



Knight Architects

Press Release
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KNIGHT ARCHITECTS WINS HUGO HÄRING LANDESPREIS

Infrastructure specialist Knight Architects is absolutely delighted to receive the Hugo Häring Landespreis 2021 for its Kienlesbergbrücke in Ulm, Germany.

Awarded every three years by the Federation of German Architects (BDA), the prize is given to exemplary buildings and structures in Baden-Württemberg. It is the oldest and most important architecture prize in the state and previous winners include James Stirling, Jörg Schlaich, Günter Behnisch, Frank Gehry and Tadao Ando.

The prize specifically recognises the collaborative approach taken between architect and client. In the case of the Kienlesbergbrücke, the clients - SWU Verkehr and Stadt Ulm - were responsible for setting up a well-defined architectural competition with clear objectives regarding the placement of the bridge in the urban landscape; its relationship with its neighbour, the listed Neutor Bridge; and a special focus on the non-motorised user. This engagement between client and architect developed from the project's early stages all the way to and beyond the realisation of the bridge. The clients recognised the bridge as an extension of the urban landscape and its value as a public place. Paired with Ulm's history, which is tightly linked to the Design School "Hochschule für Gestaltung", the clients were willing to bring in the spirit and the philosophy of the late Bauhaus offspring, resulting in lively discussions that led to many improvements of the design.

Conceived with engineering partner Krebs + Kiefer and opened in 2018, the Kienlesbergbrücke is a tram and pedestrian/cycle bridge spanning multiple railway lines. The design team took great care to create a crossing that not only enhanced the town's active mobility but - equally importantly - provided areas to rest, meet and socialise whilst enjoying elevated views of Europe's tallest church tower, the 530 feet-tall Minster. The community has truly embraced the bridge as both a landmark and a vital piece of public infrastructure.

International Director and Project Architect at Knight Architects, Bart Halaczek, comments: "The Kienlesberg Bridge has been celebrated with great amounts of public enthusiasm since the first day it was opened three years ago. This is the result of a fruitful cooperation between client, architect and engineer. Early discussions aimed at the right questions, asking about the Why (purpose) and the Who (the user) before the questions of structure and constructability (What and How). The design puts the most vulnerable users first: there is a separate deck for pedestrians and cyclists, with bespoke parapets, lighting and resting locations. Equally, it provides an attractive and convenient route across the railway land for passengers riding the tram. As a whole, the bridge is a key stone in Ulm's ambitious plan to dramatically reduce the dependence on cars and embrace the advantages of active mobility."

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Notes to editors:

About Knight Architects

Knight Architects is an architectural consultancy specialising exclusively in the field of bridge and infrastructure design, where it is recognised as a market leader within the UK and internationally.

Formed in 2006, the practice is founded on the unique experience, skills and passion for bridge design which Martin Knight has built up over more than twenty years in leading architecture and engineering practice. The award-winning studio now comprises a skilled team with extensive experience and market-leading skills working on world-class projects around the world, yet it remains true to its founding principles: that good design is vital and that memorable and beautiful solutions are based on a clear understanding of function, context, budget and time.

The practice believes that infrastructure is a very important component of both the built and natural environments – highly visible forms that have a significant impact on their locality – and its work has been recognised with awards for bringing community benefits, as well as for design, and received the Specialist Consultant of the Year Award at the NCE / ACE Consultants of the Year Awards 2015; the first time an architectural practice has been recognised in these engineering-focused awards. The practice was awarded BD Infrastructure Architect of the Year 2017 and most recently, has been awarded a Structural Award 2019 and International Civic Trust Award 2020 for its Kienlesbergbrücke in Ulm, Germany.

Knight Architects is an RIBA Chartered Practice.

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