

Portrait



Three country Bridge, Weil-am-Rhein –Huningue 2006

Dietmar Feichtinger,
Architekt Dipl.-Ing.



The Simone de Beauvoir footbridge was designed by Dietmar Feichtinger. We talk with an architect who is as attentive to the natural as he is to the urban environment.

He designed the Simone de Beauvoir footbridge, won the European competition for the Mont Saint Michel pedestrian causeway bridge and was responsible for the footbridges at La Défense and over the Rhine, but Dietmar Feichtinger

Footbridge Simone de Beauvoir, Paris 1998



does not consider himself a bridge specialist. "I don't like the term specialist. Our work covers a hospital, universities, office buildings, toll plazas and cinemas as well as bridges."

He does not prefer horizontal to vertical lines and adds that he is careful never to repeat himself. "I don't to get into the habit of designing only office buildings, only bridges or anything else. Habit kills creativity."

Every location calls for its own project. Treating every project as a new one fitting into a specific location is a good way of avoiding routine. This involves seeking a new solution every time, endeavoring to be highly modern, highly contemporary and above all avoiding stylistic precepts. Every location, every natural landscape, every urban setting requires its own response.

This can mean attracting attention, like the Simone de Beauvoir Footbridge, or blending into the landscape like the causeway bridge at the Mont Saint Michel Bay. The



Kunsthhaus Weiz, Austria 2005



Donauuniversität Krems, Austria 2005

design of his bridges thus varies considerably. But relationships and analogies can be found with other – at first glance quite different – structures. The causeway bridge, for example, bears a resemblance to the Klagenfurth hospital, of which a scale model takes up half the office where we are talking with Dietmar Feichtinger. "In both projects, the direct connection tonature was important to us."

All-revealing architecture

Everywhere – if it's in Paris or the Mont Saint Michel Bay – Dietmar Feichtinger focuses primarily on fitting his projects into their setting. This, he strongly believes, is the fundamental tenet of architecture, a guiding principle rather than an obstacle, and he pays close attention to the structure of his work. "The bones of the building – that is what every architect should be interested in." His bridges are, in that sense, a stylistic exercise: "This is all-revealing architecture, you can conceal nothing. It is the basic principles that make the project."

Brief biography

Dietmar Feichtinger, a native of Austria, studied architecture at the Technical University of Graz, graduating [summa] cum laude in 1988. After gaining initial experience with Prof. Huth, Prof. Giencke and Prof. Klaus Kada, he moved to Paris in 1989, working at Chaix/Morel where he was appointed associate architect and project manager. In 1994 he founded Feichtinger Architectes, with headquarters in Paris, and in 2002 he opened a subsidiary in Vienna. Feichtinger has taught at a number of universities since 1994 – the University of Paris6-La Villette, the RWTH Aachen, the University of Innsbruck and the University of Vienna. In 1998 he was awarded the Kunstpreis Berlin by the Academy of Arts.

To find out more about his projects, log onto:
www.feichtingerarchitectes.com