

= St. Michael 's Golden @-@ Domed Monastery =

St. Michael 's Golden @-@ Domed Monastery (Ukrainian : ?????????????? ?????????????? ?????????? , Mykhaylivs ? kyi zolotoverkhyi monastyr) is a functioning monastery in Kiev , the capital of Ukraine . The monastery is located on the right bank of the Dnieper River on the edge of a bluff northeast of the Saint Sophia Cathedral . The site is located in the historic administrative Uppertown and overlooks the city 's historical commercial and merchant quarter , the Podil neighbourhood .

Originally built in the Middle Ages by Sviatopolk II Iziaslavych , the monastery comprises the Cathedral itself , the Refectory of St. John the Divine , built in 1713 , the Economic Gates , constructed in 1760 and the monastery 's bell tower , which was added c . 1716 ? 1719 . The exterior of the structure was rebuilt in the Ukrainian Baroque style in the 18th century while the interior remained in its original Byzantine style . The original cathedral was demolished by the Soviet authorities in the 1930s , but was reconstructed and opened in 1999 following Ukrainian independence in 1991 .

= = History = =

= = = 11th to 19th centuries = = =

Some scholars do not believe that Prince Iziaslav Yaroslavych , whose Christian name was Demetrius , first built the Saint Demetrius 's Monastery and Church in the Uppertown of Kiev near Saint Sophia Cathedral in the 1050s . Half a century later , his son , Sviatopolk II Iziaslavych , is recorded as commissioning a monastery church (1108 ? 1113) dedicated to his own patron saint , Michael the Archangel . One reason for building the church may have been Svyatopolk 's recent victory over the nomadic Polovtsians , as Michael the Archangel was considered a patron of warriors and victories . In 1906 , a medieval hoard of silver and gold jewellery was discovered in a metal casket on Trekhsvyatytska Street (Street of the Three Saints) , opposite the gates of St. Michael 's Golden @-@ Domed Monastery . Gold jewellery from the hoard is now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art , New York while the silver jewellery and two ingots are in the British Museum , London . The hoard is dated to the 11th @-@ 12th centuries and was probably hidden at the time of the Tartar invasions and the Sack of Kiev in 1240 .

The monastery was regarded as a family cloister of Svyatopolk 's family ; it was there that members of Svyatopolk 's family were buried . (This is in contrast to the Vydubychi Monastery patronized by his rival , Vladimir Monomakh) . The cathedral domes were probably the first in Kievan Rus to be gilded , a practice that became regular with the passage of time and acquired for the monastery the nickname of " golden @-@ domed " or " golden @-@ roofed " , depending on the translation .

During the Mongol invasion in 1240 , the monastery is believed to have been damaged seriously . The Mongols damaged the cathedral and removed its gold @-@ plated domes . The cloister subsequently fell into disrepair and there is no documentation of it for the following two and a half centuries . By 1496 , the monastery had been revived and its name was changed from St. Demetrius ' Monastery to St. Michael 's after the cathedral church built by Sviatopolk II . After numerous restorations and enlargements during the sixteenth century , it gradually became one of the most popular and wealthiest monasteries in Ukraine . In 1620 , Iov Boretsky made it the residence of the renewed Orthodox metropolitan of Kiev , and in 1633 , Isaya Kopynsky was named a supervisor of the monastery .

The monastery enjoyed the patronage of hetmans and other benefactors throughout the years . The chief magnet for pilgrims were the relics of Saint Barbara , alleged to have been brought to Kiev from Constantinople in 1108 by Sviatopolk II Iziaslavych 's wife and kept in a silver reliquary donated by Hetman Ivan Mazepa . Although most of the monastery grounds were secularized in the late eighteenth century , as many as 240 monks resided there in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries . The monastery served as the residence of the bishop of Chernigov after 1800 . A precentor 's school was located on the monastery grounds ; many prominent composers , such as Korylo

Stetsenko and Yakiv Yatsynevych , either studied or taught at the school .

In 1870 , about 100 @, @ 000 pilgrims paid tribute to St. Barbara at St. Michael 's Monastery . Before the Russian Revolution in 1917 , rings manufactured and blessed at St. Michael 's Monastery , known as St. Barbara 's rings , were very popular among the citizens of Kiev . They usually served as good luck charms and , according to popular beliefs , occasionally protected against witchcraft but were also effective against serious illnesses and sudden death . These beliefs reference the facts that the Monastery was not affected by the plague epidemics in 1710 and 1770 and cholera epidemics of the nineteenth century .

= = = Demolition of the cathedral and belltower = = =

During the first half of the 1930s , various Soviet publications questioned the known historical facts regarding the age of the Cathedral . The publications stressed that the medieval building had undergone major reconstructions and that little of the original Byzantine @-@ style cathedral was preserved . This wave of questioning led to the demolition of the monastery and its replacement with a new administrative centre for the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (previously located in the city of Kharkiv) . Before its demolition (June 8 ? July 9 , 1934) , the structure was carefully studied by T.M. Movchanivskyi and K. Honcharev from the recently purged and re @-@ organized Institute of Material Culture of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences . On the basis of their survey , the cathedral was declared to belong primarily to the Ukrainian Baroque style , rather than to the twelfth century as was previously thought , and thus did not merit preservation due to its lack of historical and artistic value . This conclusion backed up the Soviet authorities ' plans to demolish the entire monastery . Local historians , archaeologists , and architects agreed to the monastery 's demolition , although reluctantly . Only one professor , Mykola Makarenko , refused to sign the demolition act ; he later died in a Soviet prison .

On June 26 , 1934 , work began on the removal of the twelfth century Byzantine mosaics . It was conducted by the Mosaic Section of the Leningrad Academy of Fine Arts . Specialists were forced to work in haste on account of the impending demolition and were thus unable to complete the entire project . Despite the care and attention shown during the removal of the mosaics from the cathedral 's walls , the relocated mosaics cannot be relied upon as being absolutely authentic .

The remaining mosaics , covering an area of 45 square metres (485 sq ft) , were partitioned between the State Hermitage Museum , the Tretyakov Gallery , and the State Russian Museum . The other remaining mosaics were installed on the second floor of the Saint Sophia Cathedral , where they were not on display for tourists . Those items that remained in Kiev were seized by the Nazis during World War II and taken to Germany . After the war ended , they fell into American hands and were later returned to Moscow .

During the spring of 1935 , the golden domes of the monastery were pulled down . The cathedral 's silver royal gates , Mazepa 's reliquary (weighing two poods of silver) and other valuables were sold abroad or simply destroyed . Master Hryhoryi 's five @-@ tier iconostasis was removed (and later destroyed) from the cathedral as well . St. Barbara 's relics were transferred to the Church of the Tithes and upon that church 's demolition , to the St Volodymyr 's Cathedral in 1961 .

During the spring @-@ summer period of 1936 , the shell of the cathedral and belltower were blown up with dynamite . The monastery 's Economic Gate (Ekonomichna Brama) and the monastic walls were also destroyed . After the demolition , a thorough search for valuables was carried out by the NKVD on the site . The resulting empty plot was joined with Sofiyivska Square , renamed Uryadova Square (Governmental Square) and was designated as the new city center and parade grounds . Soviet authorities then commissioned a competition how to best fill the empty plot ; most architects , including Yakiv Shteinberg , suggested a huge Lenin statue . The square itself was planned as a rectangle with huge governmental buildings on the perimeter . Four pillars were planned with statues of workers , peasants and revolutionaries with flags standing on them . Some architects suggested to demolish the statue of Bohdan Khmelnytsky in front of the Saint Sophia Cathedral and the Cathedral itself .

The only building completed on the former monastery grounds before World War II currently houses

the Ministry of Foreign Affairs . The construction of the second building (" the capital center ") , planned to be built on the site where the Cathedral had once stood , was delayed in the spring of 1938 as the authorities were not satisfied with the submitted design . This building failed to materialize . Some time after demolition , the site where the former cathedral used to be located was transformed into a sport complex , including tennis and volleyball courts . The Refectory (Trapezna) of St. John the Divine was used for changing rooms .

= = = Preservation and reconstruction = = =

In August 1963 , the preserved refectory of the demolished monastery without its Baroque cupola was designated a monument of architecture of the Ukrainian SSR . In 1973 , the Kiev City Council established several " archaeological preservation zones " within the city ; these included the territory surrounding the monastery . However , the vacant site of the demolished cathedral was excluded from the proposed Historic @-@ Archaeological Park @-@ Museum , The Ancient Kiev , developed by architect A. M. Miletskyi and consultants M. V. Kholostenko and P. P. Tolochko .

During the 1970s , Ukrainian architects I. Melnyk , A. Zayika , V. Korol , and engineer A. Kolyakov worked out a plan of reconstruction of the St. Michael 's Monastery . However , these plans were only considered after the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 .

After Ukraine regained independence in 1991 , the demolition of the monastery was deemed a crime and voices started to be heard calling for the monastery 's full @-@ scale reconstruction as an important part of the cultural heritage of the Ukrainian people . These plans were approved and carried out in 1997 ? 1998 , whereupon the cathedral and belltower were transferred to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church - Kiev Patriarchate . Yuriy Ivakin , the chief archaeologist for the site , said that more than 260 valuable ancient artifacts were recovered during excavations of the site before reconstruction . In addition , a portion of the ancient cathedral , still intact , was uncovered ; this today makes up a part of the current cathedral 's crypt .

With support of the Kiev city authorities , architect @-@ restorer Y. Lositskiy and others restored the western part of the stone walls . The belltower was restored next and became an observation platform . Instead of the original chiming clock , a new electronic one with hands and a set of chimes (a total of 40) was installed from which today the melodies of famous Ukrainian composers can be heard . The Cathedral was reconstructed last and decorated with a set of wooden baroque icons , copies of former mosaics and frescoes , and new works of art by Ukrainian artists .

The newly rebuilt St. Michael 's Golden @-@ Domed Cathedral was officially opened on May 30 , 1999 . However , interior decorations , mosaics , and frescoes were not completed until May 28 , 2000 . The side chapels were consecrated to SS . Barbara and Catherine in 2001 . During the following four years , 18 out of 29 mosaics and other objets d 'art from the original cathedral were returned from Moscow after years of tedious discussion between Ukrainian and Russian authorities . However , by the end of 2006 , the remaining frescoes of the monastery are going to be transferred from the Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg to Kiev . They are placed in a special preserve that is owned by the municipality rather than the church body .

= = = Historic pictures = = =

= = Featured landmarks = =

= = = St. Michael Golden @-@ Domed Cathedral = = =

The religious architecture of St. Michael 's Golden @-@ Domed Monastery incorporates elements that have evolved from styles prevalent during Byzantine and Baroque periods . The St. Michael 's Golden @-@ Domed Cathedral (Ukrainian : ?????????????? ?????????????? C????) is the monastery 's main church , built in 1108 ? 1113 at the behest of Sviatopolk II Izyaslavych . The

cathedral was the largest of three churches of St. Demetrius Monastery .

The ancient cathedral was modeled on the Assumption Cathedral of the Kiev Monastery of the Caves . It used the Greek cross plan prevalent during the time of the Kievan Rus , six pillars , and three apses . A miniature church , likely a baptistery , adjoined the cathedral from the south . There was also a tower with a staircase leading to the choir loft ; it was incorporated into the northern part of the narthex rather than protruding from the main block as was common at the time . It is likely that the cathedral had a single dome , although two smaller domes might have topped the tower and baptistery . The interior decoration was lavish as its high @-@ quality shimmering mosaics , probably the finest in Kievan Rus , still testify .

When the medieval churches of Kiev were rebuilt in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries in the Ukrainian Baroque style , the cathedral was enlarged and renovated dramatically . By 1746 , it had acquired a new baroque exterior , while maintaining its original Byzantine interior . Six domes were added to the original single dome , but the added pressure on the walls was counteracted by the construction of buttresses . The remaining medieval walls , characterised by alternative layers of limestone and flat brick , were covered with stucco . Ivan Hryhorovych @-@ Barskyi was responsible for window surrounds and stucco ornamentation .

Inside the church , an intricate five @-@ tier icon screen funded by Hetman Pavlo Skoropadsky and executed by Hryhoryi Petriv from Chernigov was installed in 1718 . During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries , almost all of the original Byzantine mosaics and frescoes on the interior walls were painted over . Some restoration work on the mosaics and frescoes that remained unpainted was carried out towards the end of the nineteenth century . However , there were no major and serious investigations of the walls done , so it is possible that medieval frescoes or mosaics were preserved under the newer coats of plaster .

= = = Refectory of St. John the Divine = = =

The refectory of the monastery is a rectangular brick building which contains a dining hall for the brethren as well as several kitchens and pantries . The Church of John the Theologian adjoins it from the east . The outside is segmented by pilasters and displays window surrounds reminiscent of traditional Eastern Orthodox church architecture . The refectory was erected in 1713 , taking the place of the original wooden refectory . Its interior was overhauled in 1827 and 1837 and the restoration work was undertaken from 1976 to 1981 .