Far from virtual, inert quantities, data exert real forces in the physical world. They are incendiaries wielding the power of once-secret diplomatic cables; mores initiated with the invention of a privacy setting; and physical laws shaping the built environment with the quiet, persistent action of zoning regulations. Data rarely act in isolation, gaining power through combination, "join"ing forces and moving into new terrain. Their presence is thought to guarantee transparency, their absence is seen as suspicious, and restrictions on their movement appear to be temporary, at best.

In this talk, Prof. Hansen will take a broad view of data (and companion ideas like "algorithm," "model" and "visualization") and explore their use in creative practices. He will present a selection of work from his artistic collaborations over the last decade - from a permanent display in the lobby of the New York Times building and a new work for the 9/11 Memorial Museum in New York City; to a performance designed as part of the New York Public Library’s centennial celebration last June.

He will tie these artworks to a larger movement in which data and data processing are seeping into almost every academic discipline on campus. His talk will end with a proposal to aggregate the data practices from science, the humanities, and even art and design under a single umbrella — Data science.

Free Admission - Open to the Public - Reception immediately following. The Series is designed to be of interest to an informed general audience.

Next Colloquium Talk - February 16, 2012, 4:00 pm, California NanoSystems Institute Auditorium
- Dr. Timothy Deming
- Prof. of Bioengineering & Biomedical Engineering and Prof. of Chemistry & Biochemistry
- “Bridging the Gap Between Plastics and Proteins”