

# Powder Tower



*Powder Gate*

See also: Powder Tower, Riga

The **Powder Tower** or **Powder Gate** (Czech: *Prašná brána*) is a Gothic tower in Prague, Czech Republic. It is one of the original city gates, dating back to the 11th century. It separates the Old Town from the New Town.

## 1 History

The Powder Tower is one of the original 13 city gates in Old Town, Prague. Construction began in 1475. The tower was intended to be an attractive entrance into the city, instead of a defensive tower. The foundation stone was placed by Vladislav II. The city council gave Vladislav II the tower as a coronation gift. While it was being built, it was called the **New Tower**. The look of the tower was inspired by the work of Peter Parler on the Charles Bridge.<sup>[1]</sup>

Vladislav II had to relocate due to riots, so the tower building stopped. He returned in 1485 to live back in Prague Castle, where he lived for the rest of his life, along with the rest of the Kings of Bohemia who lived

in Prague.<sup>[1]</sup> Kings would not return to use the tower or Royal Court until using it for coronation ceremonies starting again in 1836, where they would pass through the tower to go to St. Vitus Cathedral.

The gate was used to store gunpowder in the 17th century, hence the name Powder Tower or Powder Gate. The gate suffered considerable damage during the Battle of Prague. The sculptures on the tower were replaced in 1876.<sup>[1]</sup>

## 2 References

[1] Turp, Craig (2012). *DK Eyewitness Travel Guide: Prague*. London: DK Travel. ISBN 0756683998.

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# Palladium (Prague)

**Palladium** is a shopping mall located in the centre of Prague in the Czech Republic. It opened in 2007. The mall contains 170 shops and 30 restaurants, with a retail area of 39,000 square metres (420,000 sq ft).<sup>[1]</sup> There is also designated office space in the building totalling 19,500 square metres (210,000 sq ft).<sup>[2]</sup> It is one of the biggest shopping centres in the Czech Republic. It is directly opposite another shopping centre, Kotva.

## 1 History

The site where Palladium stands was under control of the Army until being sold in the 1990s.<sup>[3]</sup> Construction on Palladium was announced in June 2005, with a projected completion date of autumn 2007.<sup>[4]</sup> The new design has retained the facade of the previous *Josef Barracks building*. During the construction process, a number of medieval ruins were found underneath the construction site in an archeological excavation. The remains were removed but not before they were recorded and photographed.<sup>[5]</sup>

The mall was opened by television personality Leoš Mareš in October 2007, becoming one of the biggest shopping centres in the Czech Republic.<sup>[6]</sup> The mall closed for three days in February 2008 following a fire.<sup>[2]</sup> Another fire, in August 2011, caused the evacuation of two floors of the mall, but it was smaller than the 2008 fire.<sup>[7]</sup> Palladium was the only shopping mall in Prague to be open on Christmas Day 2007, and New Year's Day 2008.<sup>[8]</sup>

Palladium Praha, the company which operates the centre, announced losses of over 700 million CZK in 2008. The following year, losses were over 2 billion CZK.<sup>[1]</sup> In 2010 however, the company recorded a profit of 155 million CZK.<sup>[9]</sup>

## 2 Tenants

Palladium contains 200 tenants, including 170 shops and 30 restaurants.<sup>[2]</sup> Tenants at Palladium include Marks & Spencer, H&M, Albert, Esprit, Marc O'Polo and Topshop.<sup>[6]</sup>

## 3 Transport

Palladium houses parking for 900 vehicles. The building is directly connected to the western exit of the Náměstí Republiky metro station on Prague Metro's Line B. The mall is also served by the tram stop *Náměstí Republiky* for overground public transport.

## 4 See also

- List of shopping malls in the Czech Republic

## 5 References

- [1] "Shopping centers reach saturation". *The Prague Post*. 8 December 2010. Retrieved 19 November 2013.
- [2] "Zavřené Palladium připravuje obchodníky o statisíce". *Mladá fronta DNES* (in Czech). 5 March 2008. Retrieved 19 November 2013.
- [3] "Stovka lidí zburcovala pražské nákupní centrum zpěvem hymny". *Mladá fronta DNES* (in Czech). 7 March 2011. Retrieved 19 November 2013.
- [4] "Nové nákupní centrum Palladium". *Hospodářské noviny* (in Czech). 6 June 2005. Retrieved 19 November 2013.
- [5] "Now you see it". *The Prague Post*. 13 September 2006. Retrieved 21 November 2013.
- [6] "Nepokoje? Vítání hokejistů? Ne, to jen otevřeli Palladium". *Mladá fronta DNES* (in Czech). 26 October 2007. Retrieved 19 November 2013.
- [7] "Hasiči evakuovali pražské Palladium kvůli požáru vzduchotechniky". *Mladá fronta DNES* (in Czech). 29 August 2011. Retrieved 19 November 2013.
- [8] "Ježíšek bude mít na Štědrý den otevřeno ještě opoledne". *Mladá fronta DNES* (in Czech). 19 December 2008. Retrieved 5 December 2013.
- [9] "Nákupní centrum Palladium vede spor o dluh, brání se u soudu". *Mladá fronta DNES* (in Czech). 8 February 2013. Retrieved 19 November 2013.

## 6 External links

- Official website

## 7 Text and image sources, contributors, and licenses

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# Municipal House



*Municipal House*



*The mosaic above the entrance of the Municipal House*

**Municipal House** (Czech: *Obecní dům*) is a civic building that houses **Smetana Hall**, a celebrate concert venue, in Prague, Czech Republic. Its address is Náměstí Republiky 5, next to the **Powder Gate** in the center of the city.

## 1 History

The Royal Court palace used to be located on the site of the Municipal House. From 1383 until 1485 the King of Bohemia lived in the property. After 1485, it was abandoned.<sup>[1]</sup> It was demolished in the early 20th century. Construction of the current building started in 1905.<sup>[1]</sup> It opened in 1912. The building was designed by Osvald Polívka and Antonín Balšánek.<sup>[1]</sup>

The Municipal House was the location of the Czechoslovak declaration of independence.<sup>[1]</sup>



*Smetana Hall in Municipal House*

## 2 Architecture and art

The building is of the Art Nouveau architecture style. The building exterior has allegorical art and stucco. There is a mosaic called *Homage to Prague* by Karel Špillar



*Gallery of the Smetana Hall*



*Interior from the café of the Municipal House*



*A jugend sculpture at the right side of the stage of the Smetana Hall*

over the entrance.<sup>[1]</sup> On either side are allegorical sculpture groups representing *The Degradation of the People* and *The Resurrection of the People* by Ladislav Šaloun. Smetana Hall serves as a concert hall and ballroom. It has a glass dome.<sup>[1]</sup> There is artwork by Alfons Mucha,<sup>[1]</sup> Jan Preisler and Max Švabinský, too.

### 3 Today

Today, the building is used as concert hall, ballroom, civic building, and as the location of cafes and restaur-

rants. Many of the rooms in the building are closed to the public and open only for guided tours.<sup>[1]</sup>

### 4 Footnotes

- [1] Turp, Craig (2012). *DK Eyewitness Travel Guide: Prague*. London: DK Travel. ISBN 0756683998.

### 5 Sources

- Peter Cannon-Brookes *Czech Sculpture, 1800–1938*
- (English) [Official website](#)

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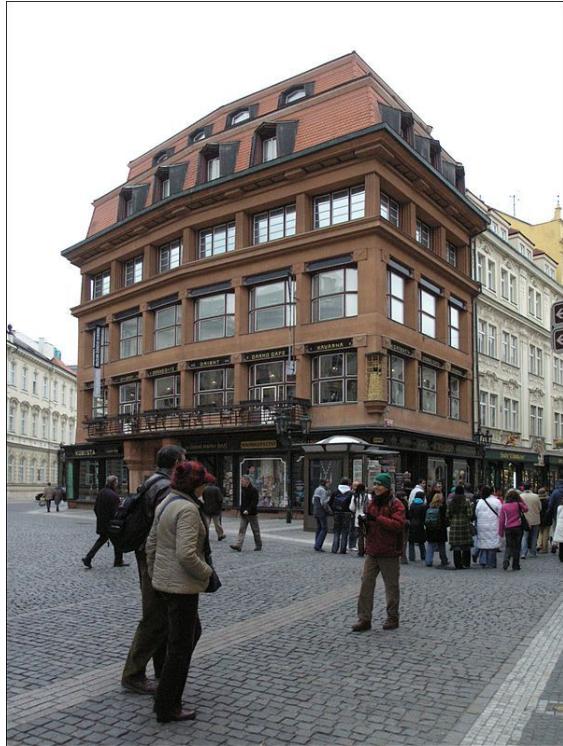
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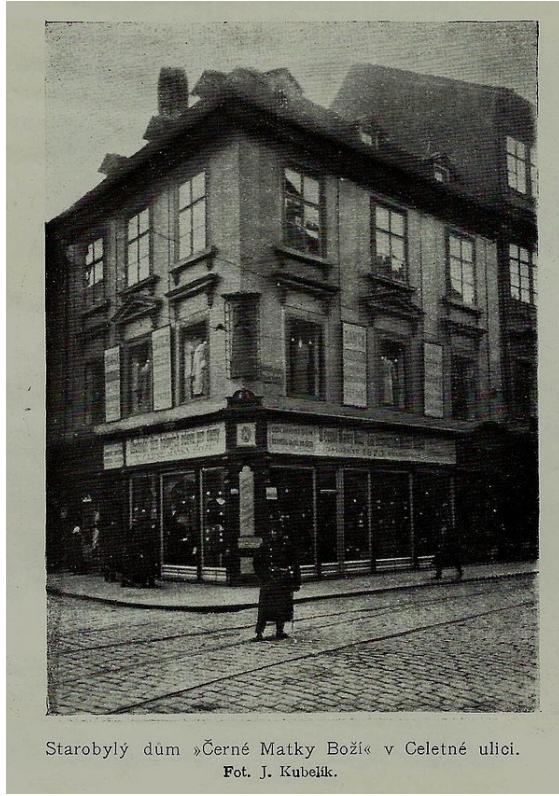
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# House of the Black Madonna



*House of the Black Madonna*



Starobylý dům »Černé Matky Boží« v Celetné ulici.  
Fot. J. Kubelík.



*The Grand Café Orient restaurant on the first floor*

The **House of the Black Madonna** is a **cubist** building in the "Old Town" area of Prague, Czech Republic. It was designed by **Josef Gočár**. It is currently in use as the **Czech Museum of Cubism** and includes the **Grand Café Orient** restaurant on the first floor.<sup>[1]</sup>

The House of the Black Mother (U Černé Matky Boží), sometimes referred to as **Black Mother of the Lord**,

*Barrock building (belonging to Knights of Granov) demolished in 1911*

was designed and built between 1911 and 1912 on the corner of Celetná Street and Ovocný trh. Josef Gočár built the house as the first example of cubist architecture in Prague, and it remains probably the most celebrated. Even without historical details of the **baroque** building surrounding it, the House at the Black Madonna maintains the atmosphere of the neighborhood. The house was given its name by the **stone sculpture** that originally adorned one of the two Baroque buildings on the same lot. After many years altered use in the interwar period and under communist rule, the house was closed in January 2002 and re-opened after extensive restoration in November 2003.

## 1 History

Gočár designed the house in mid-1911 at the age of 31 for the wholesale merchant František Josef Herbst. Herbst chose Gočár to build his **department store** in the Old



*Figure of the Black Madonna*

Town along the old coronation route because of the architect's earlier success with a similar shop in Jaroměř, built in 1909-1911. Because of its prominent location in the heart of the city, Gočár's building was subject to strict harmonization rules requiring that the department store not conflict with its historical setting. The building thus uses the language of baroque architecture in a Cubist form, thus exemplifying the 'contextualization' of Cubist architecture.

Gočár's first plans were not well received by the historical buildings authority in Bohemia. Subsequent designs incorporated more Cubist features into the building. The Prague City Council eventually approved the plans on August 4, 1911. Gočár's early modernist orientation (as can be seen in the original plans for the building), gave way to new Cubist designs in the finished building. The angular bay windows, iconic capitals between windows, and cubist balcony railing took their place in the designs.

Like many of Gočár's houses, the House at the Black Madonna was built with a reinforced-concrete skeleton inspired by the Chicago School (architecture). Cubist interiors have proven a challenge to architects. The use of a reinforced-concrete skeleton allowed for large interior spaces without ceiling support that were better suited to Cubist aesthetics. The Grand Café Orient, which encompassed the entire first floor without supporting pillars, was a revolutionary feat of engineering.

In some literature, Gočár is described as 'decorativist' because he was primarily concerned with creating a Cubist façade instead of a Cubist building. It is thus ironic that

his design for the Grand Café Orient is the only surviving Cubist interior in the world. As for the façade, multiple changes in design and the requirements of harmonization forced certain compromises in the Cubist elements. The façade breaks with Cubist and modern traditions on the third storey, and incorporates 'foreign' elements in order to reconcile the building with its surroundings. For example, the roof resembles baroque double roofs, and the third storey also features flat windows and pilasters with Classical fluting between them.

The House at the Black Madonna was originally designed to house a department store. Herbst's store occupied the ground and second floor of the building. Grand Café Orient was established on the first floor. Above that were apartments. Minor changes were made to this arrangement in 1914. In the mid-1920s the café and store on the second floor were converted into bank offices. Further alterations to the architectural integrity were made in 1941, when functionalist architect V. Kubík refashioned the wooden frames on the ground floor windows with steel. During the communist period, the building was subdivided internally into more office space and then designated the state exhibition agency.

In 1994, the building was made a center for Czech art and culture. After heavy renovation works between 2002 and 2003, the building was made home to the Museum of Czech Cubism. The fourth and fifth floors are dedicated to a permanent exhibition of Cubist art curated by the Czech Museum of Fine Arts. The exhibition focuses on Czech artists in the period from 1911 to 1919, when Cubism was in its heyday in both the visual arts and in architecture. In March 2005, the Grand Café Orient was re-opened after extensive renovation works. Although only a few original plans had survived, black-and-white photographs documenting the café's interior décor and atmosphere from 1912 were used during renovation. Replicas of café furniture and brass chandeliers were constructed to revive the café and showcase the many forms of Cubism present in the Czech republic.

## 2 References

- [1] [Grand Café Orient] October 2012 Afar magazine page 117

## 3 External links

- Cubist House of the Black Madonna re-opens in Prague - Czech Radio
- House at the Black Madonna - Museum of Czech Cubism
- House at the Black Madonna at [www.prague-museums.com](http://www.prague-museums.com)

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# Church of Our Lady before Týn

The **Church of Mother of God before Týn** (in Czech *Kostel Matky Boží před Týnem*, also *Týnský chrám* (*Týn Church*) or just *Týn*), often translated as **Church of Our Lady before Týn**, is a dominant feature of the Old Town of Prague, Czech Republic, and has been the main church of this part of the city since the 14th century. The church's towers are 80 m high and topped by four small spires.



Church from east, in a print of the 19th century

## 1 History

In the 11th century, this area was occupied by a Romanesque church, which was built there for foreign merchants coming to the nearby Týn Courtyard.<sup>[1]</sup> Later it was replaced by an early Gothic Church of Our Lady before Týn in 1256. Construction of the present church began in the 14th century in the late Gothic style under the influence of Matthias of Arras and later Peter Parler. By the beginning of the 15th century, construction was almost complete; only the towers, the gable and roof were missing. The church was controlled by Hussites for

two centuries, including John of Rokycan, future archbishop of Prague, who became the church's vicar in 1427. The roof was completed in the 1450s, while the gable and northern tower were completed shortly thereafter during the reign of George of Poděbrady (1453–1471). His sculpture was placed on the gable, below a huge golden chalice, the symbol of the Hussites. The southern tower was not completed until 1511, under architect Matěj Rejsek.



Interior of the church

After the lost Battle of White Mountain (1620) began the era of harsh recatholicisation (part of the Counter-Reformation). Consequently, the sculptures of “heretic king” George of Poděbrady and the chalice were removed in 1626 and replaced by a sculpture of the Virgin Mary, with a giant halo made from melting down the chalice. In 1679 the church was struck by lightning, and the subsequent fire heavily damaged the old vault, which was later replaced by a lower baroque vault.

Renovation works carried out in 1876–1895 were later reversed during extensive exterior renovation works in the years 1973–1995. Interior renovation is still in progress.

## 2 Design

The northern portal is a wonderful example of Gothic sculpture from the Parler workshop, with a relief depicting the Crucifixion. The main entrance is located on the church's western face, through a narrow passage between the houses in front of the church.

The early baroque altarpiece has paintings by Karel Skréta from around 1649. The oldest pipe organ in



*Tycho Brahe's grave, new tomb stone from 1901*

Prague stands inside this church. The organ was built in 1673 by Heinrich Mundt and is one of the most representative 17th-century organs in Europe.

### 3 References

- [1] Římskokatolická farnost u kostela Matky Boží před Týnem – Historie (Czech)

### 4 External links

- Information on Prague Information Service website

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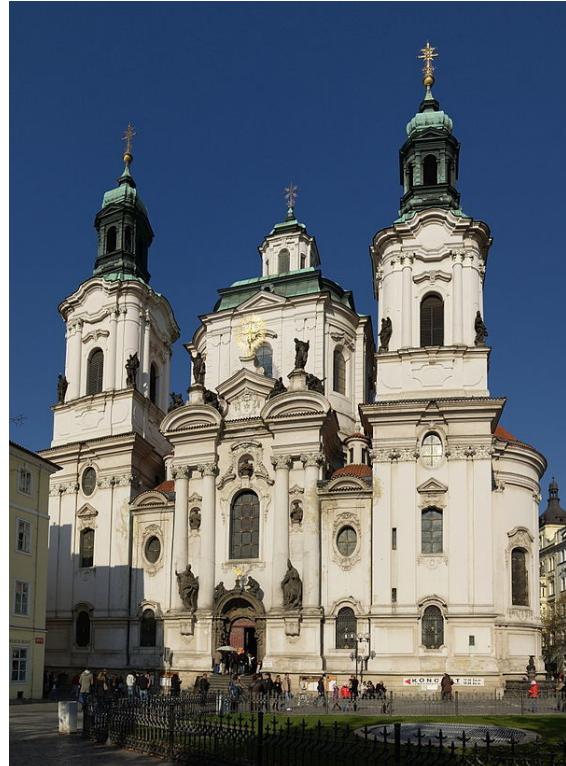
# Old Town Square

Not to be confused with town square (disambiguation).

**Old Town Square** (Czech:  Staroměstské náměstí



*The Old Town Hall and the Church of Our Lady before Týn*



*The Church of St Nicholas*

## 1 Buildings

The square features various architectural styles including the **Gothic Church of Our Lady before Týn**, which has been the main church of this part of the city since the 14th century; the church's towers are 80 m high. **Prague Orloj** is a medieval astronomical clock located on the **Old Town Hall**. The clock was first installed in 1410, making it the third-oldest astronomical clock in the world and the oldest one still in operation.

The Baroque **St. Nicholas Church** is another church located in the square, while the tower of the Old Town Hall offers a panoramic view of Old Town. An art museum of the Czech National Gallery is located in Kinský Palace.



*Jan Hus Memorial*

) is a historic square in the **Old Town** quarter of **Prague**, the capital of the **Czech Republic**. It is located between **Wenceslas Square** and the **Charles Bridge**.

## 2 Statues and memorials

The square's center is home to a statue of religious reformer Jan Hus, who for his beliefs was burned at the stake in Constance, this led to the **Hussite Wars**. The

statue known as the **Jan Hus Memorial** was erected on July 6, 1915 to mark the 500th anniversary of his death.

In front of the **Old Town Hall** is also a memorial to martyrs (including Jan Jesenius and **Maxmilián Hošťálek**) beheaded on that spot during the **Old Town Square execution** by Habsburgs, after the **Battle of White Mountain**. Twenty-seven crosses mark the pavement in their honour. The crosses were installed during the repairs of Old Town Hall after the **WW2**,<sup>[1]</sup> while a nearby plaque which lists the names of all 27 victims dates from 1911.<sup>[2]</sup>

On November 3, 1918, a **Marian Column** that had been erected in the square shortly after the **Thirty Years' War** was demolished in celebration of independence from the Habsburg empire.<sup>[3]</sup>



Town Square

### 3 Markets



Prague Christmas Markets

At **Christmas** and **Easter**, markets are held on the square; they resemble medieval markets.

The Christmas Markets on the Old Town Square are the largest Christmas markets in the Czech Republic and are visited by hundreds of thousands of visitors from the Czech Republic and abroad. A tall decorated tree and a musical stage are set up. The markets are mostly visited by Germans, Russians, Italians and British.<sup>[4][5]</sup>

### 4 See also

- Old Town Square execution

### 5 References

[1]

[2] Derek Sayer, “The Language of Nationality and the Nationality of Language: Prague 1780-1920”, *Past & Present*, No. 153 (Nov., 1996), pp. 164-210

[3] Cynthia Paces, “The Fall and Rise of Prague’s Marian Column,” *Radical History Review* 79 (2001) 141-155

[4] Prague Experience, *Prague Christmas Markets*

[5] iDNES.cz - Vánoční trhy na Staroměstském náměstí končí, strom využijí v zoo

### 6 External links

[Old Town Square Live Webcam](#)

Coordinates: 50°05'15"N 14°25'17"E / 50.0875°N 14.4214°E

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# Orologio astronomico di Praga



Il municipio con l'orologio astronomico  
50°05'13.23"N 14°25'15.3"E / 50.087008°N 14.420917°E

**L'Orologio Astronomico di Praga**, in ceco **Staroměstský Orloj** (*Orologio della città vecchia*), è un orologio astronomico medioevale situato nella città di Praga, capitale della Repubblica Ceca. L'orologio è montato sul lato sud del **municipio** della Città Vecchia, nella Piazza della Città Vecchia ed è una delle più importanti attrazioni turistiche della città.

Il meccanismo è composto da tre elementi principali: il quadrante astronomico, sul quale, oltre all'ora, sono rappresentate le posizioni in cielo del Sole e della Luna, insieme ad altre informazioni astronomiche; il “Corteo degli Apostoli”, un meccanismo che, allo scoccare di ogni ora, mette in movimento delle figure rappresentanti i 12 Apostoli; e un quadrante inferiore composto da 12 medaglioni raffiguranti i mesi dell'anno.

## 1 Storia

L'elemento più antico dell'orologio è il meccanismo del quadrante astronomico, costruito nel 1410 dal maestro d'orologeria Mikuláš z Kadaň e da Jan Šindel,



Orologio, calendario, e figure animate

quest'ultimo professore di matematica ed astronomia dell'Università Carlo di Praga. L'Orologio di Praga è stato uno dei primi orologi astronomici progettati e costruiti durante il XIV e il XV secolo. Altri ne furono costruiti nelle città di Norwich, St Albans, Wells, Lund, Strasburgo e Padova.

Successivamente, intorno al 1490, vennero aggiunti il quadrante del calendario e le sculture gotiche che decorano la facciata. Nel 1552 il meccanismo fu riparato da Jan Taborský, il quale scrisse un rapporto nel quale menzionava il mastro orologiaio Hanuš z Růže come realizzatore dell'orologio, cosa poi rivelatasi falsa da studi seguenti.

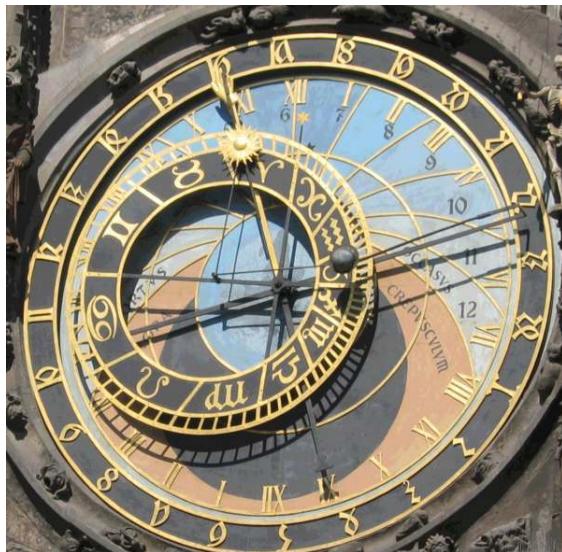
L'Orloj si fermò varie volte dopo il 1552 e furono necessarie parecchie riparazioni. Nel XVII secolo vennero aggiunte le statue mobili. Le figure in legno degli Apostoli, invece, furono installate durante la riparazione del 1865-1866.

Tra il 7 e l'8 maggio 1945 l'orologio venne seriamente danneggiato a causa delle bombe incendiarie dirette verso il lato sud-est della Piazza Vecchia sparate dagli autoblindo tedeschi che tentavano, in questo modo, di interrompere le trasmissioni radio della resistenza ceca. Il munici-

pio prese fuoco, e con esso le sculture lignee dell'orologio. Il meccanismo venne riparato grazie allo sforzo della popolazione locale, e l'Orloj tornò a funzionare nel 1948.

Esiste una leggenda relativa alla costruzione dell'Orloj. Come già accennato, si pensava che l'orologio fosse stato costruito nel 1490 da Hanuš z Růže e dal suo assistente Jakub Čech. Secondo la leggenda Hanuš sarebbe stato accecato per ordine dei consiglieri della città di Praga per impedirgli di costruirne un altro simile. Per vendicarsi dell'accecamento, mastro Hanus fermò l'orologio e lo riattivò soltanto quando il consiglio della città lo supplicò di farlo, e come ricompensa gli permise di continuare il mestiere di orologiaio. Nonostante l'accecamento mastro Hanus continuò a lavorare anche grazie all'aiuto di Jakub Čech e di mastro Mikulas, suo allievo.

## 2 Quadrante astronomico



*Dettaglio Orloj*

Il quadrante astronomico è a forma di **astrolabio**, uno strumento medioevale per la determinazione delle posizioni delle stelle. Sullo sfondo del quadrante è rappresentata la Terra fissa nel cielo attorno alla quale si muovono quattro meccanismi: un anello zodiacale, un anello esterno rotante, una lancetta con il simbolo del Sole e una con il simbolo della Luna.

### 2.1 Sfondo del quadrante

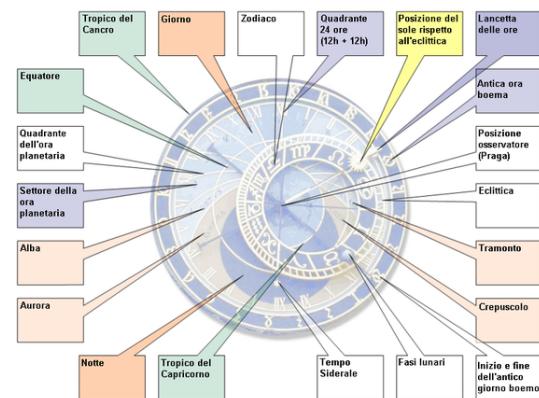
Lo sfondo rappresenta la Terra e l'aspetto del cielo locale. Il cerchio azzurro al centro simboleggia appunto la Terra, la zona superiore colorata di blu è la porzione di cielo situata sopra l'orizzonte. Le zone rosse e nera, viceversa, rappresentano il cielo sotto l'orizzonte. Durante l'arco delle ventiquattr'ore il meccanismo sposta il simbolo del

Sole nella zona blu (giorno), nella zona nera (notte) o in quelle rosse (fasi di alba e tramonto).

Nella parte sinistra dello sfondo si possono leggere le scritte latine *aurora* (aurora) e *ortus* (alba), in quella destra *occasus* (tramonto) e *crepusculum* (crepuscolo)

I numeri romani dorati posti sul bordo del quadrante indicano la normale ora locale di Praga (Tempo Centrale Europeo). Le linee curve dorate, invece, dividono la zona blu del quadrante in dodici parti (numerate da 1 a 12 con cifre arabe) e segnano le ore intese come 1/12 del tempo che intercorre tra l'alba ed il tramonto di ogni giorno, chiamate anche "ore planetarie". La lunghezza delle ore così calcolate varia a seconda delle stagioni, con l'allungarsi o l'accorciarsi delle giornate nel corso dell'anno.

### 2.2 Anello zodiacale



*Schema Orloj*

All'interno del quadrante vi è un anello mobile recante i 12 simboli dello **zodiaco** (disposti in ordine antiorario), che indica anche la posizione del sole sull'eclittica. Nella foto qui riportata il Sole si trova in **Ariete**, per spostarsi poi nel **Toro**.

La disposizione dei simboli sull'anello zodiacale è derivata dall'uso di una **proiezione stereografica** del piano dell'eclittica usando il polo nord come base della proiezione stessa; come comunemente fatto per gli orologi astronomici di questo periodo.

La piccola stella dorata indica la posizione dell'**equinozio di primavera** ed il **tempo siderale** può essere letto sulla scala contrassegnata dai numeri romani dorati.

### 2.3 Antica ora boema

La serie di numeri arabi su sfondo scuro presenti sul bordo esterno dell'orologio indicano l'Antica ora boema, misurata partendo dal tramonto. L'anello si muove nell'arco dell'anno per far coincidere la prima ora della giornata con il momento del tramonto.

## 2.4 Sole

Il simbolo del Sole si muove attorno all'anello zodiacale, in modo da indicare la posizione del sole rispetto all'eclittica. È fissato ad una lancetta che termina con una piccola mano, in modo da segnare l'ora in 3 diversi modi:

1. La posizione della mano rispetto ai numeri romani indica l'ora locale di Praga;
2. La posizione del sole rispetto ai settori delimitati dalle linee curve indica l'ora intesa come 1/12 di tempo tra l'alba ed il tramonto (ora planetaria);
3. La posizione della mano rispetto all'anello esterno segna l'antica ora Boema.



## 2.5 Luna

Il movimento della Luna sull'eclittica è simile a quello del Sole, sebbene molto più veloce. Una sfera metà argentata e metà scura indica le varie fasi lunari.

## 3 Figure animate

Le quattro figure che fiancheggiano l'orologio si animano allo scoccare di ogni ora. Ognuna di esse rappresenta i vizi capitali: lo scheletro simboleggia la morte, il turco la lussuria, il personaggio con lo specchio impersona la vanità e il viandante con la borsa (in origine un usufruo ebreo, sostituito dopo la seconda guerra mondiale) rappresenta l'avarizia. Allo scoccare dell'ora lo scheletro suona una campana tirando la fune con la mano destra e capovolge la clessidra che ha nella sinistra, mentre il turco, l'avarco e il lussurioso fanno no con la testa; a questo punto esce il corteo con i dodici apostoli (11 apostoli più San Paolo) che, a coppie di due a due, si inchinano alla folla. Le finestre che fanno uscire le statue si aprono contemporaneamente. La prima figura ad uscire dalla finestra sulla destra è San Paolo (con in mano un libro e

una spada), seguito da Tommaso (con una lancia), Giuda che porta un libro, Simone con una sega e Bartolomeo con un libro. Mentre nella seconda finestra, escono Pietro (recante una chiave), Matteo con un'ascia, Giovanni con un serpente, Andrea e Filippo con una croce e Giacomo con una mazza, alla fine dello spettacolo il gallo, sopra le finestre dell'orologio canta l'ora suonata.

## 4 Calendario

Il **calendario** posto al di sotto dell'orologio astronomico è stato aggiunto nel 1870 ed è una copia del dipinto del pittore boemo **Josef Manes**. È formato da dodici medaglioni raffiguranti scene di vita rurale associate ai dodici mesi dell'anno, i personaggi ai lati del calendario raffigurano le principali materie dell'epoca: il primo sapiente in fondo a destra che legge il libro simboleggia la **filosofia**, il secondo sapiente che reca in mano un cannocchiale simboleggia la **astronomia**. Mentre a sinistra, la prima figura raffigura un angelo con la spada e scudo, simboleggia la **teologia**, l'ultimo studioso in fondo a sinistra che esamina la pergamena simboleggia la **matematica o la storia**. <sup>[1]</sup>.

## 5 Note

[1] [http://www.orloj.eu/en/orloj\\_drevne\\_socchy.htm](http://www.orloj.eu/en/orloj_drevne_socchy.htm)

## 6 Altri progetti

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# Chiesa di San Nicola (Città Vecchia di Praga)

Coordinate: 50°05'16.26"N 14°25'11.75"E /  
50.08785°N 14.41993°E

La chiesa di San Nicola è situata a Praga, nella Città Vecchia. Essa si può confondere con l'omonima situata nel Piccolo Quartiere, la maggiore della città dopo la cattedrale di San Vito.

Fin dal XII secolo in questo luogo sorgeva un tempio che aveva il ruolo di chiesa parrocchiale della Città Vecchia fino al XIV secolo, allorché fu portata al termine la chiesa di Santa Maria di Týn.<sup>[1]</sup> Dopo la battaglia della Montagna Bianca nel 1620, essa divenne parte di un monastero benedettino. L'edificio attuale, di Kilian Ignaz Dientzenhofer, fu terminato nel 1735. La chiesa fu spogliata nel 1781, quando Giuseppe II fece chiudere tutti i monasteri che non svolgevano attività socialmente utili.<sup>[2]</sup>

Durante la prima guerra mondiale la chiesa di San Nicola fu usata come guarnigione di stanza a Praga, ma il colonnello che la comandava approfittò dell'occasione per restaurarla. La cupola è affrescata con le vite di San Nicola e San Benedetto, opera di Kosmas Damian Asam.<sup>[2]</sup>

## 1 Storia

### 1.1 Costruzione

La chiesa di San Nicola è una delle più antiche della Città Vecchia di Praga, si trova infatti citata nei documenti storici già a partire dal 1273.<sup>[3]</sup> Nell'originaria chiesa parrocchiale, che si distingueva per una tradizione di grandi predicatori, esercitarono il loro ufficio Jan Milíč da Kroměříž, Matěj da Janov ed altri esponenti dell'hussitismo e della riforma.<sup>[3]</sup>

La facciata della chiesa era originariamente rivolta verso la piccola piazza chiamata "mercato dei polli" ed era circondata da edifici, demoliti col passare del tempo, quindi la sua attuale collocazione nella piazza della Città Vecchia (in ceco Staroměstské náměstí) influenza negativamente l'effetto visivo finale, dato che la struttura non era stata progettata per una visione a lunga distanza.<sup>[3]</sup>

Kilián Ignác Dienzenhofer, dovendo reagire allo spazio ristretto che aveva a disposizione, concepì la chiesa come il corpo centrale allungato di una pianta a croce, sormontato da una cupola poggiante su un tamburo ottagonale. La Chiesa di San Nicola è una delle sue migliori realizzazioni e lo spazio interno dell'edificio, creato in modo complesso con uno strano gioco di luci e una pittoresca

plasticità, rappresenta uno dei più suggestivi interni sacri praghesi.<sup>[3]</sup>

### 1.2 Secoli XVII e XVIII



La cupola affrescata della Chiesa di San Nicola vista dall'interno.

Nel 1635 la chiesa passò ai benedettini del convento di Emmaus, chiamato *Na Slovaneč*, i quali vi edificarono gradualmente il loro centro religioso. Dopo la costruzione del convento venne iniziata la costruzione della nuova chiesa, realizzata in forme rudimentali dal 1727 al 1735, consacrata nel 1737 e portata al termine nel 1739, seguendo il progetto elaborato da Kilián Ignác Dienzenhofer, il più famoso architetto del barocco praghese.<sup>[3]</sup>

La decorazione a stucco è opera di Bernardo Spinetti. Negli anni 1735 e 1736 il famoso pittore e decoratore bavarese Cosmas Damian Asam eseguì gli affreschi della cupola del coro, aventi come tema la celebrazione di San Nicola, ossia l'apotesi del santo come pilastro della chiesa, i popoli di tutto il mondo lo venerano, la Vergine Maria che lo accoglie in cielo e il suo miracolo sul mare, e di San Benedetto, nonché i motivi tratti dal Vecchio Testamento (Mosè disseta le genti del deserto, Giuseppe e la moglie di Putifarre e Davide che suona l'arpa).<sup>[4]</sup>

Sopra la balconata, inseriti in cornici di stucco dorate, ci sono gli affreschi che raffigurano i quattro Evangelisti, in parte ridipinti su pitture precedenti e in parte creati ex novo. La decorazione scultorea esterna, risalente allo stesso periodo, proviene dall'officina praghese di Antonín Braun.<sup>[4]</sup> Nella navata della chiesa, poste su basamenti collocati in nicchie semicircolari, si trovano otto statue di santi e sante (Sant'Elena e San Benedetto sulla parete

orientale, San Bernardo di Clairveaux e Santa Teresa sulla parete meridionale, Santa Margherita e un'altra santa sconosciuta sulla parete occidentale e una figura di un pontefice e una santa con un libro sulla parte settentrionale). Nelle nicchie al pianterreno si trovano due statue di gesso recenti che raffigurano San Giorgio e San Michele.<sup>[4]</sup>

Del ricco arredamento originario della chiesa non rimane quasi nulla. L'altare maggiore, risalente al 1737, è di marmo artificiale con colonne dai capitelli dorati, il quadro raffigurante Santa Maria, del 1917, è stato sostituito con un dipinto di Gesù Cristo.<sup>[4]</sup> Il pulpito in legno marmorizzato, risalente alla prima metà del XVIII secolo, è molto semplice e la sua decorazione costituita solo da un grappolo d'uva dorato, dai bassorilievi dorati dei quattro Evangelisti e dalle statuette lignee di santi poste sulla piccola tettoia piana.<sup>[4]</sup>

Degni di nota sono i banchi risalenti al periodo tra il 1730 e il 1735, che si inseriscono bene nello stile complessivo dell'edificio. L'organo, ornato da statue di angeli e da una decorazione di drappeggi intagliati, è stato creato nel secondo trentennio del XVIII secolo.<sup>[4]</sup>

### 1.3 Secoli XIX e XX



*Il monumento a Jan Hus, patriarca dell'hussitismo, in primo piano, e in secondo piano la Chiesa di San Nicola.*

Nel 1787, nell'ambito delle riforme dell'imperatore Giuseppe II, la chiesa venne soppressa e il suo prezioso arredamento venne venduto e asportato. La chiesa stessa fu acquistata dal Municipio di Praga, che in tal modo la salvò *de facto* dalla rovina. L'edificio venne usato per un breve periodo come granaio e più tardi vi ebbe sede l'archivio dell'Ufficio del registro.<sup>[5]</sup>

Nel 1865, dopo essere stata ristrutturata come sala da concerti, la chiesa venne usata temporaneamente per scopi culturali. Fu restituita a scopi religiosi quando venne data in affitto alla Chiesa ortodossa russa nel 1871. A questo periodo risale, tra le altre cose, il lampadario di cristallo prodotto nelle vetrerie di Harrachov, nella Boemia settentrionale.<sup>[5]</sup>

L'edificio del convento venne demolito nel 1898 e al suo posto venne costruita, tra gli anni 1901 e 1902, una casa privata in stile neobarocco. Nel 1916 la chiesa venne adibita a cappella militare e fu oggetto di un sostanziale restauro, mentre l'interno veniva arricchito con una serie di statue, dipinti e accessori di artigianato artistico in stile neobarocco. A partire dal 1920 la chiesa serve come luogo di culto per la Chiesa hussita cecoslovacca, che è stata proclamata in questo luogo l'11 gennaio 1920.<sup>[5]</sup>

Per la maggior parte dell'anno nella Chiesa di San Nicola si tengono quasi tutti i giorni concerti di musica rinascimentale, barocca e classica. Le funzioni religiose con l'Eucarestia vengono officiate ogni domenica alle 10:30.<sup>[1][5]</sup>

## 2 Architettura

La Chiesa di San Nicola è costruita in stile barocco, imbiancata all'esterno di bianco e riccamente affrescata all'intero con molte statue e decorazioni in marmo. La cupola in bronzo, che, se vista dall'interno, è affrescata, e le due torri costituiscono i punti più alti della chiesa.

Parte integrante della decorazione della chiesa sono i quattro affreschi con le cornici in stucco dorato. Gli Evangelisti illustrano, ciascuno a modo proprio, la biografia di Gesù di Nazareth. Essi sono raffigurati con i rispettivi attributi: Matteo (l'angelo), Marco (il leone), Luca (il toro) e Giovanni (l'aquila).<sup>[6]</sup>



*Veduta della Chiesa di San Nicola e degli edifici circostanti nella Piazza della Città Vecchia.*

Il lampadario della chiesa, a forma di corona dello zar e del peso di 1400 chilogrammi, è stato fabbricato nelle vetrerie di Harrachov nel 1880. È costituito da una struttura circolare in ferro con un diametro di quattro metri, composta da otto segmenti doppi, ed è completato da parti in cristallo molato. Al centro è appesa una croce di cristallo. Si tratta di un regalo fatto dallo zar Nicola II di Russia alla chiesa nel periodo in cui teneva le sue funzioni la Chiesa ortodossa russa.<sup>[5]</sup>

## 3 Organo

L'organo della chiesa risale al secondo trentennio del XVIII secolo ed originariamente si trovava nella chiesa

gesuitica di Bohosudov. La parte anteriore dell'organo, tripartita, lignea e in stile barocco, è verniciata di nero e decorata da un vaso, un motivo floreale, dei baldacchini, delle conchiglie, due figure di angeli assisi e due figure di angeli eretti con le trombe. Nel 1949 il meccanismo originale dell'organo è stato sostituito con uno nuovo.<sup>[4]</sup>

## 4 Note

[1] Soukop, pagina 70.

[2] Soukop, pagina 71.

[3] Zane, pagina 4.

[4] Zane, pagina 6.

[5] Zane, pagina 12.

[6] Zane, pagina 8.

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- Barbara Zane, *La Chiesa di San Nicola*. Nakladatelství v Ráji, Praga, 1998. ISBN 80-85894-57-2
- (CS) Dobroslav Líbal; Jan Muk, *Staré město pražské - architektonický a urbanistický vývoj*. Praga, 1996.
- (CS) Emanuel Poche, *Prahou krok za krokem*. Praga, 1958.

## 6 Voci correlate

- Città Vecchia (Praga)
- Praga
- Chiesa di San Nicola (Piccolo Quartiere di Praga)

## 7 Altri progetti

-  **Wikimedia Commons** contiene immagini o altri file su [chiesa di San Nicola](#)

## 8 Collegamenti esterni

- (CS) [Informazioni sulla Chiesa di San Nicola](#), tipynavylet.cz.

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### 9.1 Testo

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# Wenceslas Square



Václavské náměstí - Wenceslas Square, Prague, January 2014



Wenceslas Monument and National Museum, at night



Wenceslas Square, viewed from the southeast end



Stallion Ardo, the work of Myslbek exhibited in Košice, Slovakia – a model for the Wenceslas Monument



The upper part of Wenceslas Square at night

**Wenceslas Square** (Czech: **Wáclavské náměstí** ['va:tslavskɛ: 'na:mjesci:], colloquially **Václavák** ['va:fslava:k]) is one of the main **city squares** and the centre of the business and cultural communities in the **New Town** of Prague, Czech Republic. Many historical events occurred there, and it is a traditional



Hotel Evropa



A memorial to [Jan Palach](#) and [Jan Zajíč](#) at the top of the square

setting for [demonstrations](#), [celebrations](#), and other public gatherings. The square is named after Saint Wenceslas, the [patron saint](#) of Bohemia. It is part of the historic centre of Prague, a World Heritage Site.<sup>[1]</sup>

Formerly known as Kořský trh (*Horse Market*), for its periodic accommodation of horse markets during the Middle Ages, it was renamed Svatováclavské náměstí (English: *Saint Wenceslas square*) in 1848 on the proposal of Karel Havlíček Borovský.

## 1 Features

Less a [square](#) than a [boulevard](#), Wenceslas Square has the shape of a very long (750 m, total area 45,000 m<sup>2</sup>) rectangle, in a northwest–southeast direction. The street slopes upward to the southeast side. At that end, the street is dominated by the grand neoclassical Czech National Museum. The northwest end runs up against the border between the New Town and the [Old Town](#).

## 2 History

In 1348, Bohemian King Charles IV founded the New Town of Prague. The plan included several open areas for markets, of which the second largest was the *Kořský trh*, or Horse Market (the largest was the [Charles Square](#)<sup>[2]</sup>). At the southeastern end of the market was the Horse Gate, one of the gates in the walls of the New Town.

During the Czech [national revival](#) movement in the 19th century, a more noble name for the street was requested. At this time the statue was built, and the square was renamed.

On 28 October 1918, Alois Jirásek read the proclamation of independence of [Czechoslovakia](#) in front of the Saint Wenceslas statue.

The [Nazis](#) used the street for mass demonstrations. During the [Prague Uprising](#) in 1945, a few buildings near the National Museum were destroyed. They were later replaced by department stores.

On 16 January 1969, student [Jan Palach](#) set himself

on fire in Wenceslas Square to protest the invasion of [Czechoslovakia](#) by the [Soviet Union](#) in 1968.

On 28 March 1969, the Czechoslovakian national ice hockey team defeated the [USSR](#) team for the second time in that year's [Ice Hockey World Championships](#). As the country was still under Soviet occupation, the victory induced great celebrations. Perhaps 150,000 people gathered on Wenceslas Square, and skirmishes with police developed. A group of [agents provocateurs](#) provoked an attack on the Prague office of the Soviet airline [Aeroflot](#), located on the street. The vandalism served as a pretext for reprisals and the period of so-called [normalization](#).

In 1989, during the [Velvet Revolution](#), large demonstrations (with hundreds of thousands of people or more) were held here.

Wenceslas Square is lined by hotels, offices, retail stores, currency exchange booths and [fast-food](#) joints. To the dismay of locals and city officials, the street is also a popular location for prostitutes to ply their trade late at night. Many [strip clubs](#) exist on and around Wenceslas Square, making Prague a popular location for stag parties.

## 3 Art and architecture

See also: [Statue of Saint Wenceslas](#), [Wenceslas Square](#)

The two obvious landmarks of Wenceslas Square are at the southeast, uphill end: the 1885–1891 [National Museum Building](#), designed by Czech architect Josef Schulz, and the statue of [Wenceslas](#).

Other significant buildings on the square include:

- Antonín Pfeiffer and Matěj Blecha's [Palác Koruna](#) office building and shopping center, #1–2, 1912–1914, with architectural sculpture by Vojtěch Sucharda
- Ludvík Kysela's [Lindt Building](#), No. 4, an early work of architectural constructivism
- the [BAŤA](#) shoe store, No. 6, 1929
- Matěj Blecha and Emil Králíček's [Adam Pharmacy](#), No. 8, 1911–1913
- Jan Kotěra's [Peterka Building](#), No. 12, 1899–1900
- Pavel Janák's [Hotel Juliš](#), No. 22, 1926
- Alois Dryák's [Hotel Evropa](#), #25–27, 1905 redesign, with architectural sculptor Ladislav Šaloun
- Antonín Wiehl's [Wiehl House](#), No. 34, 1896
- the [Melařtrich Building](#), No. 36, 1914, where Alexander Dubček and Václav Havel appeared together on its balcony in November 1989, a major event of the [Velvet Revolution](#)

- Hotel Adria, No 26, reconstruction in 1912, in 1918 sold to František Tichý, Burian's Theatre (1925–1928)

## 4 Transport

The Prague Metro's line A runs underneath Wenceslas Square, and the Metro's two busiest stations, Muzeum (lines A and C) and Můstek (lines A and B), have entrances on the street. Tram tracks running the length of the street were removed from the street in 1980; a proposal to reintroduce trams is under consideration. Currently trams bisect the square only. Most of the street is open to automobile traffic; the northwestern end is pedestrianised.

## 5 Literary references

- A tavern in the square, *the Golden Goose*, is mentioned in Franz Kafka's *Amerika*, as the place where the Manageress previously worked.
- *Wenceslas Square* is the name of a *theatrical* play by Larry Shue, which is set in Prague.
- *Wenceslas Square* is the name of a story written by Arthur Phillips, which takes place in Czechoslovakia at the end of the Cold War. The story was published in the compendium *Wild East: Stories from the Last Frontier*, and featured in Episode 337 of the radio show *This American Life*.
- “Wenceslas Square” featured in Marc Adnitt’s short film “You Want Christmas?” in December 2008.

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# Ss. Cyril and Methodius Cathedral

For a Catholic church in Prague, see [Church of Saints Cyril and Methodius \(Karlín\)](#).

The **Ss. Cyril and Methodius Cathedral** in the New Town of Prague, Czech Republic, is the principal church in the Orthodox Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia.

The existing structure had its origins as a Roman Catholic church built between 1730 and 1736 by Kilian Ignaz Dientzenhofer, dedicated to [Charles Borromeo](#), archbishop and cardinal of Milan in the 16th century.

In 1942, during [World War II](#), the cathedral was the scene of the last stand of a number of Czech and Slovak patriots who, in [Operation Anthropoid](#), had assassinated Reinhard Heydrich, the Nazi SS *Obergruppenführer* and General of Police. Karl Fischer von Treuenfeld was in command of the troops that stormed the church on 18 June 1942. After a fierce gun battle, they committed suicide to avoid capture.<sup>[1]</sup> There is a museum in the church crypt dedicated to them as national heroes.

## 1 Gallery

- Photo of Memorial outside door of the church
- Photo of Crucifix outside door of the church
- Street Identifier of Church
- Their Blood Shed for Us Lock in the rain of the gate
- Bullet-scarred window of the Church of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Prague where the attackers were cornered

## 2 Citations

[1] Evans 2008, p. 277.

## 3 Sources

- Evans, Richard J. (2008). *The Third Reich at War*. New York: Penguin. ISBN 978-0-14-311671-4.

## 4 External links

- Detailed report regarding the attack on the church and the killing of the assassins – with numerous photographs
- Orthodox Wiki: [Ss. Cyril and Methodius Cathedral \(Prague, Czech Republic\)](#)

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# St. Wenceslas Church in Zderaz, Prague

**St. Wenceslas Church at Zderaz** is a Gothic single-nave church in **Prague – New Town**. It is located at the crossroad of Resslova Street and Dittrichova Street.



*St. Wenceslas' Church at Zderaz as seen from Resslova Street*

Church at Zderaz was consecrated 26 November 1181 by the Bishop Valentine of Prague.



*St. Wenceslas' Church at Zderaz from Dittrichova Street.*

Archeological research made by archeologist Karel Guth (1883-1943) in the years 1927 – 1929, showed that it was a simple one-nave construction with a semi rounded apse on the east and a large square tower on the west. A part of this tower was later included into the Gothic reconstruction and it became a part of the western frontage of the church from 14th century. The church was surrounded by a cemetery. Three gravestones were preserved and are now placed in the City of Prague Museum.

## 1 History

### 1.1 Origins

The Zderaz settlement has ancient origin and is named after the owner, Zderaz. In 1115, the village was first mentioned with a church, which was probably dedicated to Saint Peter and Paul.

In the years 1180 to 1190, the settlement belonged to two Czech noblemen, Kojat and Všebor (Svébor), members of the aristocratic **House of Hrabischitz**, who gave their land to found a monastery of the Order of the Cross – the **Guardians of the Holy Sepulchre**. However, due to this, the villagers lost their parish church, therefore the brothers founded a new Romanesque church dedicated to St. Wenceslas. The new church took over the parish duties of the Church of St. Peter and Paul. St. Wenceslas'

### 1.2 14th century

In 1324, the monastery bought a house with a spa near the church and established a hospital in this new building. After the founding of **New Town** in 1348 by king **Charles IV**, St. Wenceslas' Church became one of the **New Town's** parish churches.

The visitation protocols of the Archdeacon of Prague Paul of Janovice from 1379-1382 state that the church had four altars. There was already a vaulted choir with a two bays of cross vault and a pentagonal ending. The sacristy was built on the south side of choir. The nave remained without a **vault**, it probably had a wooden ceiling, supported by two pillars. As stated before, the tower of the Romanesque church was included as a part of the Gothic nave.

### 1.3 The Hussite Wars

On 5 August 1420, the monastery was burned down by the Hussites and St. Wenceslas' church was given to Hussite priests, together with the parsonage. After the Hussite Wars, the church was restored. Two altars were added next to the pillars, which supported the ceiling, one was dedicated to St. Nicolas and St. Procopius, the other to St. John the Baptist. Around 1500, a Gothic arch was added as a decoration to the main altar. The arch was transferred to the parish Church of St. Adalbert in Jílové near Prague in 1760.

### 1.4 16th–17th centuries



*The Gothic vault over the nave.*

Until 1586, the church remained without a change, afterwards the emperor Rudolph II (1552-1612) donated 300 threescopes to the church. The wooden ceiling was replaced with a new Gothic vault with terracotta ribs supported by Tuscan semi columns. Due to this change, the Gothic windows had to be lowered down and their traceries had to be replaced, even the Romanesque tower was demolished. The reconstruction was led by master builder Karel Mělnický.

In 1641, a cloister was built for the newcomer community of Augustinians. Before that, in 1623, the church was given to the Augustinians by emperor Ferdinand II. Three years later, with the support of the emperor and nobility, the Augustinians started to build a monastery on the west side of the church. Around 1645, the church was

paved with white marble and green serpentine, brought from the Prague Castle, together with four marble pillars. The construction was finished a year later.

During the Swedish occupation of Prague, the church was heavily damaged. In 17th century, a new sacristy was built on the place of the old one. The most famous Czech Baroque painter Karel Škréta (1610-1674) painted 32 paintings depicting the Legend of St. Wenceslas for the cloister of the church. The monastery and the church became a gallery of Škréta's paintings for the Augustinians. There were often held funerals of important people.

### 1.5 18th–19th centuries

In the year 1785, the monastery was abolished and deconsecrated. This was due to the emperor Joseph II, who abolished many monasteries during his reign. From 1809, the building became a prison. In 1827, the church was consecrated again, however it still remained a prison until 1884, when the jail was moved to Pankrác and the complex of buildings was bought by the city.

### 1.6 Reconstruction in the 20th century



*The choir.*

Around 1904, the whole monastery was demolished and the terrain was lowered to the level of the street and rent houses were built instead of the monastery. The church was not restored and was in danger of demolition.

However, in 1904, the Association for restoration of St. Wenceslas' church ordered a plan for restoration, which was made by acknowledged Art Nouveau architects Antonín Wiehl (1846-1910) and Josef Fanta (1872-1941). The cemetery was abolished but the church was still not restored. In 1909, the city council appointed architects Eduard Sochor (1862-1947) and Ferdinand Čapka (1905-1987) with the restoration. A terrace was created around the church, the tracery was restored, nevertheless the renovation works stopped one year later. They were not finished till the church was bought by The Czechoslo-

vak Hussite Church. In 1926 the reconstruction was finally completed. The temple was consecrated again in 1929. In 1936, a columbarium was added under the choir loft.

## 2 Architecture

### 2.1 Exterior

St. Wenceslas' Church is located on a rock terrace above the level of street. The construction is made of rubble stone with remains of Romanesque walls. The building includes a polyhedral chancel, a rectangular nave, a fléche and a Baroque sacristy in the south. The main nave is 14 meters high, the smaller presbytery is 13 meters high with the ending shaped as five sides of an octagon.

The pointed windows have new simple Renaissance traceries, made from the remains of old ones. The main nave is supported by four simple columns in the south and three on the north. The oldest part of the construction are the remains of the Romanesque tower in the nord-west. There is a gallery located under the church.

### 2.2 Interior

#### 2.2.1 Vault

The chancel has two bays of cross vault and a spokewise vaulting at the ending. The ribs, which have a pear-like profile, are placed on pentagonal dosserets ending on the same level as the window cornice.

The presbytery and the main nave are separated by a pointed triumphal arc. The nave is vaulted with a late Gothic vault with terracotta ribs, supported by Renaissance Tuscan semi columns. The vault is decorated with late Baroque murals.

#### 2.2.2 Murals

The murals are tightly connected to book illumination – they capture richly draped figures in rigid groups or epic scenes. There is a symbolic depiction of the maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary on the northern wall of the presbytery. It was represented by a number of small depictions in a geometric composition. The Tree of Life with medallions depicting the miracles of Jesus is displayed on the southern wall above the entrance to the sacristy.

#### 2.2.3 Choir

The choir with wooden balustrade stands on Tuscan stone pillars with capitals. There is a painted wooden ceiling under the choir. The western wall under the choir is painted with 4 Latin inscriptions, which were added



*The presbytery.*

in the reconstruction from 19th century. There is a columbarium under the choir.

#### 2.2.4 Sedilia

The sedilia is divided into two parts and it is located on the southern wall of the presbytery.

#### 2.2.5 The sacristy

The entrance to the sacristy is in the south wall of the chancel. The pointed portal is profiled in the same way as sedilia. There are remains of original mural above the entrance. The painting depicts the genealogy of Jesus Christ.

The Baroque sacristy was built in 17th century. It is square shaped, it has two window axis and a low barrel vault. The vault is covered with rich stuke decorations of leaves and heads of angels.

#### 2.2.6 Furnishings

A large Statue of the Crucifixion stands in the presbytery. It was carved in 1930 by Czech artist František Bílek (1872-1941), who also made the altar table. It is made from larch wood.

The front side of the altar is decorated with carvings of six figures from the Czech history - Forefather Čech, princess Ludmila with prince Wenceslas, John Hus, John Žižka



*The sacristy.*



*The altar.*

and John Amos Comenius. Worth noticing is the candelabrum shaped as human hands.

The benches were designed by František Bílek and made by František Kotyza. Each bench has its own animal motif. The organ is placed in the western part of the church on the organ loft.

### 2.2.7 Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre

The inspiration for the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre in St. Wenceslas' Church was the **Church of the Holy Sepulchre** in Jerusalem. The construction began 8 November 1643. The finished chapel was consecrated 11 May 1645.

## 3 Gallery

- The benches designed by František Bílek and made by František Kotyza.
- The cross vault above the presbytery.
- The interior of the church.
- The plan of the church.

- The sedilia.
- The entrance to the sacristy.
- The remains of the murals above the entrance to the sacristy.
- The choir.
- The vault over the nave.
- The space under the choir.
- The view from the space under the choir.
- The candelabrum shaped as hands.
- The candelabrum shaped as hands.
- The sacristy.
- St. Wenceslas' Church at Zderaz from Resslova Street.
- St. Wenceslas' Church at Zderaz from Dittrichova Street.

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## 5 External links

- <http://www.pragueticetoffice.com/prostoradetail.aspx?id=stwenceslas-church-na-zderaze>
- [http://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/WMKKGX\\_Church\\_of\\_St\\_Wenceslas\\_at\\_Zderaz\\_Kostel\\_Sv\\_Vclava\\_na\\_Zderaze\\_Prague](http://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/WMKKGX_Church_of_St_Wenceslas_at_Zderaz_Kostel_Sv_Vclava_na_Zderaze_Prague)

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# Dancing House

The **Dancing House** (Czech: *Tančící dům*), or **Fred and Ginger**, is the nickname given to the Nationale-Nederlanden building on the Rašínovo nábřeží (Rašín Embankment) in Prague, Czech Republic. It was designed by the Croatian-Czech architect **Vlado Milunić** in cooperation with Canadian-American architect **Frank Gehry** on a vacant riverfront plot. The building was designed in 1992 and completed in 1996.<sup>[1]</sup>

The very non-traditional design was controversial at the time because the house stands out among the Baroque, Gothic and Art Nouveau buildings for which Prague is famous, and in the opinion of some it does not accord well with these architectural styles. The then Czech president, Václav Havel, who lived for decades next to the site, had avidly supported this project, hoping that the building would become a center of cultural activity.

Gehry originally named the house *Fred and Ginger* (after the famous dancers Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers – the house resembles a pair of dancers)<sup>[2]</sup> but this nickname is now rarely used; moreover, Gehry himself was later “afraid to import American Hollywood kitsch to Prague”,<sup>[3]</sup> and thus discarded his own idea.

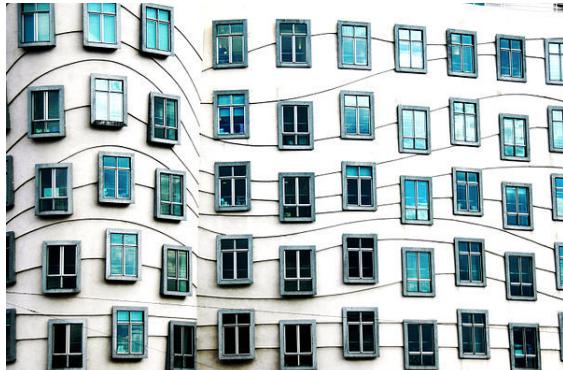
## 1 Origin

The “Dancing House” is set on a property of great historical significance. Its site was the location of a house destroyed by the U.S. bombing of Prague in 1945. The plot and structure lay decrepit until 1960 when the area was cleared. The neighbouring plot was co-owned by the family of Václav Havel who spent most of his life there. As early as 1986 (during the Communist era) V. Milunić, then a respected architect in the Czechoslovak milieu, conceived an idea for a project at the place and discussed it with his neighbour, the then little-known dissident Václav Havel. A few years later, during the Velvet Revolution Havel became a popular leader and was subsequently elected president of Czechoslovakia. Thanks to his authority the idea to develop the site grew. Havel eventually decided to have Milunić survey the site, hoping for it to become a cultural center, although this was not the result.

The Dutch insurance company Nationale-Nederlanden (since 1991 ING Bank) agreed to sponsor the building of a house on site. The “super bank” chose Milunić as the lead designer and asked him to partner with another world-renowned architect to approach the process. The French architect Jean Nouvel turned down the idea be-

cause of the small square footage, but the well-known Canadian-American architect **Frank Gehry** accepted the invitation. Because of the bank’s excellent financial state at the time, it was able to offer almost unlimited funding for the project.<sup>[4]</sup> From their first meeting in 1992 in Geneva, Gehry and Milunić began to elaborate Milunić’s original idea of a building consisting of two parts, static and dynamic (“yin and yang”), which were to symbolize the transition of Czechoslovakia from a communist regime to a parliamentary democracy.

## 2 Structure



Windows of the Dancing House

The style is known as deconstructivist (“new-baroque” to the designers) architecture due to its unusual shape. The “dancing” shape is supported by 99 concrete panels, each a different shape and dimension. On the top of the building is a large twisted structure of metal nicknamed *Medusa*.

“In the interior of a square of buildings in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the Dancing House has two central bodies. The first is a tower of glass that is close to half height and is supported by curved pillars, the second runs parallel to the river, which is characterized by the moldings that follow a wavy motion and distributed through the windows so the non-aligned. This solution has been driven mainly by a kind of aesthetic consideration: the windows lined evidenciarían that the building has two windows, although they have the same height as the two adjacent buildings of the nineteenth century. They also do not have to be perceived in the will of the designer, as simple forms on a flat surface, but must achieve the effect of three-dimensionality, hence the idea of frames

as outgoing frames of paintings. Also the winding moldings on the facade make it more confusing perspective, diminishing the contrast with the buildings that surround it.”<sup>[5]</sup>

### 3 Awards

The general shape of the building is now featured on a gold 2,000 Czech koruna coin issued by the Czech National Bank. The coin completes a series called “Ten Centuries of Architecture”.<sup>[6]</sup>

### 4 References

- [1] Nationale-Nederlanden Building Frank O. Gehry, The Architect’s Studio. Digital catalog of the Henry Art Gallery at arcspace. Archived.
- [2] “Dancing House in Prague – Ginger and Fred”, last modified March 26, 2012
- [3] Interview with V. Milunić
- [4] “Dancing House”, last modified March 26, 2012
- [5] {[http://en.wikiarquitectura.com/index.php/Dancing\\_House](http://en.wikiarquitectura.com/index.php/Dancing_House)}, last modified March 26, 2012
- [6] “Ten centuries of architecture/‘Present day – Dancing House in Prague’”. Czech National Bank. Retrieved 27 July 2012.

### 5 External links

- Dancing House Prague by Frank Gehry
- Radio Prague article with Vlado Milunic

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# Charles Bridge

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The **Charles Bridge** (Czech: *Karluv most* [kar'lūv mɔst] 'most') is an historic bridge that crosses the Vltava river in Prague, Czech Republic. Its construction started in 1357 under the auspices of King **Charles IV**, and finished in the beginning of the 15th century.<sup>[2]</sup> The bridge replaced the old Judith Bridge built 1158–1172 that had been badly damaged by a flood in 1342. This new bridge was originally called the Stone Bridge (*Kamenný most*) or the Prague Bridge (*Pražský most*) but has been the “Charles Bridge” since 1870.<sup>[2]</sup> As the only means of crossing the river Vltava (Moldau) until 1841, the Charles Bridge was the most important connection between **Prague Castle** and the city's Old Town and adjacent areas. This “solid-land” connection made Prague important as a trade route between Eastern and Western Europe.

The bridge is 621 metres (2,037 ft) long and nearly 10 metres (33 ft) wide, following the example of the Stone Bridge in Regensburg, it was built as a bow bridge with 16 arches shielded by ice guards.<sup>[2]</sup> It is protected by three bridge towers, two of them on the Lesser Quarter side and the third one on the Old Town side. The Old Town bridge tower is often considered to be one of the most astonishing civil gothic-style buildings in the world. The bridge is decorated by a continuous alley of 30 statues and statuaries, most of them baroque-style, originally erected around 1700 but now all replaced by replicas.



Old Town bridge tower during 1848 revolution



Charles Bridge during 1872 flood

## 1 History

### 1.1 Through the 19th century

Throughout its history, the Charles Bridge suffered several disasters and witnessed many historic events. Czech legend has it that construction began on Charles Bridge at 5:31am on 9 July 1357 with the first stone being laid by Charles IV himself. This exact time was very important to the Holy Roman Emperor because he was a strong believer of numerology and this specific time, which formed a numerical bridge (1357 9, 7 5:31), would imbue Charles Bridge with additional strength. Given the bridge's long life perhaps the Emperor's belief holds some weight, though the bridge has seen its fair share of tragedy. A flood in 1432 damaged three pillars. In 1496 the third arch (counting from the Old Town side) broke

down after one of the pillars lowered, being undermined by the water (repairs were finished in 1503). A year after the **Battle of White Mountain**, when the 27 leaders of the anti-Habsburg revolt were executed on 21 June 1621, the Old Town bridge tower served as a deterrent display of the severed heads of the victims to stop Czechs from further resistance. During the end of the **Thirty Years' War** in 1648, the **Swedes** occupied the west bank of the Vltava, and as they tried to advance into the Old Town the heaviest fighting took place right on the bridge. Dur-



*Charles Bridge as viewed from Petřínská rozhledna – lookout tower*

ing the fighting, they severely damaged one side of the Old Town bridge tower (the side facing the river) and the remnants of almost all gothic decorations had to be removed from it afterward. During the late 17th century and early 18th century the bridge gained its typical appearance when an alley of baroque statues was installed on the pillars. During a great flood in 1784, five pillars were severely damaged and although the arches did not break down, the traffic on the bridge had to be greatly restricted for some time.

The original stairway to Kampa Island was replaced by a new one in 1844. The next year, another great flood threatened the bridge, but the bridge escaped major damage. In 1848, during the revolutionary days, the bridge escaped unharmed from the cannonade, but some of the statues were damaged. In 1866, pseudo-gothic gas lights were erected on the balustrade; they were later replaced with electric lighting. In the 1870s, the first regular public-transport (*omnibus*) line went over the bridge (officially called “Charles Bridge” after 1870), later replaced by a horse tram.<sup>[2]</sup> The bridge towers underwent a thorough reconstruction between 1874 and 1883.

On 2–5 September 1890, another disastrous flood struck Prague and severely damaged the Charles Bridge. Thousands of rafts, logs and other floating materials that escaped from places upstream gradually formed a huge barrier leaning against the bridge. Three arches were torn down by the great pressure and two pillars collapsed from being undermined by the water, while others were partly

damaged. With the fifth pillar, two statues – St. Ignatius of Loyola and St. Xavier, both by Ferdinand Brokoff – also fell into the river. The former statue was replaced by a statuary of Saints Cyril and Methodius by Karel Dvořák; the latter was replaced by a replica of the original. Repair works lasted for two years (the bridge was reopened on 19 November 1892) and cost 665,000 crowns.

## 1.2 20th century to present



In the beginning of the 20th century, the Charles Bridge saw a steep rise of heavy traffic. The last day of the horse line on the bridge was 15 May 1905, when it was replaced with an electric tram and later, in 1908, with buses. At the end of World War II, a barricade was built in the Old Town bridge tower gateway. A capital repair of the



bridge took place between 1965 and 1978, based on a collaboration among various scientific and cultural institutes. The stability of the pillars was reassured, all broken stone blocks were replaced, and the asphalt top was removed. All vehicular traffic has been excluded from the Charles Bridge since then, making it accessible by pedestrians only. The repair cost 50 million crowns.

During the 1990s, some people started criticizing the previous reconstruction of the bridge and proposing further work. As of the beginning of the new millennium, most of the experts appeared to agree that the previous reconstruction had not been flawless but disputed the need for further interference with the bridge. However, after the disastrous floods of 2002 (which themselves caused only minor harm to the bridge), support for an overall bridge reconstruction grew. It was decided that repair and stabilization of the two pillars (numbers 8 and 9) on the Malá Strana side of the bridge would be done. These are the only river pillars that were not repaired after the 1890 floods. The reconstruction was a gradual process that closed off parts of the bridge without closing the span entirely.

Performed from 2008 to 2010, the work included bolstering the pillars and building a new hydroisolation system protecting the bridge. It also encompassed a repavementation of the bridge's pavement and the replacement of many of the stones in the bridge walls, a matter which was controversial due to a heavy-handed approach adopted by the restoration team, which had no previous experience in restoration of cultural heritage monuments. The result has been criticised by conservation professionals all over Europe (see photos on external links), as dozens of new replacement stones do not match the historical ones they are next to, the amount of replaced stones is considered excessive, some stones have been inappropriately positioned, original stones have been chipped and joining materials employed are considered not appropriate for the structure.<sup>[3]</sup> <sup>[4]</sup> In 2010 UNESCO's World Heritage Committee adopted a decision stating that "the restoration of Charles Bridge was carried out without adequate conservation advice on materials and techniques".<sup>[5]</sup>

## 2 Statues on the bridge

Main article: [List of statues on Charles Bridge](#)  
The avenue of 30 mostly baroque statues and statuar-



*Charles Bridge and the Holy Crucifix, c. 1935*

ies situated on the balustrade forms a unique connection of artistic styles with the underlying gothic bridge. Most sculptures were erected between 1683 and 1714.<sup>[2]</sup> They depict various saints and patron saints venerated at that time. The most prominent Bohemian sculptors of the time took part in decorating the bridge, such as Matthias Braun, Jan Brokoff, and his sons Michael Joseph and Ferdinand Maximilian.

Among the most notable sculptures, one can find the statuary of St. Luthgard, the Holy Crucifix and Calvary, and John of Nepomuk. Well known also is the statue of the knight Bruncvík, although it was erected some 200 years later and does not belong to the main avenue.

Beginning in 1965, all of the statues have been systematically replaced by replicas, and the originals have been exhibited in the lapidarium of the National Museum.

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- [4] Czech Republic -- The Botched Restoration of the Charles Bridge on YouTube
- [5] Decision 34COM7B.82

## 4 External links

- A panorama of the bridge

- Official Museum of the Charles Bridge
- A webcam of the Charles Bridge
- Charles bridge photography
- Charles Bridge at *Structurae*

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# Lennon Wall



Lennon Wall in August 1981



Portion of the wall, 1993

The **Lennon Wall** or **John Lennon Wall** is a wall in Prague, Czech Republic. Once a normal wall, since the 1980s it has been filled with John Lennon-inspired graffiti and pieces of lyrics from Beatles' songs.

In 1988, the wall was a source of irritation for the communist regime of Gustáv Husák. Young Czechs would write grievances on the wall and in a report of the time this led to a clash between hundreds of students and security police on the nearby Charles Bridge. The movement these students followed was described ironically as "Lennonism" and Czech authorities described these people variously as alcoholics, mentally deranged, sociopathic, and agents of Western capitalism.

The wall continuously undergoes change and the original portrait of Lennon is long lost under layers of new paint. Even when the wall was repainted by some authorities, on the second day it was again full of poems and flowers.

Today, the wall represents a symbol of global ideals such as love and peace.

The wall is owned by the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, which allowed the graffiti to continue on the wall, and is located at *Velkopřevorské náměstí* (Grand Priory Square), Malá Strana.

A similar wall inspired by the original wall has appeared on the walls of the Hong Kong Central Government Offices, with citizens posting colourful post-it notes with their democratic wishes for Hong Kong during 2014 Hong Kong protests.<sup>[1]</sup>

On 17 November 2014, the 25th anniversary of the Velvet Revolution, the wall was painted over in pure white by a group of art students, leaving only the text "wall is over" [sic]. The Knights of Malta initially filed a criminal complaint for vandalism against the students, which they later retracted after gaining contact with them.<sup>[2]</sup> The wall mural is still there as of Dec 6, 2014. And the "Wall is Over" bit has been changed to "War is Over".



Lennon Wall, May 2015

## 1 See also

- John Lennon Park
- Lennon Wall, Hong Kong
- List of famous walls
- Tsoi Wall — a similar wall near Arbat Street in Moscow

## 2 References

[1] <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/15/world/asia/>

rescuing-protest-artwork-from-hong-kongs-streets.html?\_r=2

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### 3 External links

- Digital Lennon Wall
- Google Maps location of John Lennon Wall
- Article about the Lennon Wall in the Erasmuspc World CityPoem collection
- Book of Lennon Wall

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