

Hedvika Kňžová

Hotel Prague. From the architectonic competition to its art and craft decoration.

ANNOTATION

Hotel Prague was founded on a lucrative site as a prominent building during 1975–1982. Its generously accommodated interiors were embellished by a great number of art and craft works, such as chandeliers, lamps, glass frieze, furniture etc. by respected interior design artists. This munificently designed complex awaits now, after 31 years, a demolition. The building was documented in detail and relevant archive documentation has been gathered.

SUMMARY

At the outset of 2013 documentation of the whole Prague hotel complex was completed within a research project and as a consequence of the impending demolition of this structure. The remarkable value of this building was confirmed considering its construction as well as art and craft decoration. The original architectural project of the hotel was prepared by a team of architects Jaroslav Paroubek – Arnošt Navrátil – Jan Sedláček – Luděk Todl. The construction started in 1975 and was completed in May 1981. Among other items chandeliers were designed by Stanislav Libenský and Pavel Hlava, a glass frieze by Stanislav Libenský and Jaroslava Brychtová, and seating furniture by Zbyněk Hřivnáč. In February 2013 a proposal was submitted to proclaim this building a heritage cultural monument. This proposal was rejected by the Ministry of Culture in June 2013. Currently the hotel Prague together with other buildings in the area is being prepared for demolition.

Fig. 1. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. General view of the hotel Prague from the south.

Fig. 2. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. Original competition project of the prize-winning team of architects Paroubek/Sedláček/Navrátil/Todl. The volume of the hotel was larger according to the original assignment by large conference and congress rooms in the basement and the ground floor from the north side.

Fig. 3. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. Construction of the building using combination of steel, truss beams and ferroconcrete ceiling sheets.

Fig. 4. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. Original project by the architects Paroubek/Sedláček/Navrátil/ Todl with characteristic stepped form.

Fig. 5. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. Original project of the cinema hall layout and equipment. Signed Pardyl/Turek/Fořtl.

Fig. 6. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. Construction pit of the hotel surrounded by pile walls around its perimeter.

Fig. 7. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. Construction of the hotel, part of the soffit of the future terrace by the garden.

Fig. 8. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. General view onto the experimental cell.

Fig. 9. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. View onto the experimental cell, terrace with the plants ready to be planted.

Fig. 10. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. Detail of the ceramic tiling of the perimeter skin after the project by Š. Kotrba. The south façade of the 6th floor.

Fig. 11. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. Perimeter skin after the construction. The north part with the main entrance to the hotel. **Fig. 12.** Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. The terrace by the south façade with a fountain. Architectural project signed by arch. J. Polák.

Fig. 13. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. Drawing of the south terrace by Prof. A. Navrátil for the competition project.

Fig. 14. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. Groundplan of the 1st floor. **1** – main entrance, **2** – staircaise, **3** – east corridor, **4** – foyer of the cinema hall, **5** – cinema hall, **6** – west corridor, **7** – winter garden, **8** – ramp before the conference hall, **9** – conference hall. (Deposited in: Archive MČ Prague 6, modified by the author, 2013.) **Fig. 15.** Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. The interior of the east corridor by the north façade with the lighting units by S. Libenský.

Fig. 16. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. Detail of the ceiling and the chandelier in the foyer of the cinema hall. The crystal lighting unit by P. Hlava.

Fig. 17. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. Entrance ramp to the conference hall with a crystal chandelier by P. Hlava.

Fig. 18. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. Chandelier in the conference hall, author P. Hlava.

Fig. 19. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. The groundplan of the 1st floor. **1** – staircase, **2** – hall with a breakfast room, **3** – winter garden, **4** – restaurant, **5** – saloons, **6** – playrooms, **7** – swimming pool, **8** – skittels, **9** – fountain on the south terrace.

Fig. 20. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. Monumental staircase between the basement and the ground floor – view from the basement.

Fig. 21. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. Detail of the lighting unit in the main staircase between the first floor and the basement, author S. Libenský.

Fig. 22. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. The space of the former breakfast room in the basement with monumental principal columns faced with fluted timber with lamellar soffit and with original standing lamps by the author K. Volf.

Fig. 23. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. The space of the former breakfast room in the basement, its rear part with metal faced columns and reflector globular lightings on the ceiling. In the background a stucco relief on the wall.

Fig. 24. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. Pivoting two-wing doors between the hall with the breakfast room and the adjacent dining room (restaurant).

Fig. 25. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. Original appearance of the dining room (restaurant).

Fig. 26. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. Crystal chandeliers in the salon in the basement by P. Hlava.

Fig. 27. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. Stained glass proposed and realised by the author pair S. Libenský and J. Brychtová in the saloon in the basement.

Fig. 28. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. View into the reading room (playroom, call-office) with complete veneer panelling, partition walls, built in wardrobes and a soffit with the lighting.

Fig. 29. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. View into the swimming pool area.

Fig. 30. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. Glass partition wall between the swimming pool and the corridor, author B. Hejlek.

Fig. 31. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. The swimming pool area – a corner with refreshment tables set into the massive fluting of the timber panels.

Fig. 32. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. Partition between the billiard and skittle part made of massive timber remotely resembling a Baroque monumental balustrade.

Fig. 33. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. Seating furniture by Z. Hřivnáč, Prague „chair“.

Fig. 34. Prague 6-Dejvice, No. 2450, Sušická 20. Information notices in the hotel, pictograms.

English by Linda and Patrick Foster