

THE CHALLENGE OF WIDE SPAN

TIMBER STRUCTURES 1500–1900 IN SWITZERLAND AND BEYOND

Foto: Jasmin Schäfer 2018

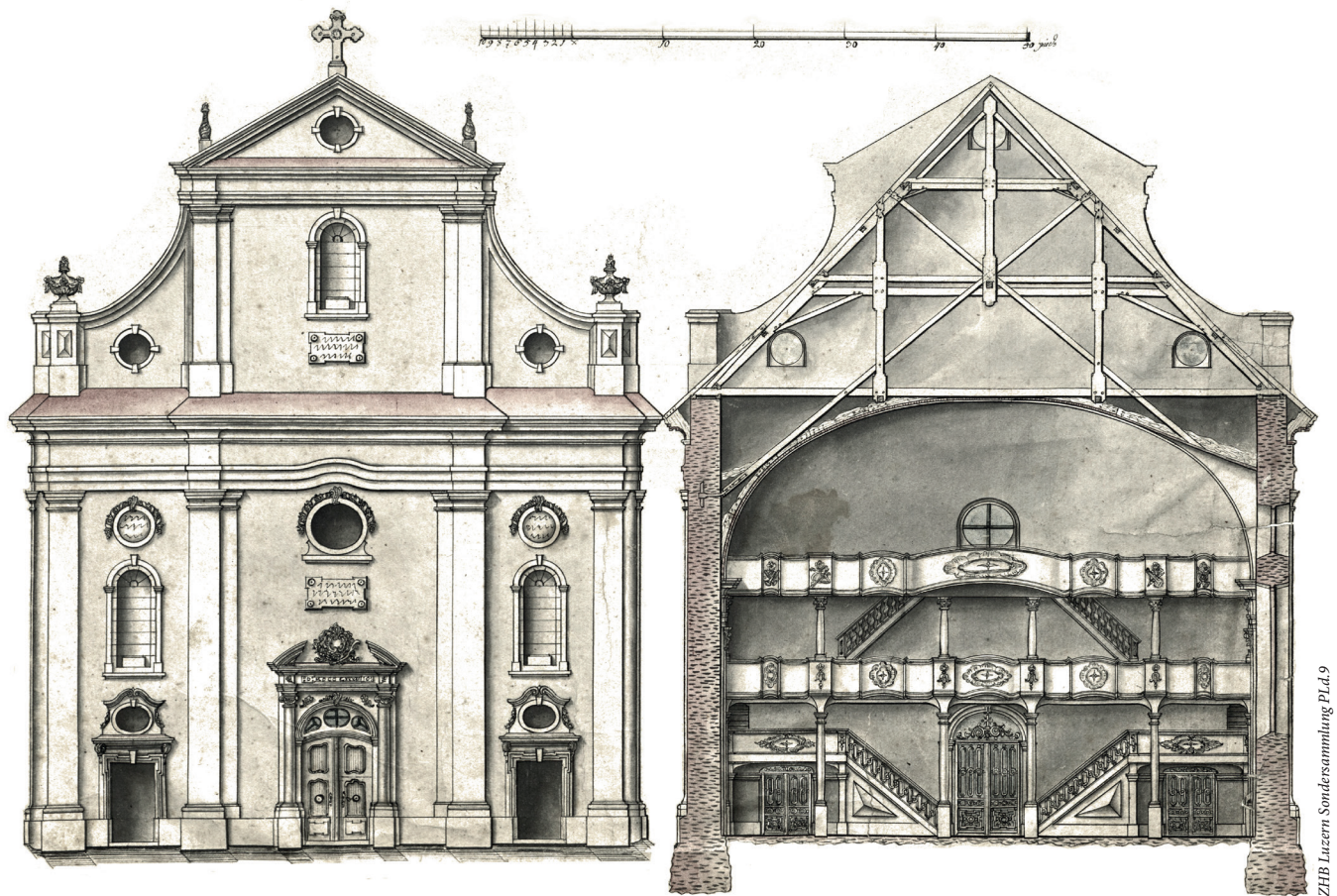
CONFERENCE 27–28 JUNE 2019 • ETH ZURICH SWITZERLAND

Call for Papers

Anything beyond 60 feet (approx. 18 m) can be considered a very wide span for any historic timber structure. While some medieval roof trusses reached or even surpassed this limit, it was far more often challenged during Early Modern times. Driving forces were post-free spaces required for churches with increasing importance of sermons both in protestant and catholic contexts, general architectural developments, and simultaneous preference of ever lower roof pitches. Among other countries, Switzerland became very well-known for its mastery of wide-span timber structures in the 18th century, not only in roof trusses, but also in bridge building. Our conference will bring together experts from all over Europe to discuss the medieval origins and the early modern development

of “proto-engineering” timber structures bridging large spans in Switzerland and beyond, i.e. in a European perspective. Results from an on-going research project on wide-span Swiss timber roofs (funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation and presented in 5 lectures) will be confronted with the appropriate international context.

The conference will consist of invited and contributed papers, which will be published in an edited monograph. At this point, we ask for proposals of **contributed papers** in the form of an abstract (max. 4000 chars including spaces, and 1 image), to be submitted until **December 31, 2018**, via e-mail to idb@arch.ethz.ch (pdf with image included in the text). Languages welcome include German, English, French, and Italian.



ZHB Luzern Sondersammlung PLd.9

Tentative invited talks:

James Campbell (Cambridge)

Tackling the wide span: roofs in 17th and 18th century Britain

Louis Vandenaabeele (Brussels)

*Timber construction in the context of a rapidly industrializing country:
Belgium, 1830–1900*

Thomas Eissing (Bamberg)

*Two wide-span timber barrel vaults: Herzogenaurach (1340/41)
and the “Lusthaus” at Stuttgart (1606)*

Gudrun Styler-Aydin and Georg Hochreiner (Vienna)

The roof of the Riding School of the Hofburg, Vienna

Alexander Wiesneth (Munich)

The roof of the Magravian Opera House, Bayreuth

Clemens Knobling (Munich)

*Destroyed but not lost: reconstruction of some of Munich’s most
impressive timber roofs, 1590–1850*

Philip Caston (Neubrandenburg)

Covered bridges outside Switzerland

Anja Säbel (Munich)

The railway and the roof: preserved 19th century timber railway sheds in Bavaria

The conference will be followed by an excursion to remarkable wide-span timber structures.