

Obituary

Prof. Jorg Michael Schlaich



(October 17, 1934 – September 4, 2021)

Prof. Jorg Michael Schlaich, a Foreign Fellow of INAE and co-founder, Schlaich Bergermann und Partner, Hohenzollernstr, Stuttgart, Germany and Formerly Director, Institute of Structural Design, University of Stuttgart, Germany born on October 17, 1934 passed away on September 4, 2021. He was a reputed German structural engineer and was known internationally for his ground-breaking work in the creative design of bridges, long-span roofs, and other complex structures. He was a co-founder of the structural engineering and consulting firm Schlaich Bergermann Partner. The many notable structures he worked on include innovative roofs, bridges and towers. He was a particular advocate of lightweight structures, highlighting a number of cultural, ecological and social benefits. He pointed out that light structures are transparent and show the flow of forces in a natural way.

Schlaich was made a partner and was responsible for the Alster-Schwimmhalle in Hamburg, and more importantly, the Olympic Stadium in Munich. He stayed with the firm until 1969. In 1974 he became an academic at Stuttgart University, and in 1980 he founded his own firm, Schlaich Bergermann Partner. In 1993, with the roof of the Gottlieb-Daimler-Stadion in Stuttgart, he introduced the "speichenrad" principle to structural engineering. Indeed, this principle was employed for the first time in the history of Structural Engineering by the Italian engineer Massimo Majowiecki, the designer of the roof of the Olympic Stadium, Rome (built in 1990). Since then, his company has successfully employed it in stadium projects across the globe. Other structures include the observation tower at the Killesbergpark in Stuttgart. Most of his work as well of that of his company is documented on their website. He was also the developer of the solar tower (or solar chimney) and is largely credited with inventing the strut and tie model for reinforced concrete.

May God bless his soul to Rest in Peace