



STRUCTURE IN QUESTION
BRIDGES

Thursday 25 June

Crossing Upper Lake Zurich in Switzerland is one of the oldest timber bridges in the world, dating back to 1523 BC. The Mycenaean civilisation built the oldest known corbel arch bridge c. 1300BC to take chariots between Tyrins and Epidavros in the Greek Peloponnese. Roman bridges, such as the Alcantara Bridge over the River Tagus in Spain and the Pont du Gard in Provence, survive complete, so excellent was their construction. Immensely long bridges were built by the Safavid dynasty of Isfahan in the 16c. Bamboo and iron bridges were made in India as early as the 5c AD. Rope bridges were used by the Incas. In 1779 the first Iron Bridge was built crossing the River Severn in Shropshire. Brunel developed the drama of the suspension bridge at Clifton. Gustave Eiffel became such a highly-regarded bridge engineer he won the commission for the Eiffel Tower, which is essentially, and ingeniously, half a bridge on end. The Forth Bridges, and those of Santiago Calatrava, are masterpieces of their separate eras. Hogarth shows the absurdities of bridge perspective; Turner delivers dizzying perspectives on the Devils Bridge over the St Gothard Pass; the Impressionists use bridges to give structure and perspective to their works.

All **Culture in Question** lectures take place in the Art Workers Guild, Queen Square, Bloomsbury, unless otherwise indicated. Coffee is served at 10.30, the lectures begin at 11, and a light lunch with wine is served at 1 pm. The day ends at 3.30 pm. £90 members, £100 non-members.