Large-scale infrastructural projects such as bridges used to be the monopoly of engineers. They were designed as – often very beautiful – expressions of how forces work in a structure, guided by the nature of materials and a rational construction process. However, in recent decades politicians and investors have discovered ways of getting more from their investments by using such projects to give identity and coherence to an area. This has led to a European tendency for engineers to surrender their design opportunities and let architects take over but it does not have to be so. These projects can also encourage engineers to focus more on the aesthetic aspects of their design and the way their structures will work in the context of the surroundings. This paper will present a series of contemporary bridge structures to provide a short history of the tendency described above and discuss design at the boundary between civil and architectural engineering.