

What is a Bridge?



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Cultural icon, daring engineering spectacle, and highly controversial structure, the Alamillo Bridge stands almost 150 meters tall, with an inclined pylon whose own weight balances that of the deck and traffic. Built for the 1992 Universal Exposition in Seville, Spain, the bridge immediately received great international attention that continues to this day. Santiago Calatrava received a direct commission to design the bridge and seized the opportunity to create a design breakthrough -- a stunning, harp-shaped bridge that defies both gravity and traditional bridge design. Along with the inclined pylon, cantilevered roadways, and elevated walkways, the striking absence of symmetry in the Alamillo Bridge prompts the observer to wonder anew, "What is a bridge?" In this book, the first to document Calatrava's work in depth, Spiro Pollalis describes each step of the bridge's design and construction, explaining the architectural intentions that motivated Calatrava's decisions along the way. He presents the constructed bridge element by element, along with the relevant engineering calculations and technical issues. The book is both a fascinating story of

the intricate process of creating architecture in contemporary society and an accessible technical reading of an unprecedented feat in bridge design and engineering.

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