



# Bridges: A History of the World's Most Famous and Important Spans

*By Judith Dupre*

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**Bridges: A History of the World's Most Famous and Important Spans** By Judith Dupre

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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### Editorial Review

#### Amazon.com Review

In her follow-up to *Skyscrapers*, Judith Dupré has taken her initial concept and turned it on its side. *Bridges*, like its predecessor, is a large-format hardcover book that opens to an impressive span a yard across. The format lends itself well to the material, displaying the many exquisite panoramic shots of bridges in full splendor. The impressive black-and-white photographs convey the majesty, elegance, and beauty of these structures.

*Bridges* is more than a picture book, however. Dupré presents a chronological collection of more than 45 bridges, from early Roman aqueducts to the most recent accomplishments of this century. Each bridge is accompanied by text that, together with the photos, provides the reader with informative background, anecdotes, and cultural and historical context. For fact seekers, the relevant names and numbers are readily accessible. For the parents of inquisitive children, "cantilever" will roll from the tongue as easily as "tension" and "torsion."

Dupré quietly proclaims in her introduction, "The unassuming poetry of bridges reveals itself to those who would see them." The author manages to convey this very poetry by giving us the tools to understand the power and grace of the bridge.

#### Review

Judith Dupre captivates the eye, mind and imagination in this ode to the greatest spans and cantilevers of the world. Admittedly fascinated by the way bridges weave in and out of the fabric of life, Ms. Dupre chronicles their history from the magnificent Roman aqueduct Pont du Gard, built in 18 B.C., to the longest suspension span in the world, the Akashi Kaikyo Bridge of Japan, to be completed next year.

Published in October as a sequel to *Skyscrapers*, which was released last year by Black Dog & Leventhal and sold 250,000 copies, the book's appearance is as unusual as some of the bridges discussed. Measuring 18 inches wide and 7 1/2 inches high, the hand-bound book opens to a yard across. Viewing books as objects. Ms. Dupre collaborated with the book designer Allison Russo on its striking format. Black and white photographs accompany informative essays on 47 bridges, which encapsulate the longings, hope and genius embodied in each structure. -- Ireen E. Kudra, *New York Times*, December 7, 1997

Quick: Name two famous bridge engineers. Can't do it? You're not alone. Although some of these leaps of wood, stone or steel are beloved icons, their creators have been largely forgotten. Who, for instance, recalls Thomas Telford, notable for having raised the first major suspension bridge in Scotland? Or Othmar Ammann, the Swiss-born designer who gave New York City six of its skyline-enhancing spans was?

If Judith Dupre has done nothing more in this well-illustrated volume than resurrect the memory of such influential builders, it would still be commendable. But *Bridges*, the playfully extra-wide sequel to her extra-tall *Skyscrapers*, is both a tribute and a trivia trove. History-minded travelers will enjoy learning that London's Tower Bridge was disparaged as "the most monstrous and preposterous architectural sham" when it was completed in 1894. Equally fun is the tale of French King Henry IV who was so pleased with Paris' Pont Neuf that he leapt its entire length from pier to pier while the bridge was still being built. -- J. Kingston Pierce, *Historic Traveler*, February 1998

## About the Author

**Judith Dupré**, *New York Times* bestselling author has written many books about architecture, including *Bridges*, *Churches*, and *Monuments*. She consults on large-scale infrastructure projects and lectures at Yale and other universities. She lives in New York. Visit [www.judithdupre.com](http://www.judithdupre.com).

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