Rudolfinum

Front façade of the Rudolfinum

The **Rudolfinum** is a music auditorium and art gallery in Prague, Czech Republic. It is designed in the neo-renaissance style and is situated on Jan Palach Square on the bank of the river Vltava.

1 Overview

The Rudolfinum has been the home of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra since 1946 and is one of the main venues of the Prague Spring International Music Festival held each year in May and June.[1] The building was designed by architect Josef Zítek and his student Josef Schulz, and was opened 8 February 1885. It is named in honour of Rudolf, Crown Prince of Austria, who presided over the opening.

The Rudolfinum's Dvořák Hall is one of the oldest concert halls in Europe and is noted for its excellent acoustics. On 4 January 1896 Antonín Dvořák himself conducted the Czech Philharmonic in the hall in its first ever concert.[2]

The building also contains the Galerie Rudolfinum, an art gallery that focuses mainly on contemporary art. Major exhibitions have included: František Drtikol – *Photographer, Painter, Mystic*, (1998), Cindy Sherman: *Retrospective*, (1998), Jürgen Klauke: *Side Effect*, (1998), *Czech Photography 1840–1950*, (2004), Annelies Štrba, (2005), Neo Rauch: *Neue Rollen*, (2007), *Uncertain States of America*, (2007–2008), Gottfried Helnwein: *Angels Sleeping*, (2008).

2 Gallery

- Dvořák Hall.

- Rudolfinum as seen from Letná.

- Krzysztof Penderecki and the Sinfonia Varsovia, rehearsal. Prague Autumn International Music Festival 2008.

- Rudolfinum by night

3 See also

- List of concert halls

4 References

[1] Bernd F. Gruschwitz, *Prague*, pg. 48, Nelles (2001), ISBN 3-88618-861-2

[2] Pablo de Sarasate, *The Strad*, vol. 71, pg. 445, Lavendar Publications (1960)

5 External links

- Czech Philharmonic

- Rudolfinum Gallery

- Concerts in Rudolfinum

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Old New Synagogue

The **Old New Synagogue** or **Altneuschul** (Czech: *Staronová synagoga*; German: *Altneu-Synagoge*) situated in Josefov, Prague, is Europe's oldest active synagogue.[1] It is also the oldest surviving medieval synagogue of twin-nave design.[2]

Completed in 1270 in gothic style, it was one of Prague's first gothic buildings.[3] A still older Prague synagogue, known as the Old Synagogue, was demolished in 1867 and replaced by the Spanish Synagogue.

1 Etymology

The synagogue was originally called the New or Great Synagogue and later, when newer synagogues were built in the 16th century, it became known as the Old-New Synagogue.[2] Another explanation derives the name from the Hebrew עֲל־תְּנַאי (al tnay), which means "on condition" and sounds identical to the Yiddish "alt-nay," or old-new. According to legend angels have brought stones from the Temple in Jerusalem to build the Synagogue in Prague — "on condition" that they are to be returned, when the Messiah comes, i.e., when the Temple in Jerusalem is rebuilt and the stones are needed.

Synagogue interior.

2 Interior

Nine steps lead from the street into a vestibule, from which a door opens into a double-nave with six vaulted bays. This double-nave system was most likely adapted from plans of monasteries and chapels by the synagogue's Christian architects.[4] The molding on the tympanum of the synagogue's entryway has a design that incorporates twelve vines and twelve bunches of grapes, said to represent twelve tribes of Israel.[5] Two large pillars aligned east to west in the middle of the room each support the interior corner of four bays. The bays have two narrow Gothic windows on the sides, for a total of twelve, again representing the twelve tribes. The narrow windows are probably responsible for many older descriptions of the building as being dark; it is now brightly lit with several electric chandeliers.

The vaulting on the six bays has five ribs instead of the typical four or six. It has been suggested that this was an attempt to avoid associations with the Christian cross. Many scholars dispute this theory, pointing to synagogues that have quadripartite ribs, and Christian buildings that have the unusual five rib design.[6]

The bimah from which Torah scrolls are read is located between the two pillars. The base of the bimah repeats the twelve vine motif found on the tympanum.[5] The Aron Kodesh where the Torah scrolls are stored is located in the middle of the customary eastern wall. There are five steps leading up to the Ark and two round stained glass windows on either side above it. A lectern in front of the ark has a square well a few inches below the main floor for the service leader to stand in.

The twelve lancet windows in the synagogue, which directed light towards the bimah, apparently led members to compare the structure with Solomon's Temple.[5]

The synagogue follows orthodox custom, with separate seating for men and women during prayer services. Women sit in an outer room with small windows looking into the main sanctuary. The framework of the roof, the gable, and the party wall date from the Middle Ages.

An unusual feature found in the nave of this synagogue is a large red flag near the west pillar. In the centre of the flag is a Star of David and in the centre of the star is a hat

in the style typically worn by Jews of the 15th century. Both the hat and star are stitched in gold. Also stitched in gold is the text of *Shema Yisrael*. Ferdinand III, Holy Roman Emperor awarded the Jewish community their own banner in recognition for their services in the defence of Prague during the Thirty Years War. The banner now on display is a modern reproduction.

3 Golem of Prague

It is said that the body of Golem (created by Rabbi Judah Loew ben Bezalel) lies in the attic where the genizah of Prague's community is kept.[7] A legend is told of a Nazi agent during World War II broaching the genizah, but who perished instead.[8] In the event, the Gestapo apparently did not enter the attic during the war, and the building was spared during the Nazis' destruction of synagogues.[7] The lowest three meters of the stairs leading to the attic from the outside have been removed and the attic is not open to the general public.

4 See also

- Oldest synagogues in the world

5 Gallery

- *The eastern facade.*
- *The Old New Synagogue before 1906*
- *Interior of the Old New Synagogue*
- *Rear with ladder to attic*
- *Old New Synagogue by painter Jiří Meitner*
- *Rabbi Loews chair*
- *View from the south-east*

6 References

[1] The Scolanova Synagogue in Italy, also 13th century, was converted to a church by 1380 but was restored to synagogue use in 2006.

[2] "Old-New Synagogue". Jewish Museum in Prague.

[3] David Wallace, Preface, Anne's Bohemia; Czech Literature and Society, 1310–1420, by Alfred Thomas University of Minnesota Press, 1998, p. xi.

[4] Carol Herselle Krinsky, Synagogues of Europe: Architecture, History, Meaning, Dover Publications, 1996.

[5] H.A. Meek, The Synagogue, Phaidon, 1995, p. 93.

[6] Krinsky p. 172-173

[7] "The Golem". Temple Emanu-El of San Jose.

[8] "The Golem Lives On". Jewish Post.

7 Bibliography

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- This article incorporates text from a publication now in the public domain: Singer, Isidore; et al., eds. (1901–1906). "article name needed". *Jewish Encyclopedia*. New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company.

8 External links

Media related to Old New Synagogue at Wikimedia Commons

- The Old-New Synagogue
- The Jewish Community of Prague
- Jewish Museum in Prague
- Jewish Encyclopedia — Prague
- YIVO Encyclopedia - Altneuschul

Coordinates: 50°05′24″N 14°25′07″E / 50.09000°N 14.41861°E

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Statue of Franz Kafka

The statue of Franz Kafka is an outdoor 2003 sculpture by Jaroslav Róna, installed on Vězeňská in Prague, Czech Republic. It is based on a scene in Kafka's first novel, *Amerika*, in which a political candidate is held on the shoulders of a giant man during a campaign rally, and carried through the streets.

1 External links

- Media related to Franz Kafka statue by Jaroslav Róna at Wikimedia Commons

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St. Salvator's Church

The **Sint-Salvator church** (also called the Old-Munster church) was one of five Catholic Church collegiate churches in Utrecht, Netherlands, before the Protestant Reformation. The others were St. Martin's Cathedral (the present-day Dom Church), St. Peter's Church, St. John's church and St. Mary's church. The church building was situated on the present-day Domplein and was demolished during the Protestant Reformation, after the 1587 outlawing of Catholicism in the Dutch Republic.

1 The first St. Salvator church

The exact history of first church building is not known but it was possibly built c. 695 and its presence was definitely established by 724. It was established by Willibrord, after he had received his mission from pope Sergius I. The patron saint of the church, Salvator, is a possible reference to the Basilica of St. John Lateran, the ecclesiastical seat of the Pope and the mother church of the Catholic Church, as this church was at first also dedicated to St. Salvator. The name Salvator means *savior* and is a direct reference to Jesus the Savior.

During World War II, the former church building location was subject to an archaeological excavation. At the site of the former crossing, on the axis of the church, wall remnants and limestone sarcophagi were found. From the positioning of the remnants it was concluded that the eastern annex of the church had been found. By studying the groundplan of the second church which included a very broad and extremely short nave and a heavy tower, the dimensions of the connecting hall were deduced. The original church was a 12 by 18 metres (39 ft × 59 ft) rectangular single-nave building with an attached 9 by 12 metres (30 ft × 39 ft) rectangular annex on the east side. The excavation showed that the annex, which contained many tombs within its walls, may have been a grave chapel and possibly a choir.

The St. Salvator church was located southwest of a second small church building, known as the Holy-Cross chapel, which was likely the original St. Martin's church. That small church building was demolished in 1826. Until the 10th century, these two churches formed a double cathedral building but it is not clear whether both church functioned as a cathedral. The bishop's cathedra was installed, c. 750, in St. Martin's church, the direct predecessor of the later Dom Church, which from then on was known as St. Martin's Cathedral.

2 Restoration and rebuilding in later times
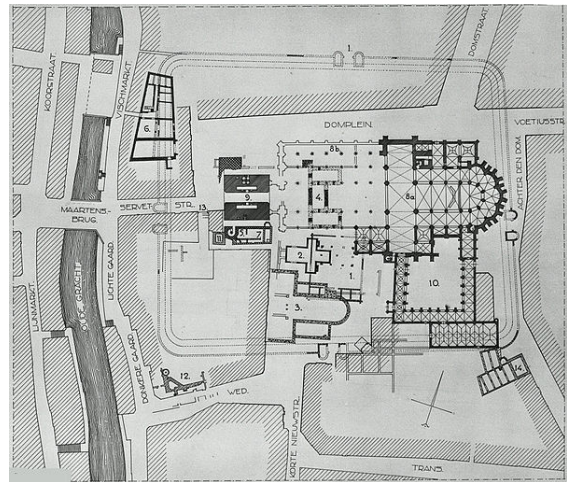
Map of the cathedral square in Utrecht showing Roman and medieval construction. St. Salvator is labeled 3.

The church was restored and possibly expanded during the episcopate of bishop Balderic of Utrecht (918-976). What exactly was done is not clear. A new grave-room might have been added to the eastern side. Balderic most likely paid more attention to the construction of the St. Martin's Cathedral to replace the old one. Under Balderic's third successor, Ansfried of Utrecht (995-1010), the church was largely rebuilt. The hall was cut into two. On the western half a westwork was erected after the example of the westwork at the Palatine Chapel in Aachen. The eastern half was transformed into a basilic layout by adding aisles. The eastern annex choir was maintained. In this form, the church may have acted as the bishopric's palatine church.[lower-alpha 1] Similar churches were also built elsewhere from around 1000. They served to represent the bishop and his court.
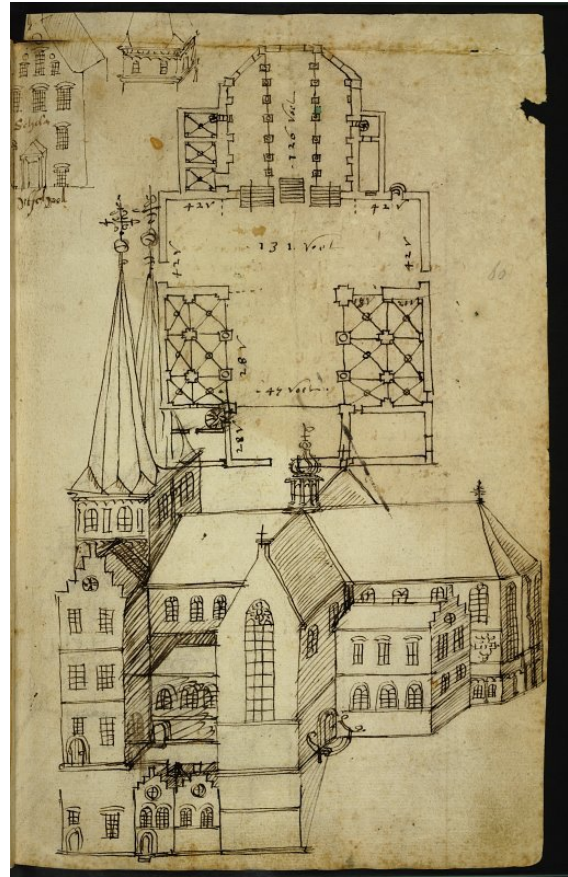
Bishop Bernold made an end to the status of palatine church. The St. Salvator church was reformed into a chapter church, and the St. Martin's church was upgraded to cathedral status, becoming the seat of the bishop of Utrecht. Bernold and his successor William I adjusted the St. Salvator church to its new function, once more modifying and expanding it. The old eastern annex was taken down and replaced by a transept, whereby the eastern side received a prestigious, very deep, three-sided closed choir. Below this choir was a spacious crypt, that was accessible through side-chapels at the sides of

the choir. Its layout corresponded to the other churches Bernold had built. The only difference, the extremely deep choir, seemed to be a reference to the special status of the church as burial place for the first bishops of Utrecht, amongst them Saint Boniface (who had never been bishop of Utrecht but was considered as such in medieval times).

The main altar was at first dedicated to Christ the Savior. The altar at the northern side-chapel was dedicated to Mary, and the southern side-chapel to John the Baptist. Together these altars represented the crucifixion and salvation of Christ. The main altar was also dedicated to Boniface, who had died as a martyr in 754 at Dokkum. Below the high altar, in the crypt, there was an altar dedicated to Saint Stephen, the first Christian protomartyr. Bishop Frederick of Utrecht, who was murdered in the church in 835, according to legend for his criticism of Empress Judith of Bavaria, was buried in front of this altar.

Around this time the St. Salvator church was designated a collegiate church with its own chapter and immunity from civil law in favor of canon law. This immunity also extended to the houses of the canons and the Holy-Cross chapel, which, as stated above, can be identified as the original St. Martin's church, and was eventually rebuilt as a cathedral by Bishop Balderic of Utrecht.

In 1131 and 1253 the church building was damaged by fire, but restored in both cases.

3   The final church

In its final form, the St. Salvator church was a Tuff-stone basilica with a deep choir, a transept and short nave, and a westwork with two towers. While the 10th-century nave and westwork, and 11th-century choir and transept were Romanesque, the church was later adapted to the Gothic style. Several new structures were also built, such as a school at the southern side of the tower and a library on the southern side of the choir.

A map and construction drawings of the church in its final form were made by Aernout van Buchel. These drawings, which have been preserved, were made either shortly before or after the demolition of the church in 1587-1588. Another source is a description made by Canon Jan Mersman, in 1592, of the demolished church. Not much remains of the church; most of its foundation had been removed. Today one can see the outlines of the choir and part of the transept in the paving of the Domplein, the square in front of the Dom Church.

4   Notes

[1] Palatine churches and chapels belong to, imperial, royal, or private palaces and castles.[1]

Sint-Salvatorkerk, drawing made around 1615 by Aernout van Buchel

5   References

[1] ⊘ This article incorporates text from a publication now in the public domain: Colby, F.; Williams, T., eds. (1914). "Church". *New International Encyclopedia*. **5** (2nd ed.). New York: Dodd, Mead. p. 307.

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7   External links

• Initiatief Domplein 2013(Dutch)

• Salvatorkerk in Collectie Utrecht(Dutch)

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