

news in pictures

East London calling

Clash Associates has defined a new space in a curious corner of East London with the creation of this bridge and public square. Tucked behind Tesco on a busy main road in the urban wasteland of Bromley by Bow are Three Mills Lane and a complex junction between Three Mills Wall River and the River Lee.

Here, a collection of eighteenth-century mill buildings has been lovingly restored to form an incongruous island of elegance. The bridge provides an improved access link for a factory and hence, although the volume of traffic is low, has to be heavy duty. In engineering terms it is a straightforward solution of welded plate girders with secondary steels spanning transversely between them. The road surface is of open steel mesh, as is the pedestrian deck which cantilevers from below the south girder.

Clash, working with light artist Peter Fink, has given the girders an unusual treatment. They have been painted different colours – the north girder pale blue/grey with a silver-gold flange, the south girder blue/black with a copper flange. A pattern of holes has been created on the south girder, some filled with metal studs and others left empty to allow light penetration.

This girder extends into the new square which Clash has created; a granite-paved kite-shaped space which has as its focus the new entrance gates to a park. The central gate is a crowd gate, only opened for special events when it folds back against the adjacent gate wall. This contains a number of different entries, some practical – an anti-motorcycle gate, a disabled radar gate, and others whimsical – a children's gate, a teenagers' gate and a pets' gate.

ENGINEER AND LEAD CONSULTANT ON BRIDGE Marks Healey Brothwell

ARCHITECT Clash Associates

ARTIST Peter Fink

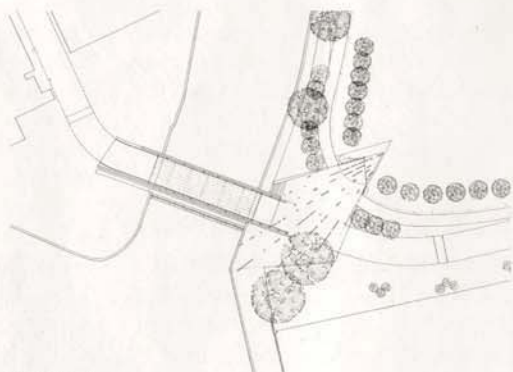
QUANTITY SURVEYORS Gardiner and Theobald, Gordon Harris and Partners

FUNDING: Stratford Development Partnership

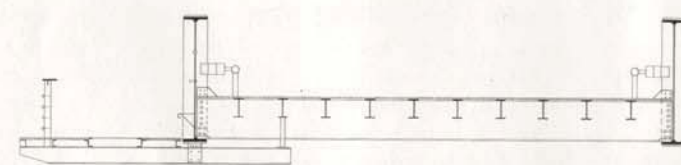
Photographs Richard Davies



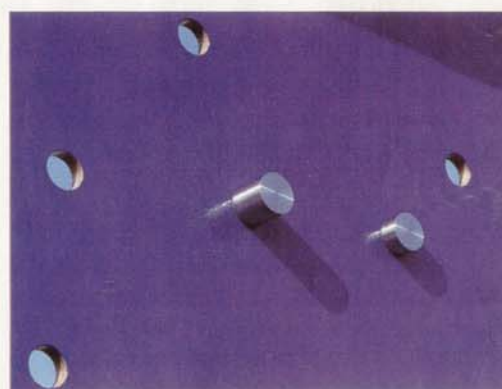
The dark south girder with patterns by light artist Peter Fink



SITE PLAN



SECTION



Above: detail of Fink's intervention. Below: the north girder frames the restored mill buildings – and Canary Wharf. Opposite: Clash's square and park gates offer a view of Allies & Morrison's new treatment works

