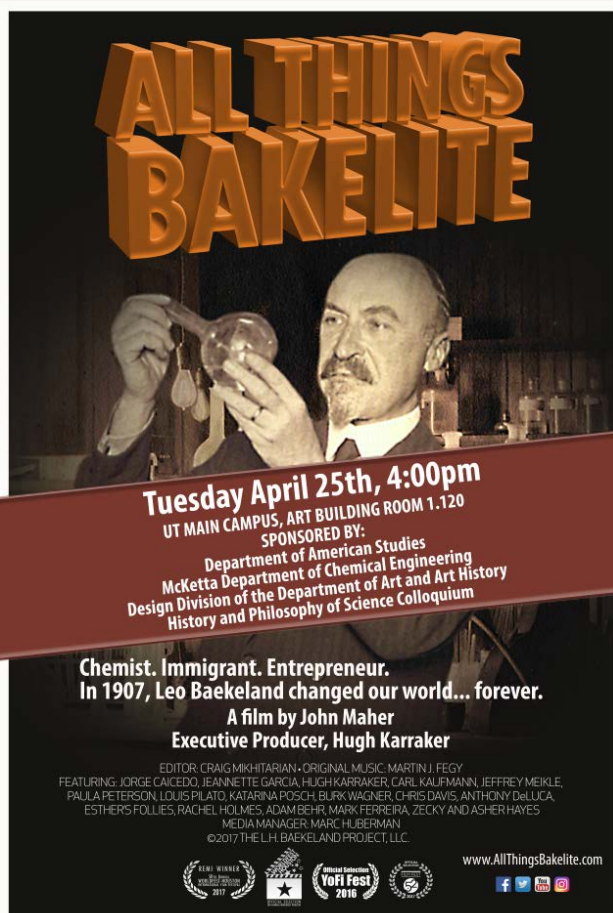
Announcement: All Things Bakelite!

by

American Studies

AMS :: ATX is a blog dedicated to representing the many activities and interests of the department of American Studies at The University of Texas at Austin. Together with the department's Twitter feed, this blog exists to serve the AMS and Austin communities by acting as a hub for up-to-date information on events and opportunities at UT and beyond.





Please joins us tomorrow, Tuesday, April 25th, for one-hour documentary film entitled *All Things Bakelite* at 4 pm, in ART 1.120, followed by a panel discussion with the filmmakers (executive producer Hugh Karraker and director John Maher) and UT faculty members (historian of science Bruce Hunt, designer Kate Catterall, design historian Carma Gorman, and historian of technology Jeff Meikle). *All Things Bakelite* employs historical footage, still photographs, dramatic reenactment, and expert interviews (as well as a cameo by Austin's cabaret troupe Esther's Follies) to explore the invention, marketing, and subsequent history of the world's first synthetic plastic.

Bakelite was the first totally artificial



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material with molecules previously unknown in nature. Invented in 1907 by Leo Baekeland, a Belgian émigré chemist, the new material immediately became indispensable for hidden electrical components of such new technologies as the automobile and radio. More to the point, as the first of many new synthetic plastics and polymers, Bakelite contributed to the expanding consumer culture of the 20th century by placing an infinite range of inexpensive, easily molded goods within economic range of ordinary citizens. By 1967, the cultural significance of synthetics such as Bakelite had become so powerful that movie audiences exploded when Dustin Hoffman in *The Graduate* was told, “Plastics... just one word... there’s a great future in plastics.”

This event is sponsored by the Department of American Studies, the McKetta Department of Chemical Engineering, the Design Division of the Department of Art and Art History, and the History and Philosophy of Science Colloquium.

Please address any questions to Jeff Meikle <meikle@mail.utexas.edu>.

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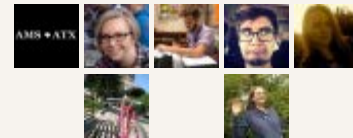
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- 5 Questions: Dr. Simone Browne, Associate Professor, African and African Diaspora Studies
- Announcement: The World In American Studies Today Graduate Conference Hosted By UT AMS
- The World in American Studies Today Keynote: Dr. Anita Mannur
- 5(ish) Questions: A Conversation With Dr. Ramzi Fawaz (University of Wisconsin - Madison)

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- slate.com/articles/arts/...
2 hours ago
- Conversation with Photographer Mark Klett: Tomorrow (9/14), 7 PM, @HRC
amstudies.wordpress.com/2017/09/13/con...
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- A short story contest judged by novelist and AMS scholar Viet Thanh Nguyen:
bostonreview.submittable.com/submit/55330/a... via @BostonReview 1 day ago
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