



I RECENTLY TRAVELED to London for Bentley System's Be Inspired Awards, part of the company's annual Year in Infrastructure Conference. When not attending sessions, jury discussions, keynote presentations and, of course, the winners presentation (you can visit www.bentley.com for a full list of winners, many of which use plenty of steel!), I made a point to photograph the steel story of London, old and new. There's plenty to tell (and unfortunately, only one magazine page in which to do so), but one of the highlights—and one of the most unique (and, I must say, bizarre) steel structures I've ever seen anywhere—was the ArcelorMittal Orbit, which towers over the Queen Elizabeth II Olympic Park in east London. At 376 ft tall and made of approximately 2,000 tons of steel, it is Britain's largest piece of public art. Depending

on the angle, proximity and time of day (at night, it is illuminated and glows blood red) it looks like: a roller coaster gone wrong, a giant serpent, a geyser of steel bursting forth from the earth, a "tripod" from H.G. Wells' *War of the Worlds* (you've got to get up close for that one), two giant metallic monsters locked in eternal battle—and probably a whole lot of other things. The number of opinions about the structure is likely similar to the number of interpretations on what it looks like, but it's definitely a sight to behold and certainly one heck of a conversation piece and structural engineering achievement. If you're ever in London, it's worth visiting and making your own interpretations. And if you'd like to know more about it, see the August 2012 "What's Cool in Steel" item at www.modernsteel.com. —Geoff Weisenberger ■