

**Rudolf Modrzejewski aka Ralph Modjeski**  
**Son of Helena Modjeska**

***ARTIST IN CONCRETE AND STEEL***  
***Bridges of Ralph Modjeski***  
**by**  
**Jan Plachta**

Modjeski's greatest work was his design for the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge. Stephen Mikesell, a historic preservation specialist, in his book "A Tale of Two Bridges – The San Francisco - Oakland Bay Bridges of 1936 and 2013" when describing how the 1936 bridge was designed stated that: "... he will attempt to set the record straight as to who was involved in designing the bridge and to correct the terrible neglect of the dominant role played by Ralph Modjeski." David Plowden in his beautiful book "Bridges – The Span of North America" wrote that "..... no man produced more characteristically American bridges than Ralph Modjeski, whose career encompassed two eras of bridge design. Beginning in the age of steel truss and the railway, it continued into the heyday of the suspension bridge. Modjeski's structures illustrate the traits and methods of construction that have made American bridges so different from their European counterparts. Modjeski was equally at home with all forms of steel bridge construction. Even when working for the railroads who favored traditional forms, Modjeski usually turned the conventional into the exceptional bridge". David Plowden called him "The Great Modjeski."

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Poland. Modjeski was also a virtuoso pianist, he performed with Ignacy Paderewski in Chicago, had a great love for Chopin, played from memory his Nocturnes, Polonaises, Etudes and Mazurkas.

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## Artist in concrete and steel - Bridges of Ralph Modjeski



Apr 22, 2018 · 



