

DESIGN



TOP 15/GLOBAL

Making moves

Good design keeps a city on the go. From lighting giants to bridge-builders and nifty mopeds, here are the best transport ideas.

Editor Nolan Giles



I.

BEST FOR BRIGHT IDEAS

Zenisk, Oslo

Surprised that Norway's perpetually dark winters had not inspired more innovative street lighting, Kristin Bredal, an award-winning theatre light designer, set up Zenisk, specialising in urban lighting design. The firm's work spans into the transport realm too. It has created the lighting system for Løren station in Oslo which highlights the building's architecture and maintains effective lighting for pedestrians for a safe but still aesthetically pleasing atmosphere. Zenisk's magic touch, Bredal says, is designing with subtlety: "Too much light is never good and most spaces could reduce what is there by 30 per cent." — LB zenisk.no

2.

STRIKING URBAN FIX

Projects by John Wardle Architects, Melbourne

Urban planners facing congestion challenges due to Melbourne's surging population called upon one of the city's top architects, John Wardle Architects, for a solution. Their brief was to design new infrastructure to improve pedestrian mobility: a challenge they have risen to with artistic flair.

The Tanderrum Bridge connects the CBD to a nearby sports precinct and is framed by an exoskeleton of sculpted steel rods, supported by a series of angular concrete columns.

Across town, the team created a bus interchange at Monash University's Clayton campus, made of organically shaped steel canopies and with perforations in the metal to aid visibility. Balancing unusual structures with safety and planning regulations was not easy. "But it's often through pushing against resistance that architects do their best work," says Wardle. — AC johnwardlearchitects.com



PHOTOGRAPHER: Derek Szatkowiak. IMAGE: Halvor Gudim

3.
BEST ELECTRIC CAR NETWORK
Nissan Motor, Yokohama, Japan

Launched in March, Choimobi Yokohama is an electric car-sharing programme with Nissan Motor using its ultra-mini two-seat New Mobility Concept. It currently comprises 25 cars parked in 14 locations but officials hope that adding more vehicles and locations will attract repeat users – and encourage businesses to sign up. “People are using big cars for short distances,” says Kenichi Yagishita, senior engineer at Nissan. “With this EV-sharing programme, we can get petrol-powered cars off the road and ease traffic jams.” — KH nissan-global.com



6. Q&A
PETTER NEBBY
Founder and CEO,
Punkt, Switzerland

Known for its stripped-back mobile phones, which only handle calls and text, Punkt is taking a similar unconventional approach to urban mobility. It recently worked with teams from Europe’s top design schools to reinterpret the electric bike.

What connected Punkt with the bicycle?

The future of the car is about super connectivity – designers are striving to create an office on wheels as tech companies race into the car industry. The bike remains an item of someone with more time. Today’s car is the smartphone and today’s bike is more like the telephone; both can be innovated though.

Design specific to cities defined this project. What’s the importance of this?

We wanted to consider how the bicycle can add to the identity of a city – think of the way red buses remain iconic to London with a design that still fills a specific demand.

So what is the future of the bike in the city?

The implementation of cycling solutions in cities can be costly but I think there is a huge opportunity for those cities that get it right and let cycle schemes add an extra dynamic to their urban environment. — NSG punkt.ch



4. Q&A
THOMAS EHRL
Head of research and innovation centre,
ThyssenKrupp Elevator Innovation, Germany

This year German industrial giant ThyssenKrupp will unveil its game-changing rope-free elevator system Multi at a test tower in Rottweil. We asked its top mobility researcher how ThyssenKrupp envisions our future cities.

What does your research reveal about city mobility? Young people have a completely different understanding of traffic; they don’t need their own cars and they are used to getting around the city on public transport and by foot. We look into movement around transportation hubs in urban centres, from metro lines to long-distance trains, and think how we can enhance them.

With its ability to span higher distances than conventional lifts, Multi will impact tall building design. But will it enhance transport hubs? The Multi has the capacity to navigate complicated infrastructure. Think about London’s underground system: track levels are at different heights and entrances are at various points along those levels. The Multi system can pick up and drop off passengers at various horizontal and vertical levels. — NSG thyssenkrupp-elevator.com

PHOTOGRAPHERS: Kohel Take, Marein Zilun, Hayato Naga

7.
BEST WATERFRONT RENEWAL
Central Beach Promenade, Tel Aviv

When the authorities commissioned Mayslits Kassif Architects with the refurbishment of Tel Aviv’s iconic promenade, they had a clear vision in mind: improving the connectivity of the beach with the city and forming an urban ‘living room’. The overhaul has reinvigorated the setting with the transformation of a retaining wall, once dividing the promenade from the sandy section of the beach, into a set of wooden and tarmac terraces, stairs and seats that invite the public to engage with the surroundings.

“We had a vision of a new type of urban space in which the beach crowd and pedestrians are interweaving, forming a unique waterfront urban culture,” says Ganit Mayslits, co-founder of the firm. It proved to be an instant success with the promenade’s outdoor gyms and running trails now packed with sun-kissed citizens. — GB mkarchitects.com



8.
BEST CYCLE CONCEPT
Ratio & C, Aoyama, Tokyo

Cyclists in Aoyama are choosing to refuel at Ratio & C, a café and shop by tyre and bike company Bridgestone. A glass facade lets in natural light and connects the space with the neighbourhood. Customers can park up in clever slits into the floor and have their tyres pumped as they sip coffee. “Our client wanted the bicycle element in the design but not in an ‘in your face’ way,” says Yuki Shibata of Tank who co-designed the space with architect Ben Nagaoka from Point. Design is the main focus here: so Artek pendant lamps hang from the ceiling rather than frames and tyres. — JT ratio-c.jp



5.
BEST MOBILITY BLEND
Railway crossing, Winterthur, Switzerland

The Swiss city of Winterthur, a bustling technology hub near Zürich, is home to one of the nation’s busiest train stations. Architecture practice Müller & Truniger and landscape architects Rotzler Krebs Partner have revamped its surroundings to improve accessibility and create a new town square. Key to the project is the spacious railway underpass that connects both ends of the square. The well-lit tunnel was designed to be easily accessible from the main road and has lanes for pedestrians and cyclists. Its entrances are marked with sculptural concrete-and-glass roofs that protect the passageway from the elements and create a unifying structure on both sides of the tracks. The adjoining asphalt plazas are furnished with minimalistic limestone benches and fountains, creating a pleasant urban park seamlessly incorporating the railway tracks. “The focus of this project was on non-motorised traffic,” says Daniel Truniger of Müller & Truniger. “In Winterthur’s highly frequented train station a good transport network and well-established public square play a vital role in improving the city’s quality of life.” — MSS muelletruniger.ch; krebssundherde.ch



9.
BEST SHORTCUT
Utrecht, The Netherlands

The commute between Utrecht and the suburb of Leidsche Rijn just got shorter. Thanks to a new cyclist-pedestrian bridge over the Amsterdam-Rhine canal, it now takes about 15 minutes and avoids car traffic. The Dafne Schippers bridge was developed by a team of international architects, including Amsterdam's NEXT. "It is a landmark, a public space and a roof; a natural part of the broader urban fabric," says Marijn Schenk of NEXT. — xxx nextarchitects.com



10.
BEST MOPEDS
Cezeta Type 506, Gogoro Smartscooter, Vespa Primavera

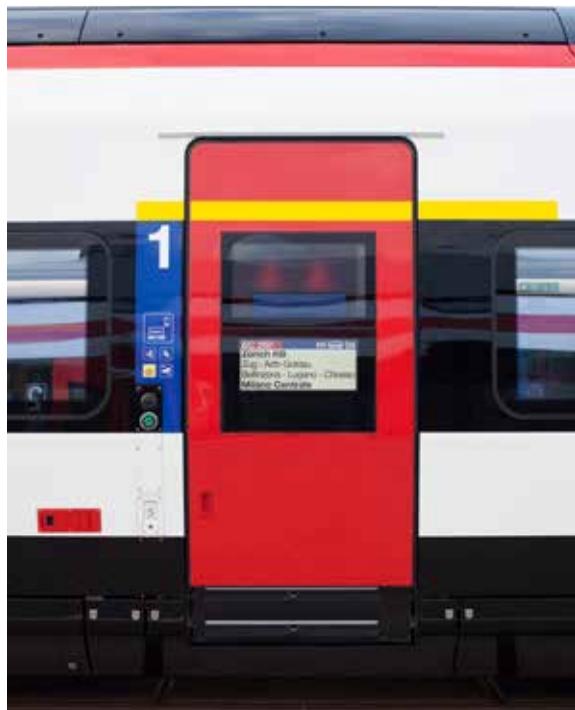
Zippy and fuel-efficient, the scooter is becoming an increasingly wise choice for urban mobility and avoiding surging public transport prices and expensive parking. One option is the cool Cezeta Type 506 (1) with its distinctive torpedo shape. The Cezeta was a symbol of freedom and adventure in Czechoslovakia between 1957 and 1964 and 60 years on this iconic ride is being revived in an all-electric version.

Taiwan's Gogoro (2) is an internet-connected electric-powered two-wheeler that's perfect for city dwellers. It's now part of a Smartscooter-sharing service in Berlin that includes 1,000 vehicles. Finally with its name translating to "Spring", Vespa's cheerful Primavera (3) is a joy to ride in the sun. Updated for 2017, its new speed-detecting ABS system means that carefreeness doesn't come at the expense of safety. — JH cezeta.co.uk; gogoro.com; vespa.com



11.
BEST COMMUTER KIT-OUT
EC250 Giruno by Nose Design Experience, Zürich

The EC250 Giruno is Stadler's latest high-speed train for Swiss Federal Railways (SBB), designed to connect Basel, Zürich and Milan on a new route. "From the start we had a goal: the train had to be accessible for cyclists, wheelchair users and the visually impaired," says Christian Harbeke, co-founder of Zürich's Nose Design Experience. The team's updates included seats with wooden backs, engineered bike racks, gender-separate toilets and a two-door design which enables wheelchair users step-free access from any platform in Europe. — MSS nose.ch



12. Q&A
FELIX RINDERER
Creative director and owner, Designalltag, Switzerland

Executed with function and elegance Zürich firm Designalltag's signage designs graces the world's top airports.

When designing signage, what are your considerations and does any typeface beat Helvetica for clarity?

We consider legibility, contrast, the shininess of the materials we're working with, the lighting and importantly the sign's placement – if the backdrop is too busy people simply miss the directions. When it comes to legible typefaces Helvetica is used in most of the world's airports for a reason but we work with many font families. For me, Swiss designer Adrian Frutiger's Frutiger sans serif font is the most legible typeface.

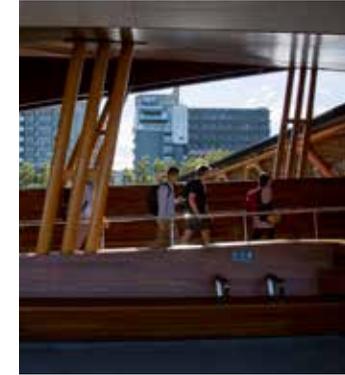
What are you working on at the moment?

Signage systems for new areas of Zürich, such as Glattpark. We've developed a black-on-yellow system. Yellow is a good signal colour but a subtle lemon contrasts best with black. — NSG designalltag.ch



13.
BEST BICYCLE STATION
Osterwold + Schmidt Architects, Weimar

In Erfurt, Germany, architects Osterwold + Schmidt created a pointed solution to the age-old problem of bicycle storage outside train stations. Utilising an unused patch of land between a road and traffic island, the triangular structure offers space for about 200 bicycles stored in a double-decker configuration with rentable spaces for long-term parkers as well places to charge e-bikes. The attractive silver textured aluminum was a response to durability demands but its "striking geometry came from the site", says the firm's Matthias Schmidt. — KB osterwold-schmidt.de



14.
BEST FERRY TERMINAL FLEET
Brisbane, Australia

In 2011 two-storey-high flood waters ravaged Brisbane, causing AU\$500bn (€340bn) worth of damage. A third of the city's public ferry terminals were lost, crippling a zippy service used by commuters and tourists alike. An international design competition held to determine the architecture of the new terminals, which was won by Australian firms Cox Architecture and Aurecon, an engineering company.

Sleek black-and-orange piers offer good visibility on rainy days, while the terminals' streamlined, boat-hull shapes lessen the potential for dangerous debris to lodge. The smartest aspect of the nine new terminals is a detachable system that allows the gangway and main pontoon to simply unlatch and float away in conditions of extreme high-torrents, reducing potential damage.

The piers' design blends into the leafy landscape and the terminals are becoming icons for both the city's river transport and its design scene. "The floods brought home the fact that natural disasters still happen and we need to turn our minds to how we design for them," says Cox Architecture's Brisbane director Brendan Gaffney. — ZZ coxarchitecture.com.au; aurecongroup.com

15.
BEST STAIRWAY REVIVAL
Stuttgart, Germany

When a city is built on different levels, just walking around can be daunting. Stuttgart's central districts sit at the bottom of a valley basin so pedestrians get about using more than 400 stairways that add up to a total of about 20 km.

These *staeffele* date from the early 19th century but in recent years Stuttgart has been rediscovering their significance for its transport infrastructure, with €300,000 a year available in the 2016 and 2017 budgets for maintenance and repairs. "The intermodality of traffic is often underestimated", says Wolfgang Vorderer from the city's mobility department.

The *staeffele* also play a role in Stuttgart's social efforts: a group of refugees refurbishes them as part of an integration project. Come summer the stairs also serve as open-air stages for cultural events and make a handy public gym for those intent on stepping up their workout. — JBO



PHOTOGRAPHERS: Marek Wigram, Martin Klindworth, Tammy Lau, Eberhard Rapp