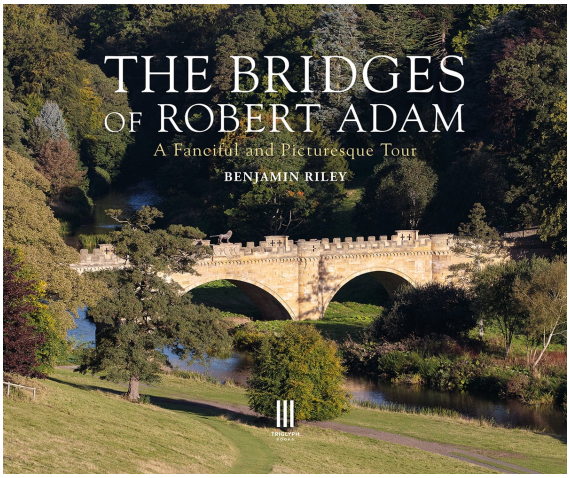
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The Bridges of Robert Adam

A Fanciful and Picturesque Tour

Benjamin Riley

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- ***The Bridges of Robert Adam: A Fanciful and Picturesque Tour*** will take the reader across Britain, shedding new light on an understudied aspect of the great architect's career

The bridge has always stood as a transitional structure – not purely a work of engineering, nor simply a work of architecture. Its functional requirements are more stringent than those of the average building; it not only must stand up; it must stand up, support those who cross it, and effectively span the space over which it stands. As Samuel Johnson said, "the first excellence of a bridge is strength … for a bridge that cannot stand, however beautiful, will boast its beauty but a little while." The Scottish architect Robert Adam (1728-92) understood these precepts well, continually building bridges that were not just structurally sound, but also aesthetically pleasing. Unlike his contemporaries, Adam did not view bridges as mere skeletons upon which to apply ornament. Rather, he sought to achieve architectural totality, incorporating his bridge designs into greater architectural programs, thereby producing aesthetically pleasing and contextually specific designs. From the Pulteney Bridge in Bath to the ruined arch and viaduct at Culzean Castle in Ayrshire, ***The Bridges of Robert Adam: A Fanciful and Picturesque Tour*** will take the reader across Britain, shedding new light on an understudied aspect of the great architect's career.

Benjamin Riley is the managing editor of *The New Criterion*, a monthly review of the arts and intellectual life based in New York. He holds degrees from Dartmouth College and the Courtauld Institute of Art, where his dissertation focused on the bridges of Robert Adam, becoming the basis for this book. His writing has appeared in *The Georgian Group Journal, The New Criterion, The Spectator*, and *The Wall Street Journal*, among other outlets. He lives in New York.

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