

Center For Advanced Information Processing
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Bridge Aesthetics Workshop Practical Ideas for Short and Medium Span Bridges

T.Y. LIN INTERNATIONAL

Michael Fitzpatrick

Bridge Architect

TRB AFF10(2)

Context Sensitive Design

- The FHWA program on Context Sensitive Design/Solutions has been adopted by the Transportation Industry



Intention and Scope

- Give the Transportation Industry new tools for solving difficult problems
 - Limited references for particular projects
- Small and medium scale projects
 - Projects not dictated by technical or economic requirements
- End with open discussion on examples in the presentation
 - Observe ‘form follows function’ and ‘beauty’ in examples

Context Sensitive Design

- Evaluates site
- Identifies local character
- Typically looks for aesthetic 'match'
- Expresses the values of a community



Beyond Typical CSD Practices

Limited or Evolving Context

- New development
- Project has multiple phases
- Client/public wants something new
- Natural environment is pristine
- Urban context is well defined



Possible Responses

- React (relatively easy)
- Manipulate (relatively difficult)
- Create New (really difficult!)

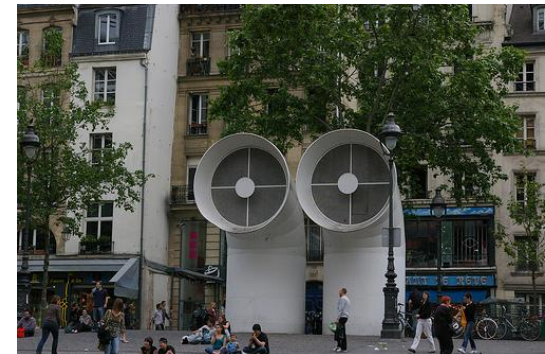


React

- Requires well established context and typically strong regulation
 - Urban centers or planned communities
- Limited scope or exceptional situation
 - Special structure
- Intentional departure from context
 - Reject context

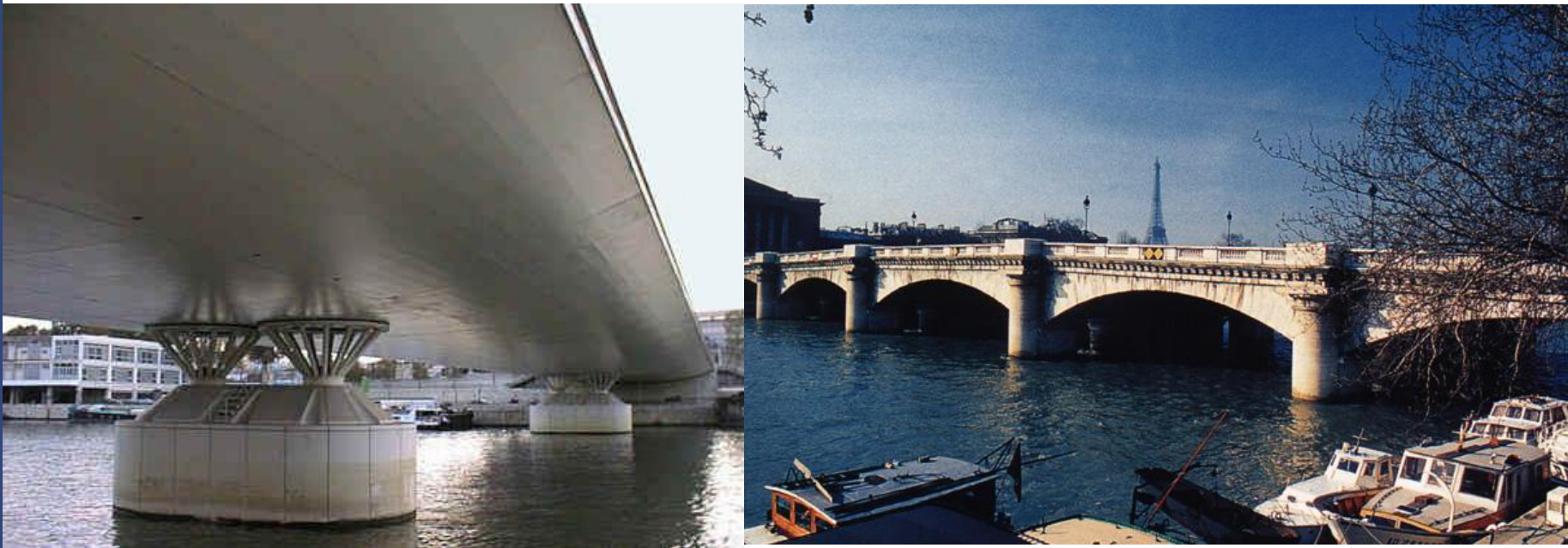
React

- Design based on opposition to the context



React

- Design based on opposition to the context



Manipulate

- Requires well established context and typically strong regulation
 - Urban centers or planned communities
- Limited scope or exceptional situation
 - Special structure
- Manipulate the context
 - Blend of existing context and new concept

Manipulate

- Analyze and manipulate typical proportions



Manipulate

- Analyze and manipulate typical proportions



Create New

- No historical reference
 - If Greek architecture was so great, why don't we build like that now?
- Limited scope or exceptional situation
 - Special structure
- Singular vision
 - Evolution of form, technology and material

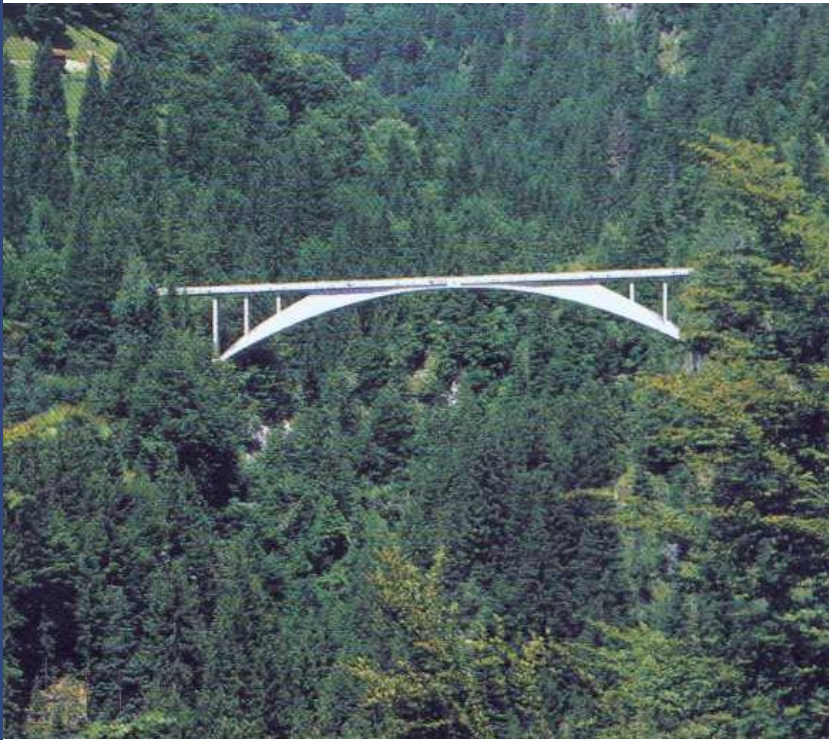
Create New

- Creating with no reference to site or history



Create New

- Creating with no reference to site or history



Hurdles to Creating New

- People tend to like the familiar
 - React and Manipulate solutions easier to accept initially
- Accepting a new design takes time
 - Allow a community to absorb the concept
 - Public ownership is essential

Main Practices

- Allow the process to evolve
 - Do not rush to find the ‘solution’
- Be comfortable without an answer
- Look at the project from multiple view points
- Listen newly
 - Fresh ideas come from fresh minds
 - Unexpected locations
- Play tennis!

Open Discussion Points

- What position did the designers of the Golden Gate Bridge take?
 - React, Manipulate or Create New
- To what extent did the examples presented exhibit ‘form follows function’ versus ‘beauty’?