

The bridge of peace

A monument to Tbilisi's different identities

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Michele De Lucchi, born 1951, graduated in architecture at Florence University. He has built buildings, developed products, contributed to numerous Italian and foreign corporate images and received major honours. He teaches at the Milan Polytechnic.

Summary

The Bridge of Peace is a monument to shared values and solidarity. Built in Tbilisi, it links the Bericoni district to Rikhe Park, in the area in which the new Presidential Palace stands. The bridge is a footbridge. 160 metres long, it is suspended from a grid frame, supported solely by the four pillars on its two embankments. Access to it is also by four stairways orientated to the points of the compass and reaching the centre of the bridge. As spacious and welcoming as a large piazza, suspended above the tumultuous river M'tkvari, the bridge is visible from all points of the city. It restores vitality to the historic centre by uniting it with the green area on the other side of the river. The "fluid" form, chosen by the client from the proposals initially submitted, is precisely what the built version expresses. This has been achieved thanks to engineering that creates a seemingly uninterrupted and formally harmonious roof shell, with a ground anchorage on forked pillars that give the structure its impetus.

Keywords: pillars, footbridge, membrane, icon, cross-arches, standardisation, economy, forces, piazza, landmark

1. Introduction

There is always a good reason to build a bridge, both between one place and another and in relationships. This project, commissioned by the Tbilisi city council and the President of Georgia, was expected on the one hand to be an urban landmark, visible at a distance as an attraction and connection between two important parts of the city; and on the other, a symbolic sign, representing such values as the union of peoples among the same population and of different peoples, the sharing of ideals and experiences of life.

For these reasons Tbilisi's new bridge



Fig. 1: The Bridge is a luminous architecture that lends vitality to the place.