

DOM KULTURE
CULTURE HALL
velenje, slovenija slovenia
1957-1962

besedilo written by **METKA DOLENEC ŠOBA**
fotografija photo by **MIRAN KAMBIČ**

oton gaspari

KULISA NEKEGA SPEKTAKLA **BACKDROP OF** **A SPECTACLE**

Na črno-beli fotografiji opazujemo množico ljudi, ki pozdravlja predsednika Tita in predsednika neke druge (vzhodnoevropske ali neuvrščene) države; Brežnjeva, Hruščova, Modibe Keita, Ceausescu. V soncu se sveti kulisa – monumentalna stavba. To je zgodba o njej.

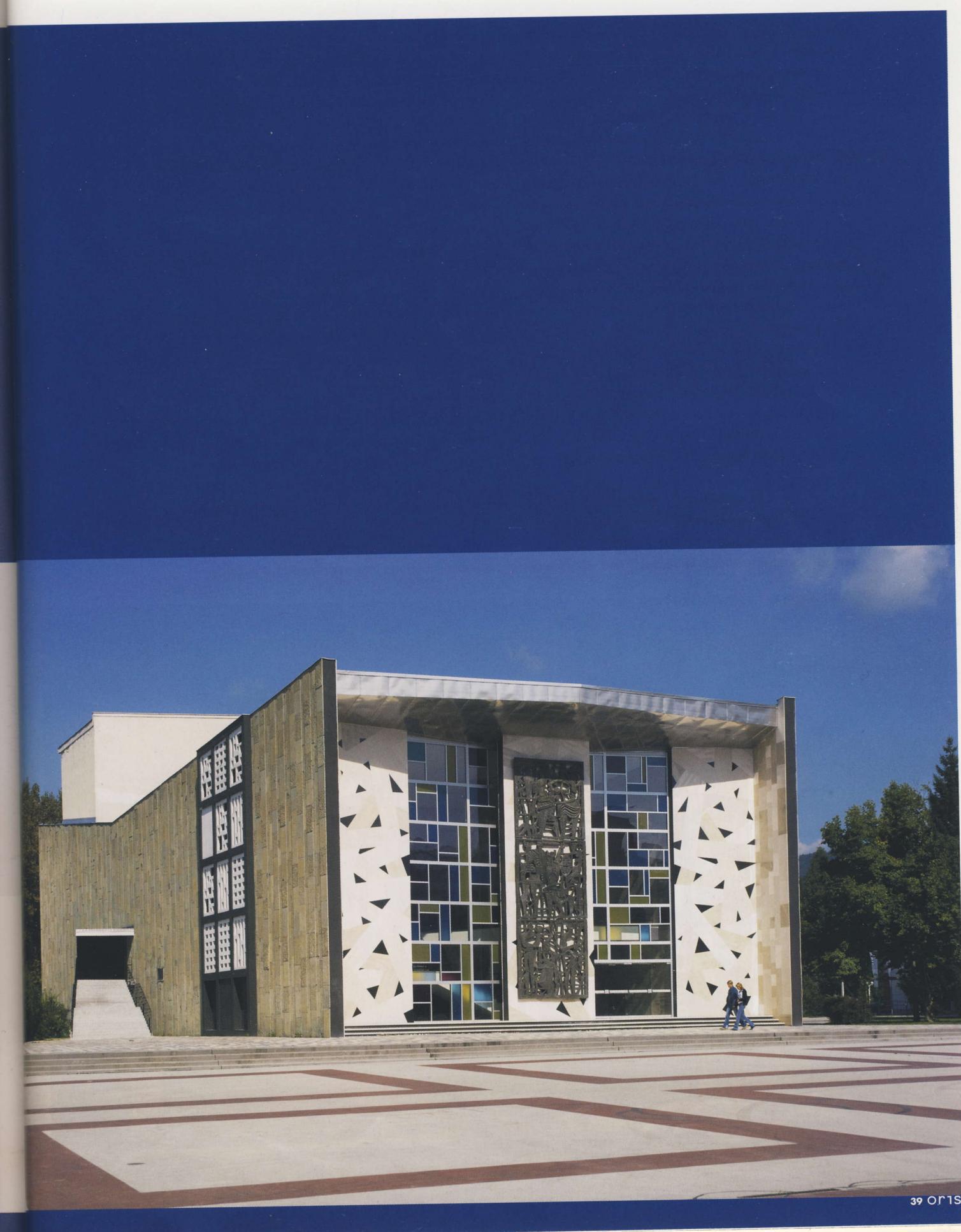
MESTO VELENJE

Mesto Velenje, med leti 1981 in 1990 imenovano po predsedniku bivše Jugoslavije, sodi med najzanimivejše arhitekturne in sociološke fenomene naše urbane kulture. Poleg Nove Gorice je namreč edino novo, v celoti po vojni zgrajeno slovensko mesto. Ima pa popolnoma industrijski značaj, saj je njegovo gradnjo ves čas financiral in vodil rudnik lignita, ki je po vojni začel intenzivno delati. Množično prise-

On a black and white photo there are a lot of people welcoming President Tito and the president of some other (east European or non-aligned) state: Brezhnev, Khrushchev, Modiba Keit, Ceausescu. Glittering in the sun there is a backdrop – a monumental building. This is a story about it.

THE CITY OF VELENJE

The city of Velenje, named after the president of ex-Yugoslavia between 1981 and 1990, is one of the most interesting architectural and sociological phenomena of our urban culture. Apart from Nova Gorica, this is the only Slovenian new town, completely built in the post-WWII era. The city has a completely industrial character, since its construction was financed and carried out by the local lignite mine, during its



Ijevanje delavcev iz vse države je spremenilo podobo doline. Po končani vojni je bilo na območju današnjega Velenja raztresenih samo nekaj vasi. Tako je območje mesta, zgrajenega čez noč, leta 1948 naseljevalo manj kot 1.700 prebivalcev, v začetku 70. let je v mestu živilo že skoraj 12.000, čez 20 let skoraj 18.000 prebivalcev.

V začetku 50. let je premogovnik vodil Nestl Žgank, pozneje tudi župan Velenja. Ravno on je tisti, ki se je odločil, da bi bilo treba naraščajočemu številu rudarskih družin zagotoviti boljše bivalne razmere. Politično vodstvo je prepričal, da Jugoslavija potrebuje moderno in humano socialistično mesto. Sam je po svetu iskal vzore za novo Velenje.

Glede na tedanjo politično ideologijo je zanimivo, da vzorov pri načrtovanju niso iskali pri vzhodnoevropskih industrijskih mestih, temveč so bile odločilne ideje utopičnih socialistov, iz Anglije izhajajoče ideje *vrtnih mest*, Le Corbusierjevo *mesto v parku* in modernistične ideje o vplivu fizičnega okolja na družbo, v oblikovanju pa takrat aktualni funkcionalizem.

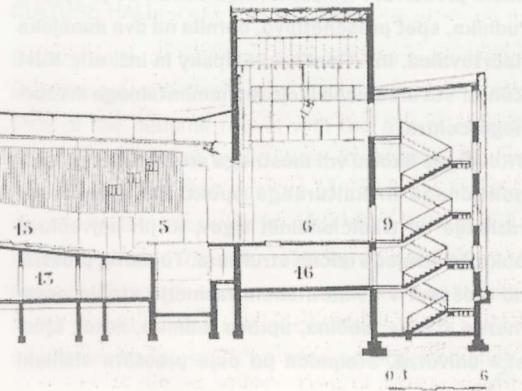
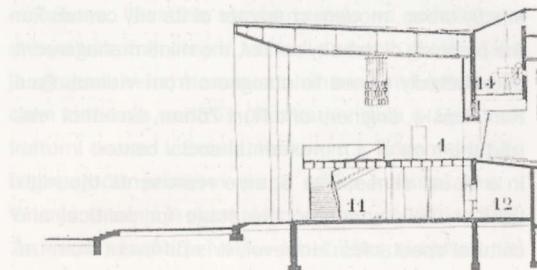
Prvi urbanistični načrt je leta 1948 izdelal arhitekt Vilijem Strmecki, ki se že zgleduje po Le Corbusierjem mestu, ki žarči. Vendar ga leta 1954 z uvažanjem samoupravljanja nadomesti bolj drzno mo-

post-war extensive exploitation. The massive influx of workers, coming from all parts of the country, changed the appearance of the valley. After the war ended, there were only a couple of villages scattered on the area covered by the present day Velenje. In the area of a "city built over night", in 1948 there were fewer than 1700 inhabitants, while at the beginning of the 1970s there were almost 12,000 people living in the city and twenty years later almost 18,000.

At the beginning of 1950s, the Velenje coal mine was managed by Nestl Žgank, later the mayor of Velenje. He was the one who decided to provide better housing for an ever greater number of coal miners' families. He convinced the political leaders that Yugoslavia needed a modern and human socialist city. He himself searched the globe for a model for the new Velenje.

Referring to the political ideology it is interesting to notice that during the planning, no East European city was taken as a model, of the crucial value rather were the ideas of utopian socialists, the ideas of the *garden cities* in England, Le Corbusier's "city in the park" and modernist ideas on the influence of physical surroundings on society, while the then fashionable functionalism was used in designing.





- **prerez** / section
- 1. **foaje** / foyer
- 5. **premični proscenij** / movable proscenium
- 6. **oder** / stage
- 9. **prostori za odrom** / rooms behind stage
- 11. **vhodno predverje** / entry hall
- 12. **garderoba** / dressing room
- 13. **klimatizacija** / air-conditioning
- 14. **kabina za kinoproterijerja** / projection room
- 15. **dvorana** / auditorium
- 16. **pogužljivi oder** / stage basement

- tloris / plan**
- 1. foaje / foyer**
- 2. prostor za kadilice / smoking room**
- 3. kavarna / bufet**
- 4. stopnišće-kinooperater / staircase-projection**
- 5. premični proscenij / movable proscenium**
- 6. oder / stage**
- 7. kulise / stage settings**
- 8. delavnice / workshops**
- 9. prostor za nastupaoče / performers**
- 10. garderobe za nastupaoče / dressing rooms**

dernistično načrtovanje arhitekta Janeza Trenza. Ta se popolnoma obrne k moderni arhitekturi in sodobni teoriji *zoninga*. Mesto loči na stanovanjski del na pobočju in središče v ravnini. Znotraj tega vpelje še ožjo delitev mestnih funkcij. Dvokapnico zamenja ravna streha, ohrani pa se prvotna ideja zelenega mesta v parku.

TITOV TRG

Ravno zaradi stroga urbanega, modernega značaja mestnega središča je Velenje posebnost v slovenskem prostoru. Pri načrtovanju centra se je uprava rudnika, spet presenetljivo, obrnila na dva dunajska načrtovalca. Inž. Paul Karl Filipsky in inž. arh. Kurt Zöhrer sta uresničila idejo monumentalnega družbenega centra.

Titov trg je likovni vrh mestnega središča ter prostor političnega in kulturnega spektakla. Vendar se razlikuje od tradicionalnih trgov, ki jih največkrat obkroža strnjena ulična struktura. Tu okrog prostrane ploščadi v asimetričnem razmerju stojijo posamezne stavbe; občina, uprava rudnika, hotel, Ljudska univerza, stolpnica pa daje prostoru višinski

The first town plan was made in 1948 by the architect Viljem Strmecki, who looked up to Le Corbusier's *Cité Radieuse*. However, in 1954, after self-governing principles were introduced, this plan was replaced by a more daring, modernist project by the architect Janez Trenz. He turned to modern architecture completely and to contemporary *zoning* theory. He separated the city into a residential area on the hillside and the city center in the valley below. He also introduced an even further division of city functions. Instead of gable roofs, he introduced flat roofs, but retained the initial idea of a green "city in a park".

TITO'S SQUARE

Velenje is a one-off in Slovenia precisely due to the strictly urban, modern character of its city center. For the planning of the city center, the mine management unexpectedly turned to designers from Vienna. Paul Karl Filipsky, engineer and Kurt Zöhrer, architect realized the idea of a monumental social center. In a visual sense, Tito Square represents the highlight of the city center, the stage for political and cultural spectacles. However, it is different from traditional squares which are mostly surrounded by an



poudarek. Trg zaznamuje tudi kolosalni kip Tita kiparja Antuna Augustinčiča. Velik prazen prostor pa najpomembnejše definira najbolj monumentalna stavba na trgu, kulturni dom. Ta predstavlja tudi sociološki fenomen, saj uresničuje idejo, da je treba neizobraženim delavcem ponuditi kakovostne kulturne vsebine.

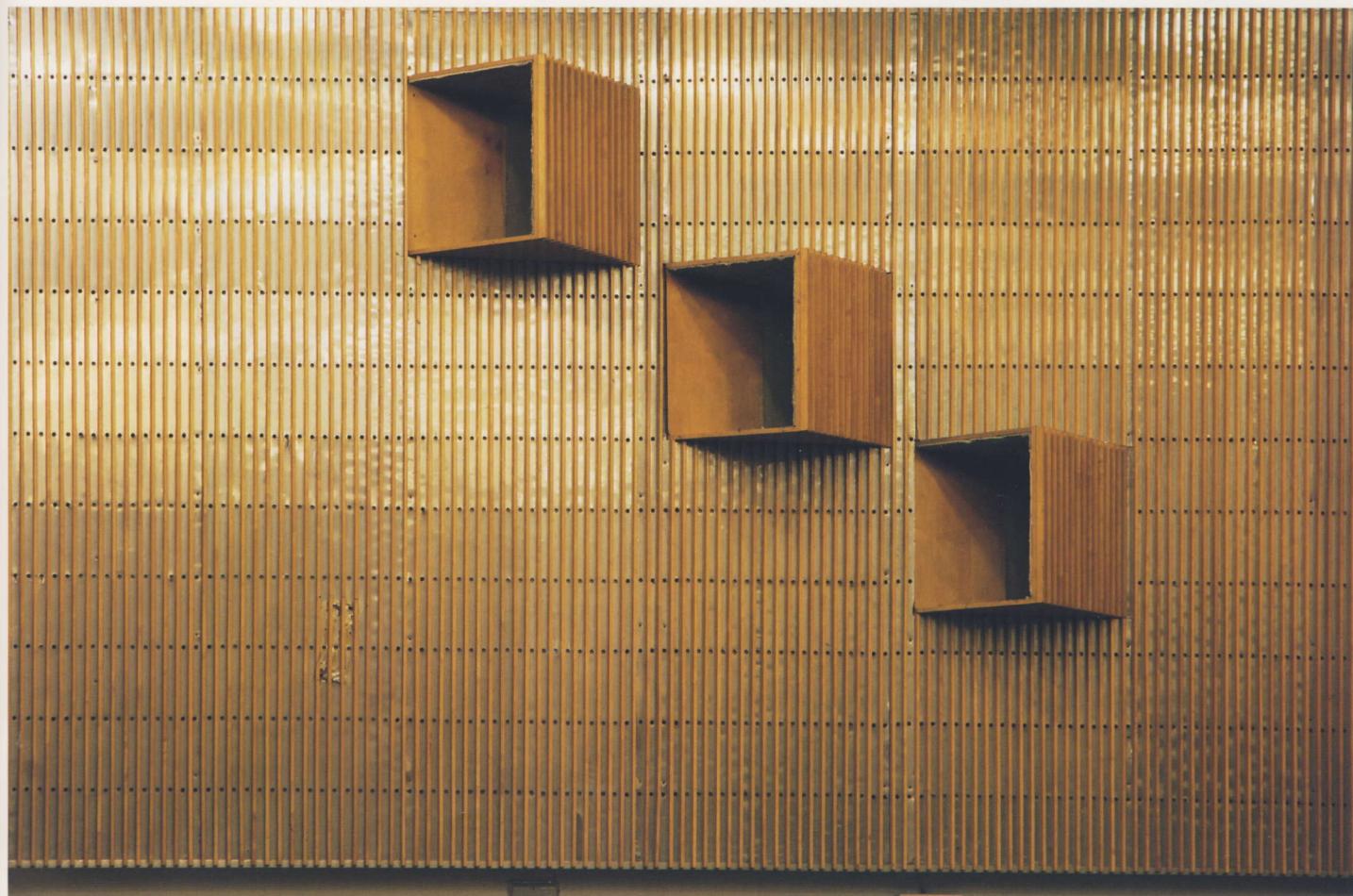
KULTURNI DOM

Kulturni domovi so kot stavbe, *namenjene kulturno-prosvetni dejavnosti, nastajale v času narodnega prebujenja in so dvigovale izobrazbo in kulturno zavednost naroda*. Pri nas jih v začetku 20. stoletja ustanavljajo različna društva. Po drugi svetovni vojni politika spodbuja približevanje kulture ljudskim množicam. Tovrstne stavbe rastejo na podeželju, v sklopu zadružnih domov, kot tudi v urbanih okoljih. Tako je zgrajenih nekaj monumentalnih mestotvornih stavb, celo kulturnih centrov (Cankarjev dom v Ljubljani, kulturni domovi v Sežani, Krškem ...). Eden najlepših, izstopajočih primerov pa je ravno kulturni dom v Velenju. Gradnja je potekala med letoma 1957 in 1962. Že sama stavba je velika umetniška skulptura, ki daje s spretnimi perspektivičnimi prevarami vtis

interconnected structure of streets. Here around spacious the platform, there are individual buildings set in an asymmetrical interrelationship: Community Authorities, Mine Headquarters, hotel, adult education institute and skyscraper which give an upward accent to the whole composition. There is colossal sculpture of Tito on the Square, a work by a sculptor Antun Augustinčič. The large empty space is best defined by the most imposing building on the square, Culture Hall. It is also a sociological phenomenon; it is the embodiment of the idea that poorly educated workers had to be offered high quality culture.

CULTURE HALL

Culture Halls, as buildings “intended for cultural and educational activities”, were being built during the time of the national revival with the aim of raising the education level and cultural awareness. At the beginning of the 20th century various associations were formed in these parts. After WWII, official policies encouraged the policy of bringing culture to the masses. Buildings of the same type were built both in the provinces as a part of community halls and in urban communities. So we have several monumen-



privzdignjenega odra, odprtega proti množici. Arhitekt Oton Gaspari je želel v Velenju zgraditi stavbo, na katero bodo meščani ponosni. Zato je na njej uporabil dragocene naravne materiale in umetniške detajle (abstraktno razporeditev odprtin in barvnih stekel na fasadi, kiparske reliefs in zanimivo oblikovane železne ograje). Vendar so ti opazni šele, ko se približamo masivni stavbi. Zdi se, da ta odigra več vlog; z volumnom definira prostor trga, je ogromna kulisa, detajli pa so namenjeni intimnejšemu opazovalcu.

Zunanje bočne stene so obložene s ploščami zelenkastega tufa. Igra zelenih plošč različnih odtenkov pretrga čipka, predrta arhitektura (bele odprtine abstraktnejih oblik v črnih okvirjih). Ob obeh stenah stojijo stopnice z ornamentirano ograjo, ki se tako kot celotna stavba širijo proti trgu, zaradi česar se zdi, da se stavba dejansko premika navzven.

Čelna fasada stavbe igra vlogo slikarsko oblikovane kulise. Uokvirjata jo močna črna poudarjena robova, zgoraj pa v pločevino oblečen, rahlo trikotno oblikovan nadstrešek ravne strehe. To trikotno temeljsko čelo ponovno asociira na stavbo s posebno vlogo v mestu. Vdrta fasada je obložena s ploščicami iz večbarvnega brušenega apnenca, prekinjata jo pasova poljubno razporejenih barvnih stekel, ki spominjajo na umetnost Pieta Mondriana. Na srednjem delu stoji veliki bronasti relief Stojana Batiča. S trapezoidno obliko, stopniščem, masivnim kam-

tal buildings of considerable urbanistic significance, some of them being culture centers (Cankarjev dom in Ljubljana, culture centers in Sežana, Krško, and so on). One of the most beautiful examples, which stands out from the rest, is the Culture Hall in Velenje, built between 1957 to 1962. The building is in itself a large-scale sculpture, which using a skillful perspective trompe-l'oeil, gives the impression of an elevated stage open to the crowd. The architect Oton Gaspari wanted to construct a building of which all the inhabitants of Velenje would be proud. Therefore he chose precious natural materials and art details (abstract disposition of openings and coloured glass on the façade, sculptural relief and interestingly designed iron railings). However these details are visible only when we approach the massive building. It seems this building plays several roles in this game; its volume defines the space of the square, it is an enormous backdrop and details were intended for a more careful spectator.

The external lateral walls are covered in slabs of green tufa. The play of the green slabs, which vary in tone, is interrupted by lace-like, perforated architecture (white openings of abstract shapes within black frames). There are stairs with ornamental railings next to both walls, extending towards the square as the building itself, thus creating the impression the building has an actual outward movement.

The front of the building has the role of a two-dimensionally designed stage setting. It is framed by



nitim okvirjem, s tempeljskim čelom in ravno streho je stavba poudarjeno monumentalna.

Svetloba raznobarvnih stekel prodira v notranjost, v visoko vstopno halo, abstraktni vzorec se ponovi na tleh, stene so oblečene v naravni kamen. V stavbi so razporejeni velika večnamenska dvorana z odrom, mala dvorana, tehnični prostori in prostori uprave. Zunanjščina je bila obnovljena pred nekaj leti, notranjost pa se trenutno prenavlja po priporočilih spomeniško-varstvene službe.

OTON GASPARI

Oton Gaspari (1911-1991), sin slikarja Maksima Gasparija, sodi med manj znane in strokovno ovrednotene slovenske arhitekte. Na ljubljanski šoli za arhitekturo je diplomiral leta 1934 pri profesorju Plečniku. Pred začetkom vojne je začel načrtovati stavbo Radia Slovenija (s T. Štrukljem), ki je bila dokončana po vojni. Palača PTT (1953) na Cigaletovi ulici je eden najbolj monumentalnih primerov povojnega funkcionalizma. V Trbovljah je leta 1956 zgradil Delavski dom (z M. Župančičem in L. Čigonem). Odlikoval se je predvsem z načrtovanjem šolskih poslopij paviljonskega tipa (npr. OŠ Toneta Tomšiča v Ljubljani, gimnazija na Jesenicah). V 70. letih je zgradil stavbo Radia Priština, v Velenju pa še vrtec in posebno šolo, kjer je uporabil montažno gradnjo. Velenjski kulturni dom je stavba, ki zagotovo najbolj zvesto opiše razmere v novonastajajočem mestu

strongly accentuated black rims and the flat roof ends in triangularly shaped eaves covered in metal sheeting. This triangular front, looking like a tympanum, is related to the special role of this building within the city. The perforated façade is covered by tiles of multicoloured limestone and intermittently placed ribbons of coloured glass, reminding us of Piet Mondrian's art works. A big bronze relief by Stojan Batič is positioned in the center. The building's monumentality is further enhanced by its trapeze shape, stairs, massive stone frames, tympanum shaped front and flat roof.

The light comes in through coloured glass, into a high entrance hall. The abstract pattern is repeated on the floor and the walls are covered with natural stone. Inside, there is a big, multi-functional hall with a stage, a small theatre, technical facility rooms and management offices. Several years ago, the exterior of the building was renovated and currently, the interior is being renovated too according to the recommendations of the monument preservation office.

OTON GASPARI

Oton Gaspari (1911-1991), son of the painter Maksim Gaspari, is one of the less known and professionally valued Slovenian architects. He graduated at the Faculty of Architecture in Ljubljana in 1934 in the class of Professor Plečnik. Just before the war he started to design the building of Radio Slovenia

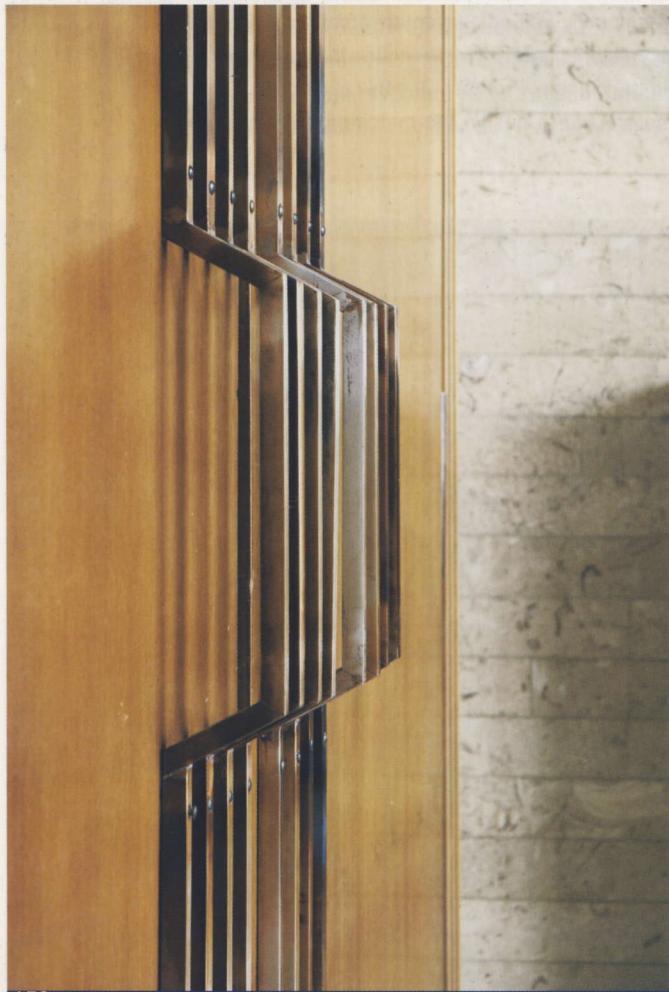


udarniškega dela, idealnem mestu novega socialnega reda. Poleg trgovsko-stanovanjskega bloka Stanka Kristla (zgrajen 1960-63) je najbolj znana stavba v Velenju. V začetku leta je bila stavba proglašena za spomenik občinskega pomena. In spet se vračamo na trg. Predsedniki so se odpeljali, množica se je počasi razšla, sonce je zašlo. Časi zastavic in zborovanj so minili. Ostala pa je stavba.

(together with T. Štrukelj), which was completed after the war. The PTT Palace (1953) located in Cigaletova street is one of the most monumental examples of post-war functionalism. In 1956 he built a Workers' Hall in Trbovlje (together with M. Župančič and L. Čigon). He excelled in designing pavilion type schools (e.g. the Tone Tomšič Primary School in Ljubljana, Jesenice Secondary School). In the 1970s, he designed the building of Radio Priština, while in Velenje, he designed a kindergarten and a special school, where he used pre-fabricated construction.

Velenje Culture Hall is a building which probably best describes the circumstances during the emergence of this city of excellent workers, the "ideal city" of the new socialist order. Together with the commercial and residential unit by Stanko Kristl (1960-63), the Culture Hall is the best known building in Velenje. It was declared an important monument for the local community at the beginning of this year.

Let us go back to the square. The presidents have left, the crowd has returned home, the sun set. The times of flag waving and rallies are over. But the building is still here.



156



