



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 18 OCTOBER 2023

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### FIRST ACRYLIC REAR LENS NAMED 2023 SPE® AUTOMOTIVE INNOVATION AWARDS “HALL OF FAME” WINNER

**Troy, (DETROIT) MICH.** – The industry’s first Acrylic Rear Lens, used on the 1948 General Motors Co. Cadillac Series 60, 61 and 62 models, has been named the 2023 Hall of Fame Winner by the Automotive Division of the Society of Plastics Engineers (SPE®). This will be celebrated by honoring the technology and the companies and people affiliated with this application during SPE’s 52<sup>nd</sup> annual Automotive Innovation Awards Gala on November 8, 2023. The Acrylic (also known as PMMA) Rear Lens, made possible with the invention of the polymer called polymethylmethacrylate by Dr. Otto Röhm in 1932, was a gamechanger replacing ground glass and enabling a renaissance of new lighting designs for all OEMs.

To be considered for a Hall of Fame Award, an automotive plastic or composite component must have been in continuous service in some form for at least 15 years and broadly adopted in the automotive industry. This application certainly qualifies as PMMA lenses are an industry standard known for glass-like optical properties while being about half the weight of glass. PMMA offers numerous design and quality benefits making it the premier material for lighting applications and more on all automotive vehicles and on numerous other products in industry.

General Motors pioneered a revolution in automotive lighting by using PMMA on the 1948 Cadillac rear lamp lens and other OEMs followed. From the perennial “50’s shark fins” to the modern “coast-to-coast” light bars, PMMA has played an integral role in the advancement of automotive lighting designs in both form and function. There are currently a variety of specialty PMMA grades designed for OEM-specific styling and applications designs including: Non-transparent high gloss black versions (for paint replacement/exterior trim), various diffusive types (for LED edge/back lighting) and even infrared transparent variations designed for laser welding and Radar/Lidar covers. PMMA resin is acclaimed for its excellent balance of properties that lens applications require, including UV resistance, (Non-yellowing), flexible colorability, chemical resistance, hardness, and scratch resistance. It is also fully recyclable via chemical depolymerization. PMMA is well positioned for emerging new vehicle designs where industry has coined “light is the new chrome” ensuring its role as a key to innovative lighting and more into the future.

The companies involved in developing the first Acrylic Rear Lens include: OEM – General Motors; Molder/Processor – Fisher Body Division; Material Supplier – Röhm & Haas OHG (Germany), now known as Röhm GmbH. General Motors will accept the SPE Automotive Hall of Fame Award, on behalf of the original team that worked to develop this application, at the SPE Automotive Innovation Awards Gala on November 8, 2023 at the Burton Manor in Livonia, Michigan.

The SPE Automotive Innovation Awards is the oldest and largest competition of its kind in the world. Dozens of teams made up of OEMs, tier suppliers, and polymer producers submit nominations describing their part, system, or complete vehicle and why it merits the claim as the Year's Most Innovative Use of Plastics. This annual event typically draws over 800 OEM engineers, automotive and plastics industry executives, and media. As is customary, funds raised from the event are used to support SPE educational programs and technical conferences, which help to secure the role of plastics in the advancement of the automobile.

The mission of SPE is to promote scientific and engineering knowledge relating to plastics worldwide and to educate industry, academia, and the public about these advances. SPE's Automotive Division is active in educating, promoting, recognizing, and communicating technical accomplishments in all phases of plastics and plastic-based composite developments in the global transportation industry. Topic areas include applications, materials, processing, equipment, tooling, design, and development.

For more info on the SPE Automotive Innovation Awards Competition and Gala go to: <https://speautomotive.com/spe-automotive-div-innovation-awards-2023/>.

For more info on the SPE Automotive Division go to: <https://speautomotive.com/>

For more info on the Society of Plastics Engineers go to: <https://www.4spe.org/>



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### **About Röhm**

With 3,500 employees and 13 production sites worldwide, Röhm is one of the leading manufacturers in the methacrylate business. The medium-sized company with branches in Germany, China, the USA, Mexico, and South Africa has 90 years of experience in methacrylate chemistry and a strong technology platform. Our best-known brands include PLEXIGLAS®, ACRYLITE®, MERACRYL®, DEGALAN®, DEGAROUTE® and CYROLITE®.

Polymethyl methacrylate (PMMA) products from Röhm are sold on the European, Asian, African and Australian continent under the registered trademark PLEXIGLAS®, in the Americas under the registered trademark ACRYLITE®.

More information is available at [www.roehm.com](http://www.roehm.com)