



Robert Maillart and the Art of Reinforced Concrete

David P Billington

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The Swiss engineer Robert Maillart (1872-1940) built bridges and industrial buildings of startling originality. His innovative use of concrete, especially in the design of thin arch structures, and his introduction of a wide range of new engineering forms, make him a seminal figure in the history of modern engineering. Focusing on 14 of Maillart's major works, this book provides a stunning full-color visual presentation of engineering structures as works of art in their own right and as images for new possibilities in architecture. Previous studies of Maillart - including the pioneering essays by Sigfried Gideon and Max Bill - were based on black and white illustrations taken in the 1930s. For this German and English dual language book, Maillart's Swiss structures were rephotographed under the author's supervision. With the added dimension of color and looked at from the point of view of a wellknown structural engineer, they present Maillart in a totally new perspective. Billington explains in detail how Maillart's ideas unfold from his first design, the 1901 Zuoz Bridge, to his last, the 1940 Lachen Bridge. He analyzes these works using engineering criteria and raises the provocative notion that structure is a fertile ground for new forms that remain to be realized in structural engineering and in architecture. David P. Billington is Professor of Civil Engineering at Princeton University.

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