



Scandinavian Studies

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Abstract

In an increasingly nationalistic and protectionist global trade market, bridge engineering and architecture remains steadfastly international, both in the exchange of services and skills, and in the design language common in the world's new bridges. However, despite superficial commonalities, geographic regions demonstrate differing appetites in terms of visual expression. This presentation examines three different bridge designs for Scandinavia. While other regions continue to favour eye-catching designs for their crossings, often using infrastructure to make an overt statement to the world about fiscal prosperity or cultural sophistication, the visual aspirations of the Scandinavian market remain restrained, even muted by contrast. In a mature culture where design pervades the most basic everyday object, simple, elegantly designed bridges are typically favoured over gimmicky, attention-grabbing statements.

Keywords: Concept design, cultural values, beam bridges, appropriate design, integrated design.

1 Introduction

As a specialist bridge architect, I have been fortunate to design bridges throughout the world for geographically and culturally disparate markets. In the past couple of years, our architectural practice has worked with different northern European engineers to design numerous distinctive structures for a range of sites. While successful designs for the Middle Eastern or Australian markets can often be eye-catching, even ostentatious, designs for the Scandinavian market are visually low-key, seeking expression through efficient use of materials and appropriate detail rather than via the creation of a high-impact motif.

Rather than illustrating the attributes of a singular landmark structure, this presentation will describe three examples from our experience in the Nordic market to describe how an ethos of simple, appropriate design has been applied to a range of bridge types in Denmark and Norway.

2 Ulleval Stadium Footbridge Oslo NO

This bridge spans across a busy highway junction to serve Norway's national stadium. It replaces two ageing trussed girders with a single, modern structure which is shaped entirely to suit the requirements of pedestrians and cyclists.



The new bridge is conceived to minimise travel times for cyclists and forms an integral part of the local network, shaped with fluid plan curves to facilitate a smooth, disruption-free flow for bicycle users. The horizontal alignment of the bridge follows a broad arc across Oslo's Ring 3 urban motorway, with a secondary span across a distributor road adjacent to the national stadium.