

Lisa Fedon
Vail Lifestyle, 2006
Pedestrian Bridge Railing Design - 8 panels
Stainless Steel with Morton Powder Coating

In the early 1990s when the International Bridge in Vail Village was reconstructed to meet Colorado Department of Transportation requirements, the neighboring pedestrian bridge was scheduled to be removed. It had been built in the late 1960s to accommodate skier and pedestrian access to the village from a parking lot. When efforts to remove the bridge were initiated by the town, the community voiced its opposition due to the vitality the bridge brought to the Gore Creek Promenade and its intimate scale. The bridge was ultimately spared and renovations to the streetscape of the promenade began in 1993 with minor cosmetic improvements made to the pedestrian bridge.

In 2000 the whitewater park was constructed near the two bridges which included high-tech adjustable waves, the first of its kind in a natural stream. This area of the Gore Creek was recognized as a potential premier venue for hosting whitewater competitions, such as the present Teva Games. The need for a new pedestrian bridge that could sustain the weight of spectators and provide optimal viewing for the events was realized.

In 2002 a call to artists was made by the Town of Vail to create a railing design for the new pedestrian bridge. Lisa Fedon's proposal was selected from over 20 artists who submitted their concepts for improving the bridge's appearance. Fedon, from Pen Argyl, Pa., originally designed 16 panels depicting Vail lifestyle for the bridge's railings from which 8 were chosen.

The panels include images of skiing, snowshoeing, snowboarding, biking, kayaking, and even dog walking. It was decided that the panels needed to be offset with traditional railings for the designs to be visible from a distance. Fedon often reworked the panels, changing the gage in the steel, so that the images would be more distinguishable. Primarily working in steel and bronze, Fedon's work enhances the functionality of the public projects for which she is commissioned.

Cohesive design elements connecting the International Bridge and pedestrian bridge were made including the stone facade and pillars. As the nearby International Bridge won the Honor Award for Design in 1994 from the Colorado Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects, it was necessary for Vail to continue its design excellence with the selection of art integrated in Gore Creek's rescued pedestrian bridge.

- Molly Eppard, Art in Public Places Coordinator