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Bridges: A History Of The World's Most Famous And Important Spans



Synopsis

Introduction by Frank O. Gehry. Opening to a dazzling full-yard span, this panoramic tour introduces more than fifty of the world's greatest bridges in 200 high-quality black-&-white photographs and an engaging text that sheds light on the historical and technological background of constructions that range from the ancient Roman Pont du Gard to the newly constructed Tsing Ma bridge in Hong Kong.

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Customer Reviews

It reminds me of how they put together movies these days. Grab some stock photos, find a writer without any knowledge of the subject, put in a big name star who's irrelevant to the whole enterprise (Frank Gehry) and put it all together in a unique package (a long narrow book). Its all about packaging, and nothing about content. The book purports to be a history of the most famous and important bridge spans, but the few factoids that make it into print are usually wrong (even the most cursory peer reviewer would know that the San Francisco earthquake was in 1906 not 1909), and no one will be enlightened by the author's description of the Tacoma Narrows or San Francisco Bay bridge failures). What was particularly disconcerting was to read on the back page that the author, rather than being interested in her subject, is concerned with "exploring the interaction of text and image on the printed page." They don't even take advantage of the books unique length to show elevation views of its subjects. Rather, the stock photos are cropped to fit on a single page. I wish they would put Leonhardts books on bridges back in print. I'm sick of these feeble efforts that are all

style and no content. Mark Yashinsky, Senior Bridge Engineer, California Department of Transportation

Show an average person the Golden Gate or the Brooklyn Bridge and watch their eyes light up. Tell that average person some history or what design methods were used, and watch their eyes glaze over. History, technology and entertainment is a difficult mix, especially in print, but Judith Dupre' combines them wonderfully in "Bridges" - a worthy follow-up to her best selling "Skyscrapers". Fifty of history's most famous spans are detailed in this wonderful collage of text, photos, graphics and trivia bits. Bridges are wide, and so is this book, which measures a full 36 inches when opened. One most appealing aspect of Judith Dupre's work is the many "sidebar" views she takes of her subjects. Pages are devoted to covered bridges, portable bridges used in war, bridge catastrophes, even "Bridges in the Movies". An interview with the Guinness Book record holder for "most suspension bridges walked across" offers a personal dimension, and mirrors the passion that many readers no doubt feel for these creations. This is a fun book, suitable for the aficionado or for people who would like to enjoy the subject without being overpowered. The author is not afraid to have fun with her subject, and that makes "Bridges" a fun book you will enjoy for a long time! - Jeff Herzer

Every day we traverse bridges in our daily lives, scarcely to give them thought. Dupre pulls back the veil and brings highlight to these engineering feats. From the simple to the revolutionary, we are brought on a tour of bridges through time, and around the globe. The superlatives are here: the longest suspension bridge, highest, oldest. But it's not a book about the superlative; it's about what moves us forward in our quest for technology, and for our ability to move across space in a timely manner. It highlights those bridges that mean something to us: where the Romans said "let's make a permanent way of moving water." Where politics came into play and tried to prevent bridges that we can't imagine not being there like the Golden Gate Bridge. Bridges become important to history such as the ones over the Rhine during the World War. And sometimes when we make mistakes and things don't work out like we planned - the most spectacular example being the Tacoma Narrows Bridge that lasted all of 4 months. But as she shows in her book "Skyscrapers," there is an intertwining of form and function, and where man built up in buildings, he builds out via bridges. The book's design even emphasizes - where Skyscrapers was an extremely tall and thin book, Bridges goes for width, to try and bring the spans into the range of the printed page. Yet so often, the task is not possible, and even on the wide pages the bridge disappears into the distance. The book looks at the engineering involved, but does not dwell on it. Rather it celebrates how the improvement of

engineering practices have been able to move man forward. A veritable love poem to something that we often take too much for granted.

Regarding Judith Dupre, the author of *Bridges: A History of the World's Most Famous and Important Spans*...As an author of 5 books on Balkan history and music, including my 1992 book *Kosovo*, I am also the publisher of over 177 books. I really get ticked off when authors do not thoroughly research what they write and I find it repugnant that a publisher would print bigoted and inaccurate hate speech while pretending to be professional publishers. Immediately after the Civil Wars that dismembered former Yugoslavia I remember reading a cookbook by Alice Waters, a famous chef in San Francisco who could not resist using her book to attack the Serbs. Ms. Waters a bigot, did not enlighten her readers with accuracy any more than Judith Dupre did in *Bridges: A History of the World's Most Famous and Important Spans*. The bridge in Mostar was not destroyed by the Serbs as she wrote, there were no Serbs left in Mostar when the bridge was destroyed as over 35,000 of them were "ethnically cleansed" a year earlier with several dozen being killed. The 16th Century Mostar Bridge stood over the Neretva River for 427 years and it was destroyed by the Croatian Army, during the Croat-Bosnian War, but let us not allow the facts to get in the way of a good book. My last thought... was Judith Dupre a politically astute writer about the Balkans or was this a sleazy way for her editors to gain some extra traction for book sales in the Balkan and ethnic communities?

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