

## **The Short Span: Symbol and constructive nature of steel footbridges in Italy**

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### **Abstract**

In the Italy of the Second World War the issue of the bridge assumes distinct paths, each pursuing well defined different objectives. The professional acclaim of Italian Engineering involved the most important engineers of the time who were mainly interested in large infrastructure projects. On the other hand certain architects involved themselves in the development of design of footbridges. This different line of research that is of no less importance than that of large infrastructure projects, is what we are going to talk about. This talk will explore certain Italian architects and their works; it will demonstrate an alternative view of the footbridge, as a tool, which is at same time syntactic and paratactic, creates a new fluid reality, blending the different characteristics of the areas needed to be spanned. The footbridge isn't just an instrument to overcome a large length, but a finite object whose construction proceeds, in contrast to the processes of industrialization and prefabrication, with a gradual recovery of craftsmanship which claims the centrality of the project and contrasts the mechanic automatism. The relationship between new architectures and urban contexts is a critical issue, which can't be solved with generic solutions proposed by industrial technologies; this talk evidences how some Italian experiences offer original solutions defining different relations with the city and the landscape such as some footbridges designed by Carlo Scarpa, Aldo Rossi, Giancarlo De Carlo and young Italian architects.