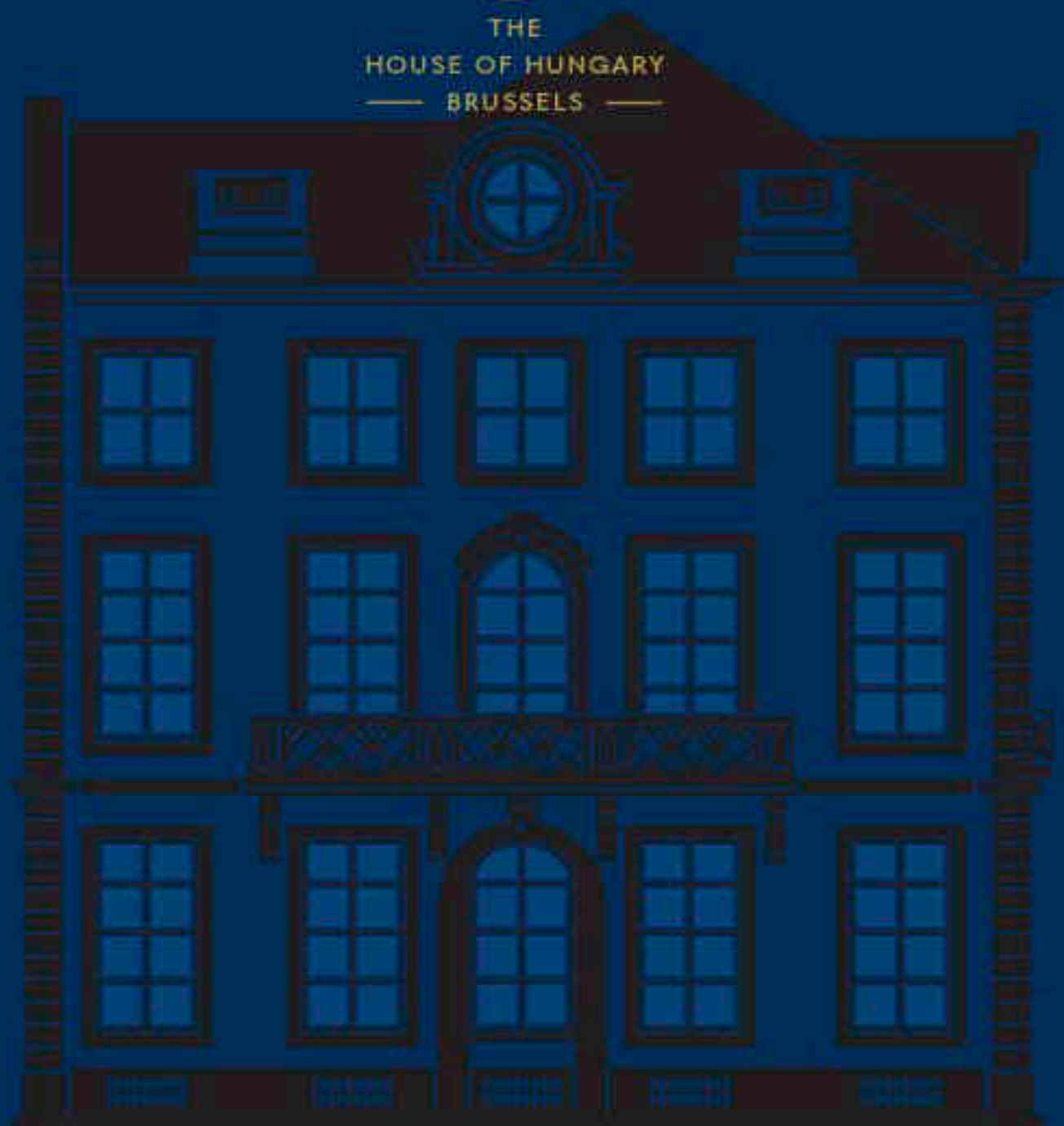




Loi 9. THE HOUSE OF HUNGARY, BRUSSELS

Loi 9.

THE  
HOUSE OF HUNGARY  
— BRUSSELS —



Loi 9.

THE  
HOUSE OF HUNGARY  
— BRUSSELS —

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LOI 9.  
THE HOUSE OF HUNGARY  
BRUSSELS



2024



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# A POWERFUL *symbol of* HUNGARY

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A conversation with TAMÁS IVÁN KOVÁCS,  
Ambassador of Hungary to Belgium and Luxembourg





**THE RECENT ACQUISITION AND RENOVATION OF THE HOUSE OF HUNGARY IN BRUSSELS IS BEING HAILED AS A SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENT IN HUNGARIAN DIPLOMACY AND THE REPRESENTATION OF THE COUNTRY'S INTERESTS. COULD YOU TELL US ABOUT THE VISION BEHIND THIS PROJECT?**

**Ambassador Tamás Iván Kovács:**  
With pleasure. The acquisition of the House of Hungary, located at 9 Rue de la Loi, in Brussels' bustling political and diplomatic district, reflects Hungary's commitment to a strong presence in Belgium and in Europe. This eighteenth-century architectural gem – the former building of the Belgian Ministry of Finance

– spans 2,364 square meters and was acquired in 2021 with a vision that goes far beyond its physical space. Our goal was to create a center that embodies our diplomatic and cultural aspirations, a place that represents Hungary's role and contributions within the European landscape. This building is a powerful symbol of Hungary's enduring commitment to Europe and our shared future.

**WHAT MAKES THE LOCATION OF THE HOUSE OF HUNGARY SO STRATEGIC?**

**T. I. K.:** The location is truly exceptional. Positioned among key diplomatic representation such as those of the United States, United Kingdom, France, and Switzerland, as well as the Office of the Belgian Prime



↑ Tamás Sulyok, President of Hungary and Viktor Orbán, Prime Minister of Hungary, Hungarian diplomats and the project team visiting the the House of Hungary

↵ Tamás Iván Kovács, Ambassador of Hungary to Belgium and Luxembourg presents the renovated building and its surroundings to Tamás Sulyok, President of Hungary

Minister and the Belgian Federal Parliament, it places Hungary in the heart of Belgian and European decision-making. Being within walking distance of the main institutions of the European Union, the House allows us to keep close ties with our European partners. This prestigious address underscores the strategic importance Hungary places on maintaining a strong and visible representation here in Brussels. We believe that our European partners will recognize and respect the significance of this choice.

**HOW WILL THE HOUSE OF HUNGARY FUNCTION WITHIN THE EUROPEAN DIPLOMATIC LANDSCAPE?**

**T. I. K.:** The House of Hungary is designed to serve as a vibrant hub for various types of gatherings – diplomatic, political, professional, economic, and cultural. It ensures that Hungary maintains visibility and active engagement on important issues at the highest levels. Beyond hosting official functions, it is also a platform for meaningful dialogue and





The renovation was characterized by continuous dialogue and cooperation between Attila Sághi, Tamás Iván Kovács and Csaba Káel

“Every detail was *thoughtfully designed* to blend Hungarian cultural heritage *with modern functionality...*”

collaboration with our European neighbors and partners. By providing a dedicated space for exchange, it strengthens Hungary’s role in fostering connections and promoting Hungarian culture.

**COULD YOU ELABORATE ON THE RENOVATION PROCESS? HOW DOES IT REFLECT HUNGARY’S EVOLVING ROLE IN EUROPE?**

**T. I. K.:** The renovation of this historic building was undertaken with a clear purpose: to balance Hungary’s deep-rooted traditions with the needs of contemporary diplomacy. As Hungary took on the presidency of the

Council of the European Union in the latter half of 2024, the House of Hungary served as a critical focal point for our diplomatic initiatives. Every detail was thoughtfully designed to blend Hungarian cultural heritage with modern functionality, demonstrating our nation’s adaptability and forward-thinking approach. The transformation of the building truly mirrors Hungary’s evolving role and influence within the EU.

**THIS PROJECT IS DESCRIBED AS A “LASTING INVESTMENT.” WHAT IMPACT DO YOU BELIEVE IT WILL HAVE ON HUNGARY’S DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS?**

**T. I. K.:** The House of Hungary is indeed a lasting investment in our future diplomatic and interest representation endeavors here in Brussels. It solidifies our diplomatic presence and offers a versatile platform for the exchange of ideas and European collaboration. This space does not just serve as an office; it embodies our long-term dedication to European unity in diversity and the role Hungary seeks to play in shaping the future of the continent. I am confident that it will stand as a proud testament to our nation’s commitment to Europe, ensuring that Hungarian perspectives remain integral to the European dialogue.



The House of Hungary is a proud testament of the nation's commitment to Europe. Ceremonial flag raising by Ambassador Tamás Iván Kovács and László Gelencsér, president of Laterex

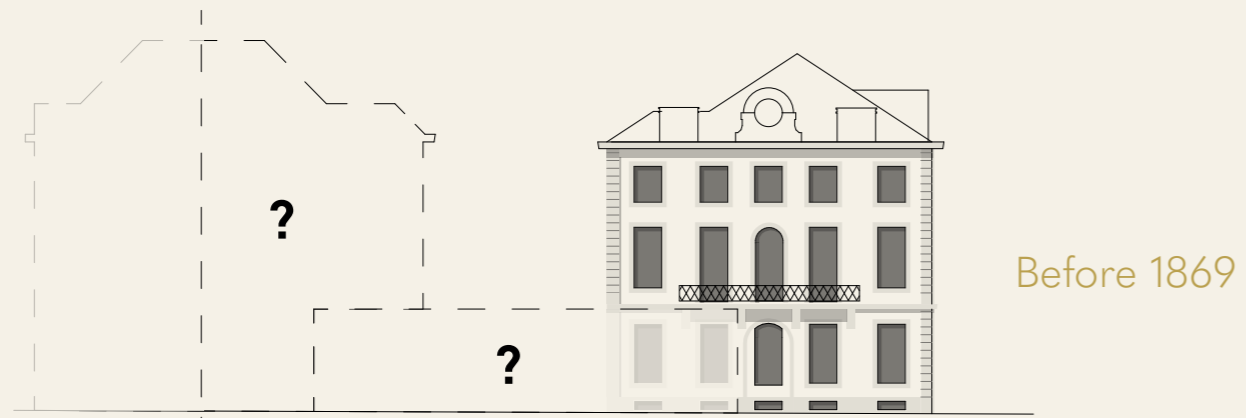
**WHO MANAGED THIS EXTENSIVE PROJECT, AND HOW WAS IT COORDINATED?**

**T. I. K.:** The renovation was carried out under the direction of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, with the Embassy of Hungary in Brussels representing Hungary’s interests before the Belgian authorities. The Prime Minister’s Office coordinated the project, ensuring that our goals were met efficiently and effectively. This collaboration across ministries allowed us to bring our vision to life seamlessly, resulting in a building that truly represents Hungary’s dedication to its European mission, which I am personally very proud of.

# Stepping through HISTORY'S Door

THE STORIED PAST  
OF THE HOUSE OF HUNGARY



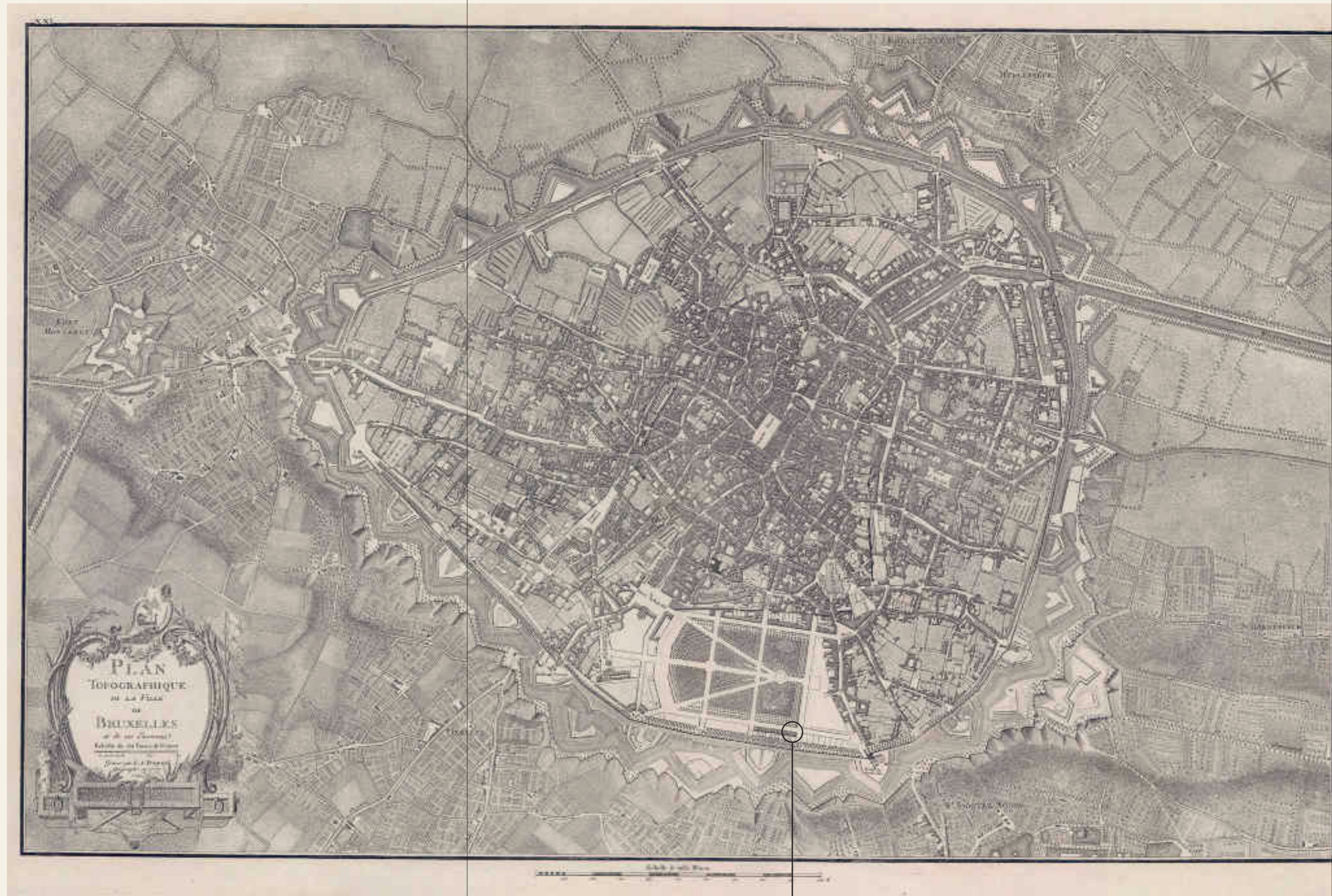


TRANSFORMATION OF THE RUE DE LA LOI FAÇADE

Standing at the prestigious intersection of Rue de la Loi and Rue Ducale, the House of Hungary is a remarkable symbol of Brussels' architectural and cultural heritage. A blend of neoclassical and eclectic design, it reflects centuries of architectural evolution and bears witness to significant moments in European history.

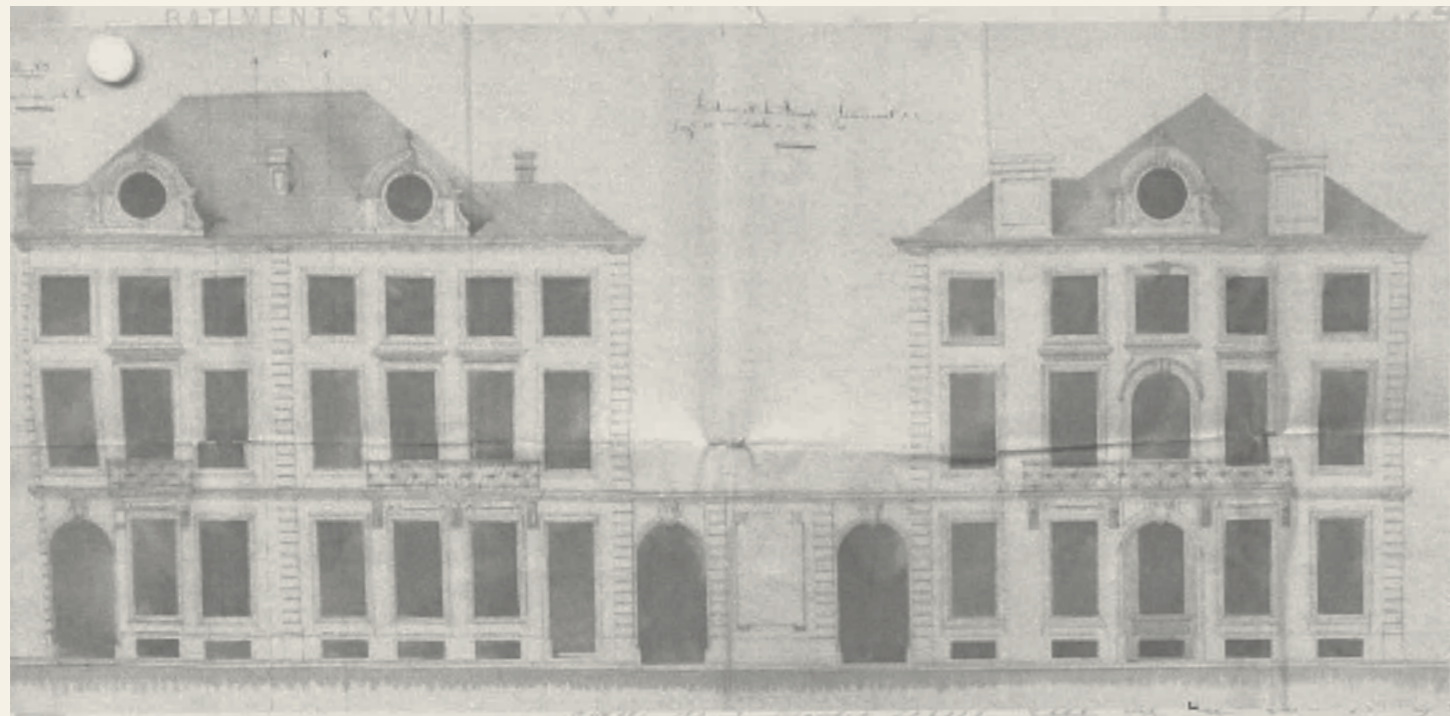
The origins of the building trace back to the late eighteenth century when the French architect Bernabé Guimard, known for his meticulous urban plans, laid out a grand neoclassical streetscape along the eastern edge of Parc de Bruxelles. The House of Hungary, constructed as part of this vision, harmonizes with the surrounding buildings through its strict adherence to facade design, proportion, and material use. Guimard's influence is evident in the building's symmetry and elegance, with refined pilasters, cornices, and grandiose windows adorning the facade.

Initially built on a rectangular plan, the structure featured three levels and five bays, crowned with a hipped roof. The design emphasized a restrained aesthetic, but with elements like a decorative wrought-iron balcony and a finely crafted pediment that hinted at its refined status. In 1783, a lower rear wing was added, expanding the building and enhancing its functional versatility.

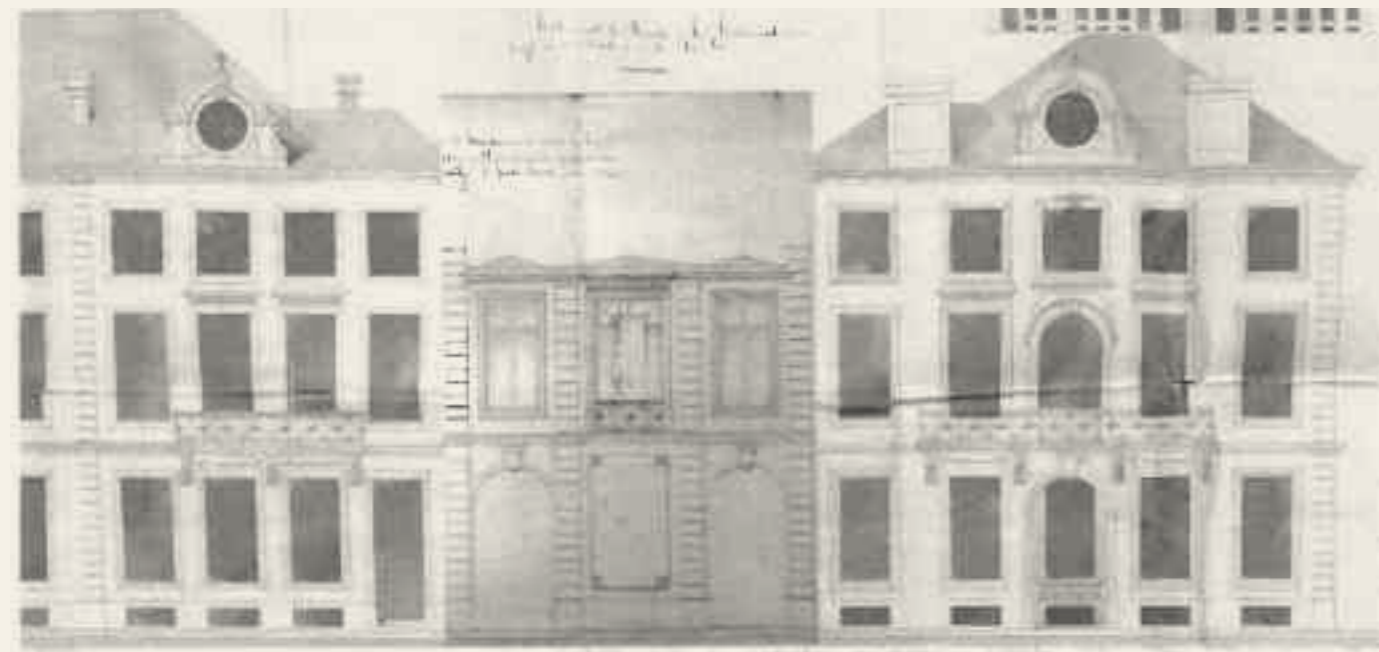


1777

Rue de la Loi x Rue Ducale

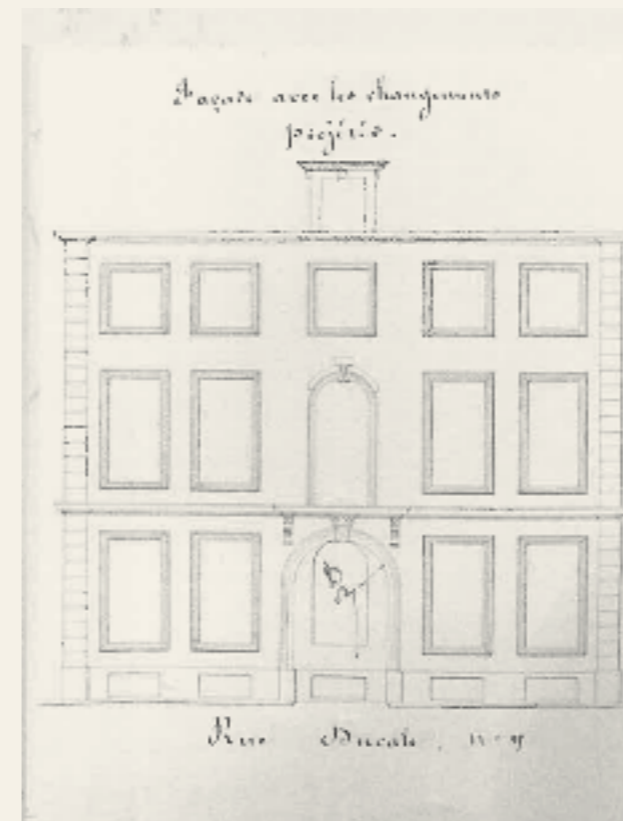


1869



1870

THE RUE DE LA LOI FAÇADE



1838



1869



1981



2024

THE RUE DUCAL FAÇADE

# Today, the House of Hungary is a proud symbol of Hungary's *diplomatic and cultural presence* in Brussels.

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As the city evolved, so did the building. By the early nineteenth century, Brussels' urban landscape was undergoing rapid transformation. In 1835, following the widening of Rue de la Loi, the house's main entrance was reoriented toward the street, reflecting its new prominence at the bustling intersection. This was followed by a series of expansions that significantly altered its structure. By 1869, additional wings and carriage entrances were added, with the renowned architect D. Limbourg overseeing the project. These modifications, including the demolition of older outbuildings and the reconstruction of the rear facade, gave the building its current U-shaped layout, enhancing both its grandeur and functionality.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the house changed ownership multiple times, passing through the hands of noble families and military officials. The building was home to the Count of Windisch-Graetz and later became the residence of Colonel de Knyf, aide-de-camp to the Prince of Orange. By the turn of the century, it had become state property, cementing its role as a site of national importance.

The early twentieth century brought further changes. In 1903, the building underwent significant renovations, including the addition of subterranean floors and expanded wings toward the inner courtyard. These updates reflected the building's adaptation to the growing needs of its occupants while preserving its neoclassical charm. Architects like Jean Canneel and Alfred Nyst played pivotal roles in these transformations, adding modern touches like redesigned ground-floor windows and an additional level to the entrance pavilion, all while maintaining the structure's architectural integrity.

During World War II, the house became a refuge, with its basement and partially enclosed courtyard offering shelter during air raids. This period adds a layer of poignancy to the building's history, reminding us of its role in the city's resilience during one of Europe's darkest chapters.

Today, the House of Hungary is a proud symbol of Hungary's diplomatic and cultural presence in Brussels. Its elegant facade, adorned with classical motifs and intricate detailing, speaks to the city's architectural grandeur, while its long history of adaptation and survival mirrors Brussels' own evolution as a European capital.



# From DESIGN *to* REALITY

A conversation with ATTILA SÁGHI,  
senior advisor, project manager



## WHAT WAS YOUR ROLE IN THE HOUSE OF HUNGARY PROJECT?

**Attila Sághi:** The project was commissioned by two ministries – the Prime Minister’s Office and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. While they adeptly handled the financial, legal, and regulatory aspects, they recognized the need for someone with experience in historic preservation and managing complex projects with an international dimension. That is where I came in. After a rigorous selection process, I was chosen to oversee the professional direction of the project. My role involved coordinating the needs of all stakeholders, crafting a comprehensive design program, and selecting the most suitable design team.

## WHAT WERE THE KEY COMPLEXITIES OF MANAGING THE PROJECT?

**A. S.:** The project was uniquely challenging. The building had to balance historic preservation with modern functionalities, serve as a space for exhibitions and diplomatic events, and reflect Hungarian identity while complying with Belgian regulations. It required a deep understanding of both cultural and governmental needs from Hungary, as well as the expectations of Belgian authorities and diplomatic representatives. My task was to unify these diverse interests and ensure that the project progressed smoothly.

## WHAT CHALLENGES DID YOU FACE WHEN COORDINATING BETWEEN HUNGARIAN AND BELGIAN INTERESTS?

**A. S.:** The biggest challenge was bridging the gap between the Hungarian vision and Belgium’s regulatory framework. While we knew the building needed significant renovation, the level of intervention required was less clear. We also had to quickly adapt to Belgium’s permitting processes, especially regarding sensitive elements like the façade and courtyard.

Time was another critical factor. There was widespread skepticism about whether the renovation could be completed in time for the Hungarian EU presidency starting in July 2024. But we persevered, and now the building stands as a testament to that effort.

## I UNDERSTAND THAT THREE ARCHITECTURAL FIRMS WERE INVOLVED IN THE DESIGN TENDER. HOW WERE THEY SELECTED?

**A. S.:** We invited three firms with international experience in heritage preservation and cultural spaces. This was not a simple ideas competition; the firms had to submit comprehensive schematic plans, covering everything from the courtyard and façade to potential extensions. We then worked closely with the Belgian authorities to assess which proposals aligned with local regulations.



↑The project required a deep understanding of Hungarian culture and Belgian regulations. Signature of the building permit with ASSAR Architects Ltd., also assisted by Ari Epstein, Hungary's Honorary Consul in Flanders.

←The building had to balance historic preservation with modern functionalities. From left to the right: Csaba Káel, Ambassador Tamás Iván Kovács, Zoltán Kovács, State Secretary of International Communication, Attila Sághi





↑ Every detail was thoroughly discussed during the renovation. János Bóka, Minister for European Union Affairs of Hungary (right), visited the construction site



←→ Work progressed at an incredible pace, and the renovation was completed in just 10 months.



↑ Tamás Sulyok, President of Hungary and Attila Sághi, senior councillor and project coordinator



← Gergely Bogányi, Kossuth- and Ferenc Liszt Prize-winning pianist in the Salon Bartók

“We aspired to reach the top tier of European excellence – *in design, execution, and cultural content.*”

**COULD YOU ELABORATE ON THE DESIGN PROPOSALS?**

A. S.: Each firm brought something unique to the table. For example, the team of Archikon Architects, led by Csaba Nagy was incredibly daring. They envisioned transforming the courtyard into a multifunctional atrium with a conservatory-style roof, creating an expansive, open area. Their proposal for residential spaces was also innovative – loggias and plant-covered terraces that provided privacy while blending seamlessly with the overall design.

György Vadász and his team presented a similarly bold concept for the courtyard, suggesting a high-ceiling enclosure. They also proposed a Tokaj wine cellar – a truly immersive space designed to celebrate Hungarian culture through the art of winemaking. The idea was to create a VIP wine-tasting experience that transported visitors to the heart of Hungary’s renowned Tokaj wine region.

**WHAT ULTIMATELY MADE THE WINNING DESIGN STAND OUT?**

A. S.: The firm we selected, 3H, found the perfect balance between respecting the building’s heritage and introducing modern, forward-thinking design elements. They avoided both strict historical replication and overly avant-garde concepts. Instead, they crafted a twenty-first-century design language that harmonized Hungarian cultural motifs with Brussels’ architectural character. Their interior design approach was cohesive, thoughtful, and imbued with a narrative that resonated with everyone involved. Every salon, every exhibition space told a unified story, adding layers of meaning and cultural significance. 3H’s vision ensured that the House of Hungary would not just be a functional building but a symbol of something much larger.

# Restoring *the Past* with an Eye *on the Future*

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A conversation with ZSOLT GUNTHER  
and KATALIN CSILLAG, chief architects  
and founding partners of 3H Architects



**R**enovating a centuries-old building like the House of Hungary in Brussels is no simple task. Under the guidance of chief architects Zsolt Gunther and Katalin Csillag from 3H Architects, this iconic structure has been revitalized, blending modern functionality with its historical essence.

**WHAT WAS THE STARTING POINT FOR THIS MASSIVE UNDERTAKING?**

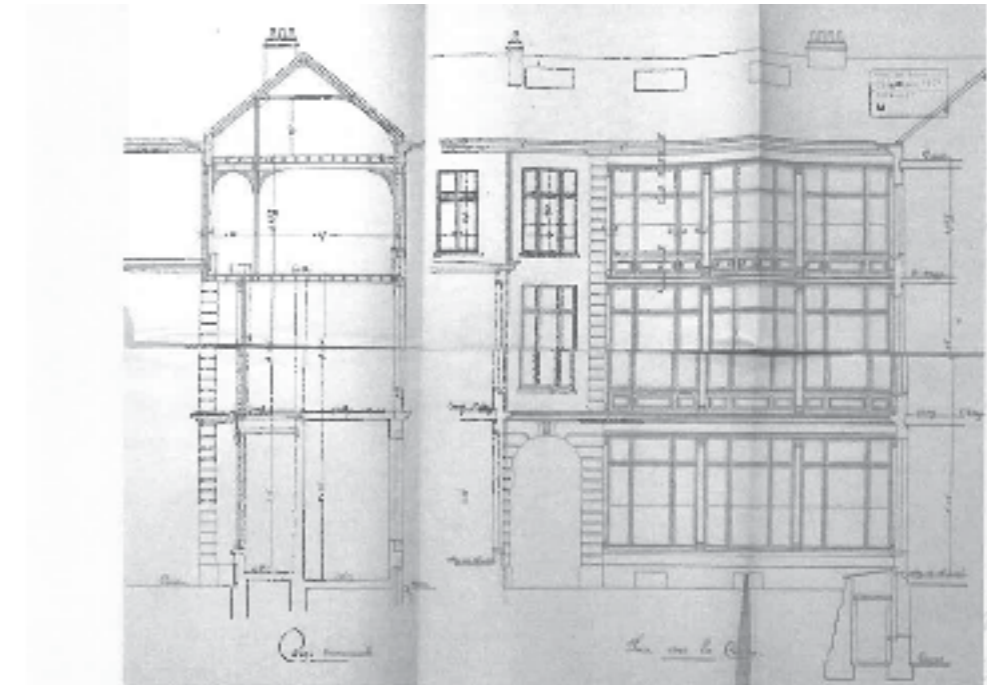
**Zsolt Gunther:** We began refining the design in October 2022, working closely with city planners and preservation bodies in Belgium. By January 2023, we were submitting permits and preparing tender documents for construction costs. This layered process allowed us to preserve the architectural integrity while meeting tight deadlines.

**Katalin Csillag:** Time was our biggest challenge from the outset. The design, approval, and construction processes had to run almost simultaneously. Our team, which included specialists in acoustics, fire safety, and kitchen technology, was in a race against the clock.

**HOW DID YOU APPROACH THE CHALLENGE OF PRESERVING THE HISTORICAL INTEGRITY OF THE BUILDING WHILE INCORPORATING NECESSARY MODERN UPDATES?**

**ZS. G.:** We started by analyzing the building's history. The façade is protected as a heritage site, so we painstakingly reconstructed it using old photographs and drawings. Inside, though not officially protected, we aimed to preserve valuable elements. Some parts, like the ceilings, were beyond saving and had to be rebuilt with plaster casts.

**K. CS.:** Our focus was on respecting the building's organic evolution. The House of Hungary has evolved since the 1700s, and rather than imposing something new, we wanted to reveal what had always been there.



The house's cross-section, 1902



The redesigned cross-section of the house, 2024

**YOU MADE A FASCINATING DISCOVERY DURING THE RENOVATION PROCESS.**

ZS. G.: Yes, we uncovered an old, bricked-up doorway. We had long suspected its existence due to the building's symmetry and the layout of neighboring houses. This third entrance, now reinstated, provides vital modern functionality, offering access for VIPs and media. Convincing Belgian authorities to approve it was not easy, but historical photographs and the discovery of the original archway during demolition helped. Restoring it transformed what was once a meaningless corridor into a natural entryway, leading guests through the grand rooms and up the staircase connecting the salons.

**WHAT WERE THE MAIN STRUCTURAL CHANGES TO THE BUILDING?**

ZS. G.: One of the most significant changes was converting the attic. Previously an unusable, labyrinthine space, we transformed it into a functional office level, integrating mechanical systems at the roof's peak. This subtle change greatly improved the building's functionality without altering its historical footprint.

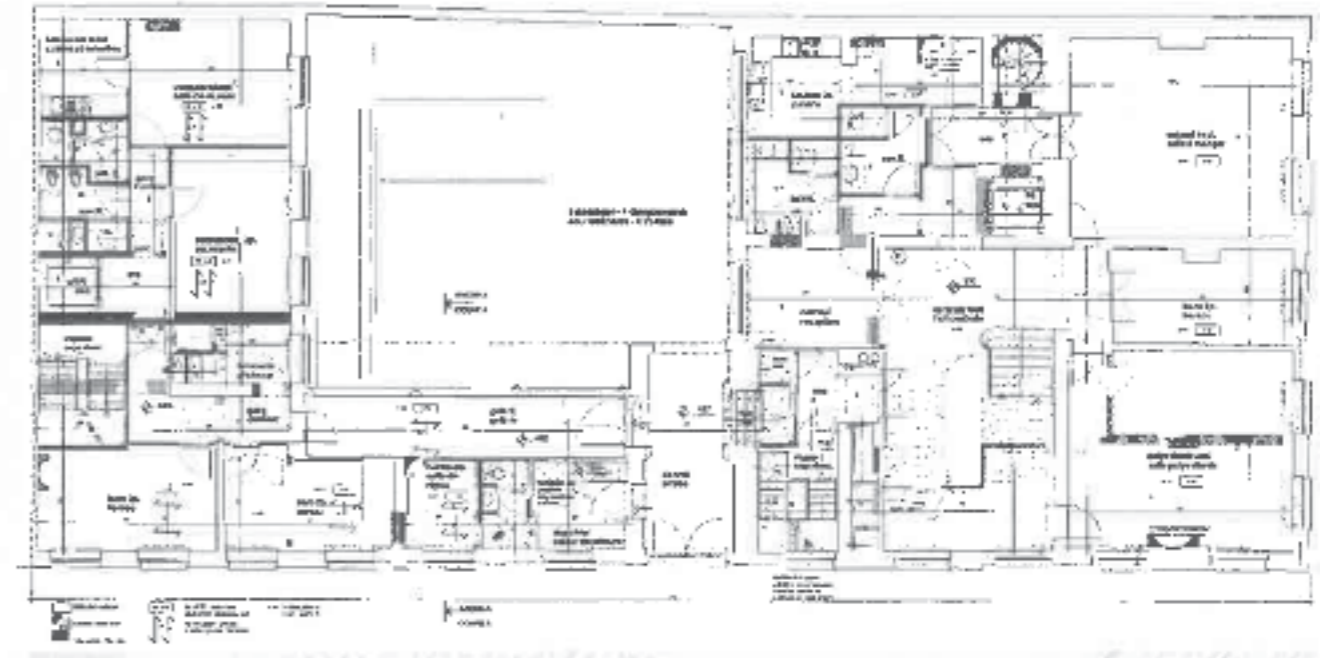
**WAS SUSTAINABILITY A KEY CONSIDERATION IN THE RENOVATION?**

ZS. G.: Absolutely. We preserved the original façade and restored it with minimal intervention. Inside, we installed energy-efficient systems, like heat recovery ventilation. Even the windows and doors meet modern standards while respecting the building's heritage. This project is designed to last for decades with minimal upkeep.

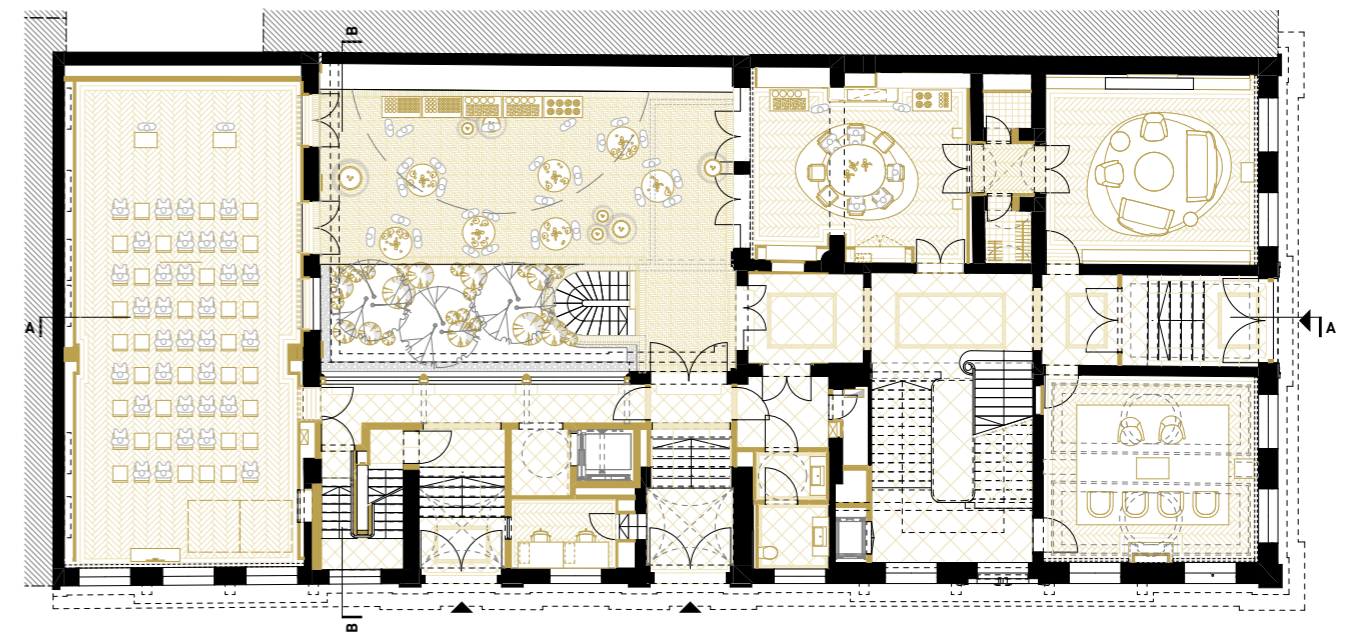
**THE INTERIOR DESIGN DREW INSPIRATION FROM TRADITIONAL VILLAS AND PALACES. CAN YOU ELABORATE?**

ZS. G.: We wanted the journey through the building to feel like a narrative, much like in traditional palaces where each salon has a theme. As guests move through the House of Hungary, guided by a host, each room tells a different part of the story. The names of the salons reflect Hungary's cultural and historical ties to Europe, evoking its contributions to art, diplomacy, and science.

K. CS.: Each room carries symbolism. For example, the Salon Márai, the library, celebrates Hungarian literature, fostering dialogue and connection through shared literary experiences. The Salon Gundel, showcasing Herend porcelain, encourages discussions on Hungarian craftsmanship during diplomatic dinners.



Ground floor plan, 1998



Redesigned ground floor plan, 2024

“Our goal was *to honor that heritage* while ensuring the building serves *today’s needs.*”

**YOU ALSO INCORPORATED HUNGARIAN MOTIFS INTO THE DESIGN.**

**K. CS.:** Yes, we used Hungarian motifs, such as the messenger bird, throughout various design elements – from wallpaper to furniture. These subtle symbols add a layer of storytelling, deepening visitors’ connection to Hungarian culture.

**ZS. G.:** Importantly, we did not want these motifs to feel nostalgic. Using modern techniques, like laser cutting, we presented them in a contemporary way, showing that cultural heritage is alive and evolving.



**FINALLY, WHAT DO YOU HOPE PEOPLE FEEL WHEN THEY STEP INTO THE HOUSE OF HUNGARY?**

**ZS. G.:** We hope they feel a connection – to history, to culture, and to the future. Every detail, from the rooms to the artwork, is designed to inspire dialogue. It is a space for conversation and collaboration.



Hungarian motif gallery



The render of Salon Bartók (above) and the final result (below)



Design of the Salon Márai (above) and the final result (below)



Design of the St. István (above) and the final result (below)



Design of the Salon Gundel (above) and the final result (below)





# The Salons of the House of Hungary

AN EXQUISITE JOURNEY  
THROUGH HUNGARIAN  
CULTURE

The House of Hungary offers an immersive experience, with each salon serving as a meticulously curated narrative blending historical significance with symbolic artistry. Every space invites visitors to explore the nation's rich heritage in music, science, art, and diplomacy, showcasing Hungary's cultural milestones with both elegance and finesse.



SALON ANDRÁSSY



SALON HABSBURG



SALON MÁRAI



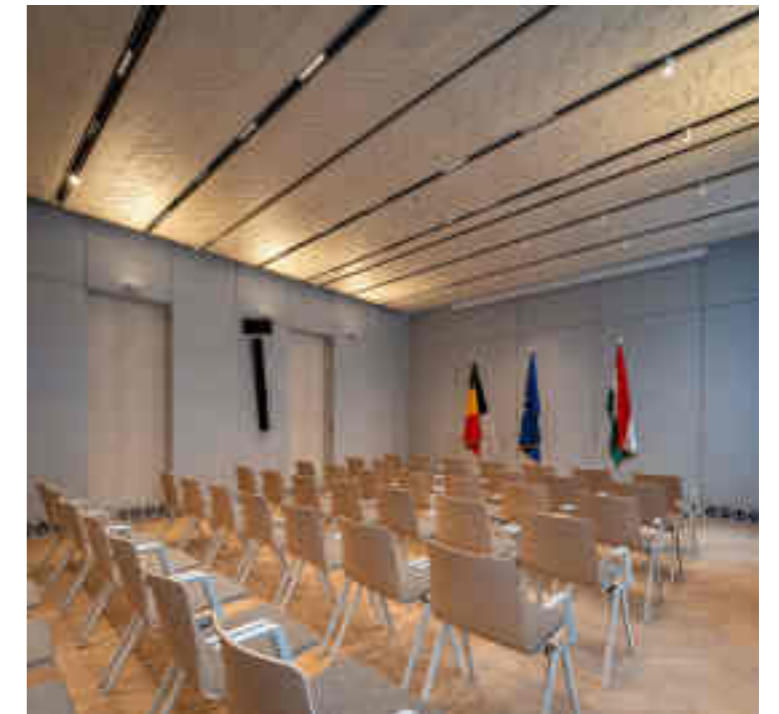
SALON BARTÓK



SALON GUNDEL



SALON NEUMANN



SALON ST. ISTVÁN



SALON  
HABSBURG



Decorated with iconic scenes from the collection of the Hungarian National Gallery, the Salon Habsburg captures the breathtaking diversity of Hungary's landscapes. From the vast Great Hungarian Plain to oak forests and poppy fields, the room's artwork pays homage to the genius of Hungarian painter Mihály Munkácsy, immersing visitors in a visual symphony of the country's natural beauty.













#### **MASTERPIECES OF CRAFTSMANSHIP**

Among the treasures on display are exquisite works by renowned Hungarian artisans. A decorative plate and candlestick by Fülöp Ö. Beck, crafted in 1898, reflect the delicate beauty of wildflowers from the Hungarian meadows. The forged iron rose by Gyula Jungfer is another masterpiece – a symbol of Hungary's expertise in ornamental ironwork. Silversmithing is represented by Alajos Giergl's refined coffee set from 1826 and an earlier set by Joseph Prandtner from 1796, both illustrating the elegance of Pest-Buda craftsmanship during the Reform era.



SALON  
GUNDEL



Inspired by Budapest's legendary gastronomic culture, the Salon Gundel elevates dining to an art form. Vitrines showcasing world-renowned Herend porcelain add to the atmosphere, recreating the intellectual charm of a turn-of-the-century literary café. Accessible from the Inner Courtyard, this salon is a tribute to Hungary's rich culinary traditions.

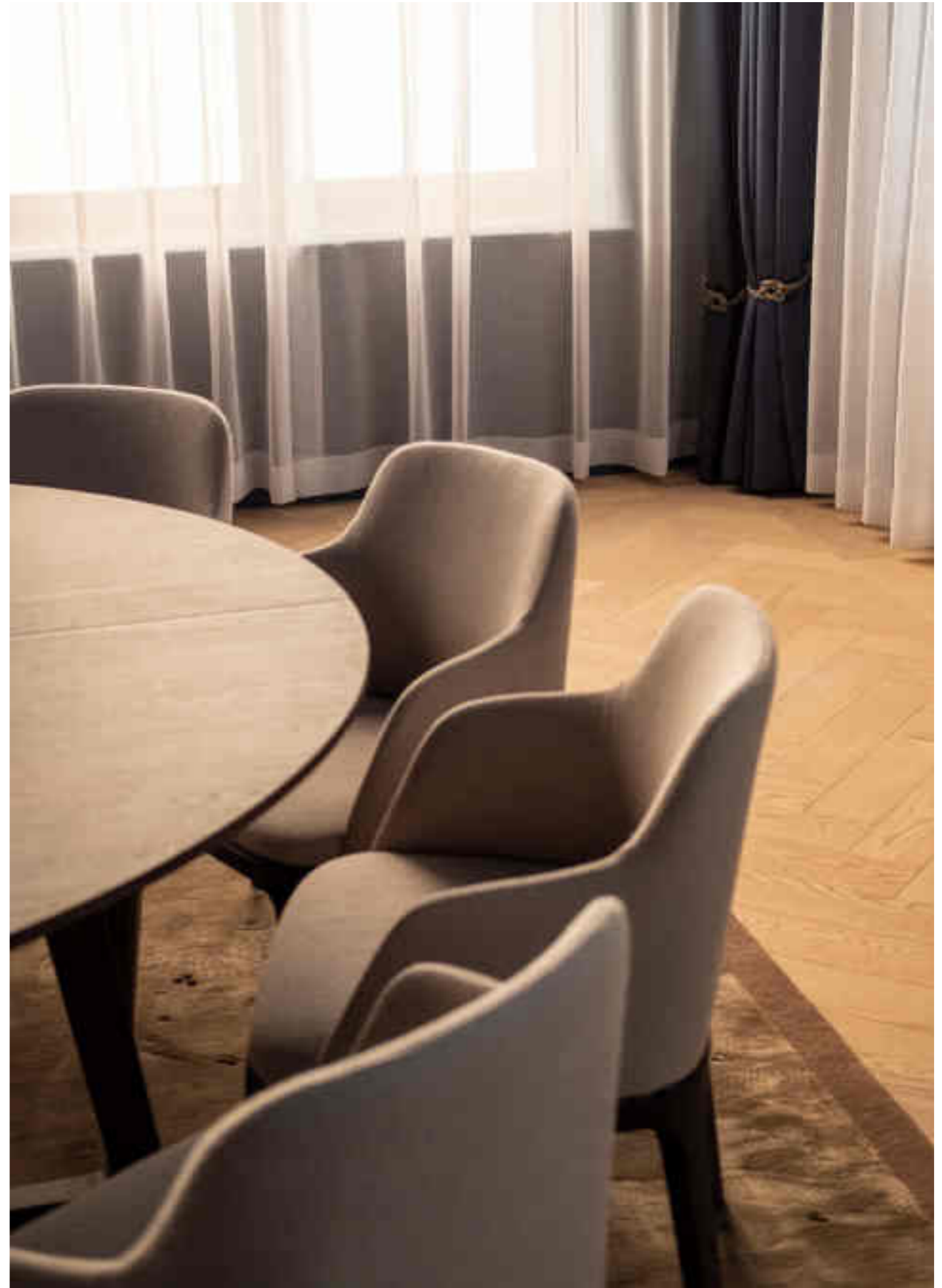






**ISTVÁN SOVÁNKA'S VASE (1902–1904)**

This stunning vase is a masterclass in the acid-etched glass technique, iconic in the Art Nouveau movement. Sovánka, inspired by French masters like Émile Gallé, elevated this craft to new heights in Hungary. The delicate, umbrella-shaped floral motifs of the vase evoke a serene connection to local woodlands. Its gradient, transitioning from warm orange to opalescent white, complemented by yellow-green tones, creates a sense of depth and quiet elegance.





SALON  
MÁRAI



The Salon Márai, a quiet and intimate library, recalls the literary salons of early twentieth-century Budapest. Its collection features over 3,000 significant works by Hungarian authors translated into the languages of the EU member states, as well as works created by foreign authors from Hungary, offers a treasure trove of literature and scholarly gems. This carefully curated library includes novels, academic treatises, and cultural studies, sourced with the expertise of Hungary's National Széchényi Library. At the library's heart is a majestic facsimile of the *Philostratos Corvina*, a cornerstone of King Matthias Corvinus's fifteenth-century royal library. This rare replica, bound using traditional materials and techniques, mirrors the craftsmanship of the original codex, which was preserved as a national treasure after its return to Hungary in 1933.





Copy of the Philostratos Corvinus Codex

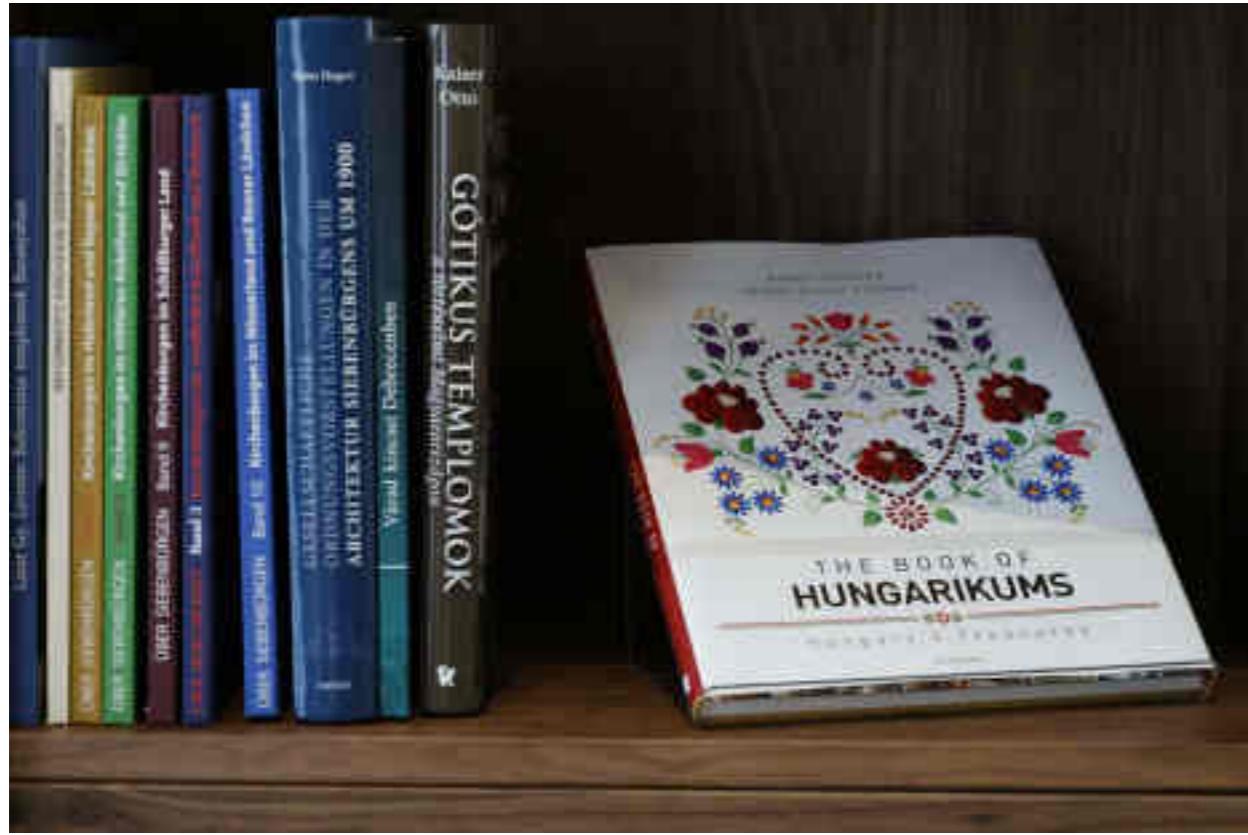


Bookends, Hajnalka Zilzer, ca. 1938, Budapest









On the right-hand shelves is a carefully curated selection of literature and literary theory, while the left-hand shelves are dedicated to scholarly works from various scientific fields, celebrating Hungarian achievements in history, archaeology, psychology, gastronomy, and architecture.

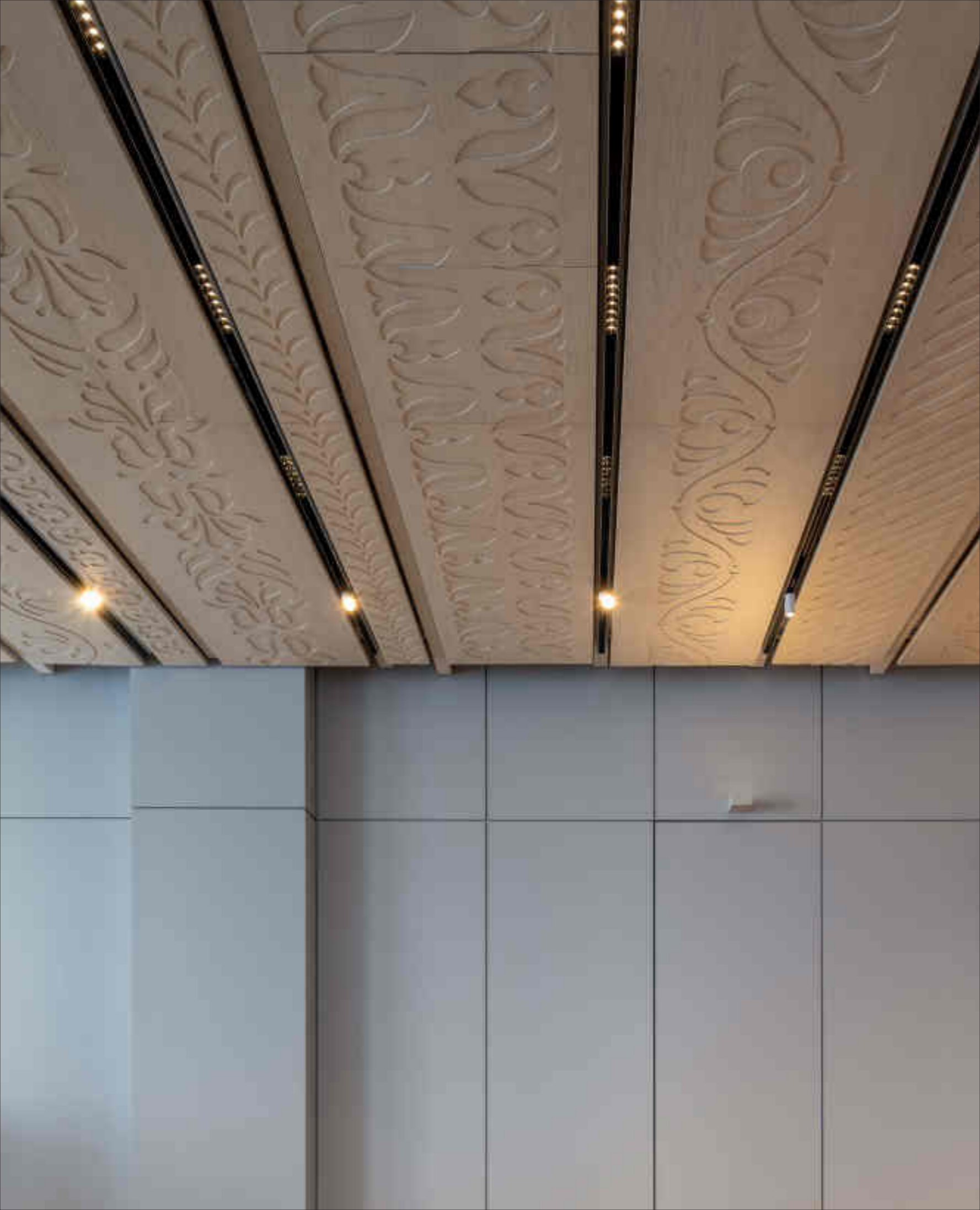


SALON  
ST. ISTVÁN



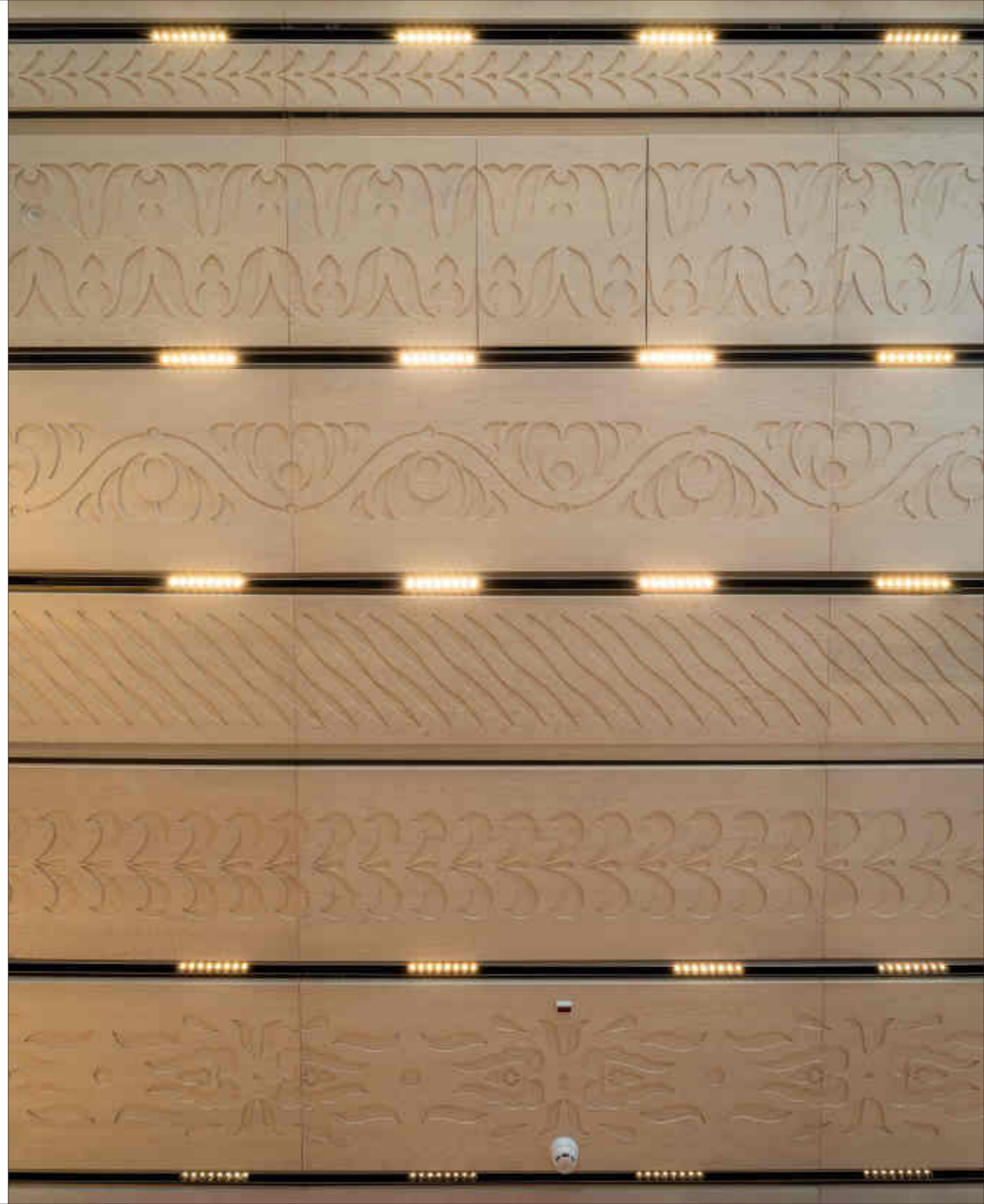
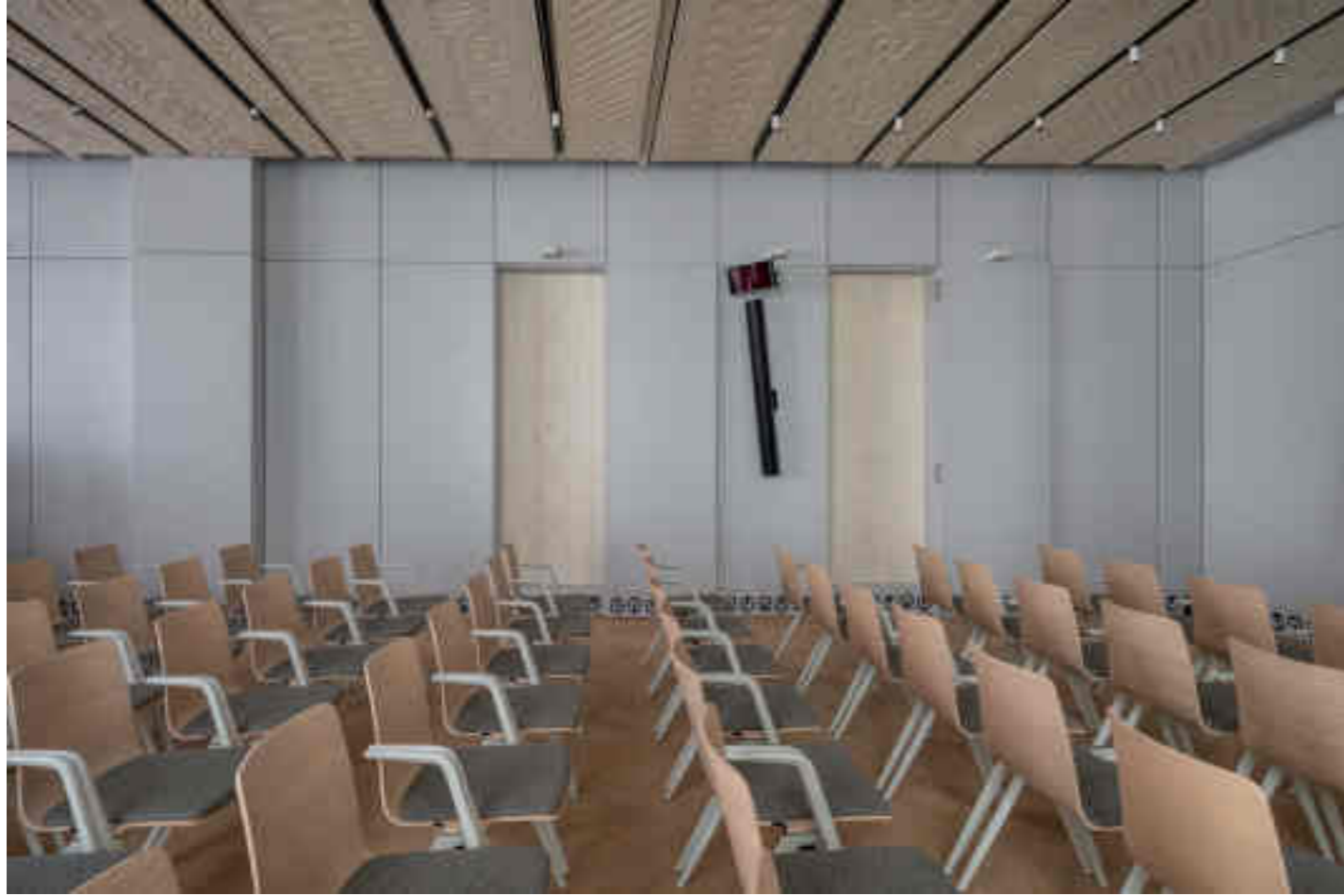
This grand salon embodies the Christian roots of Hungary, a cornerstone of its identity for over a millennium. It serves as a versatile venue for receptions, conferences, and formal dinners. The room is adorned with motifs inspired by intricate wooden gates, vibrant tapestries, and harvest wreaths that evoke the Carpathian Basin's historical depth. These regional symbols create a captivating panorama, reflecting the shared spiritual heritage that has shaped Hungary's intellectual and artistic legacy.













SALON  
**ANDRÁSSY**



The most elaborate of the salons, the Salon Andrassy, offers a deep dive into Hungarian folk art traditions. This intimate dining space pays tribute to the craft of “kékfestés” (blue-dyeing), with reliefs that reflect the beauty of Hungarian flora such as vine tendrils, elderflower, and hawthorn. These motifs serve as a reminder of the natural beauty and artisanal expertise that have inspired generations of Hungarian craftsmen.



















**JOSEPHUS PRANDTNER SR.,  
POTS AND SUGAR HOLDER  
1796, PEST**

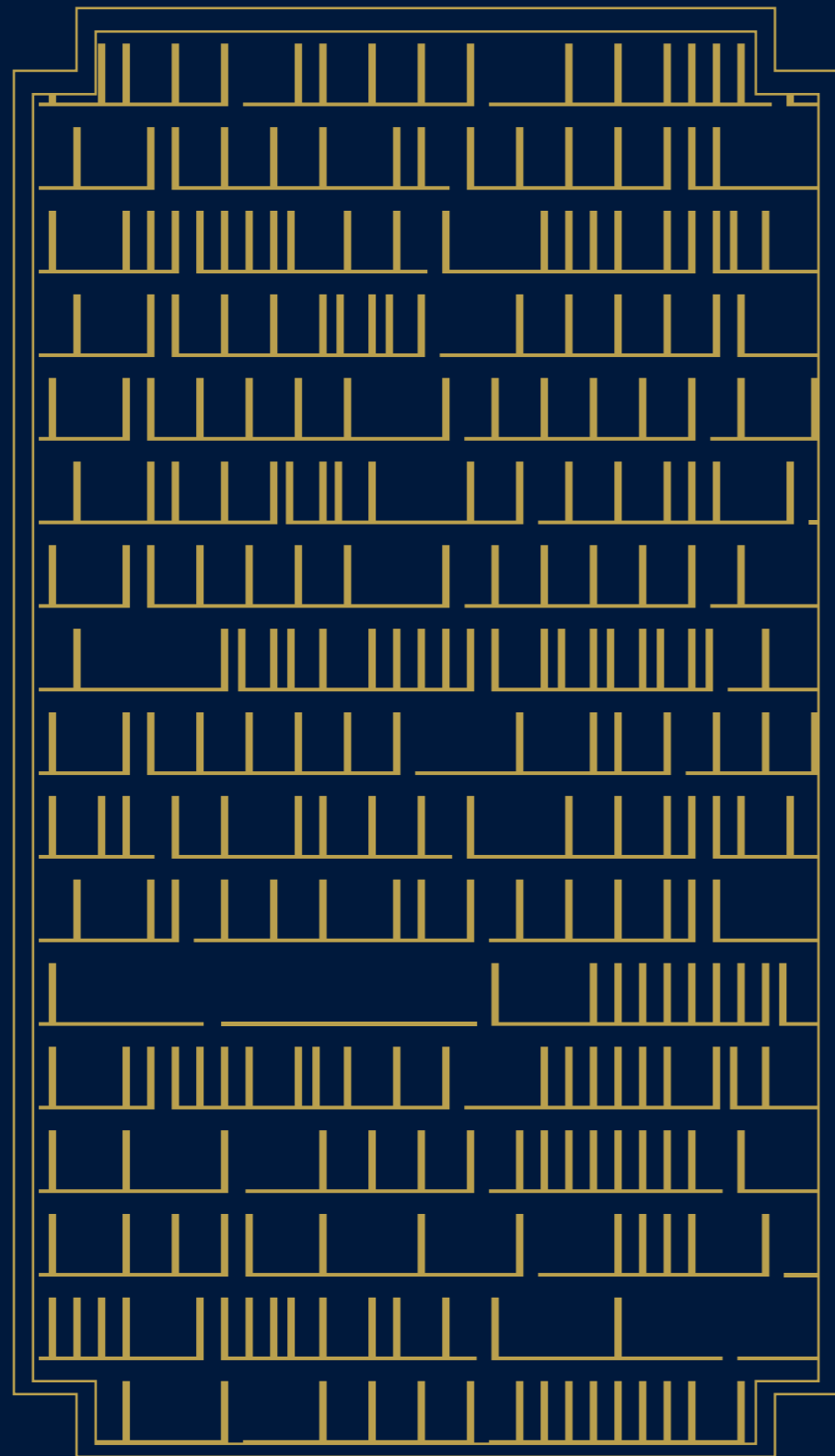
The coffee sets are masterpieces of late 18th-century goldsmithing from Pest-Buda during the Reformation era, crafted by members of two distinguished goldsmith and artist dynasties.



**ALOIS GIERGL,  
POTS AND SUGAR HOLDER  
1826, PEST**

This frequently used silver coffee set is an exceptional example of the goldsmithing of Hungarian classicism.





SALON  
BARTÓK



The Salon Bartók harmoniously bridges the worlds of sound and sight. Its golden-hued friezes, inspired by rhythmic motifs from some of Hungary's most iconic compositions – Ferenc Erkel's *Hymn*, Béla Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle*, and *The Miraculous Mandarin* – transform the space into a visual tribute to Hungary's musical heritage.







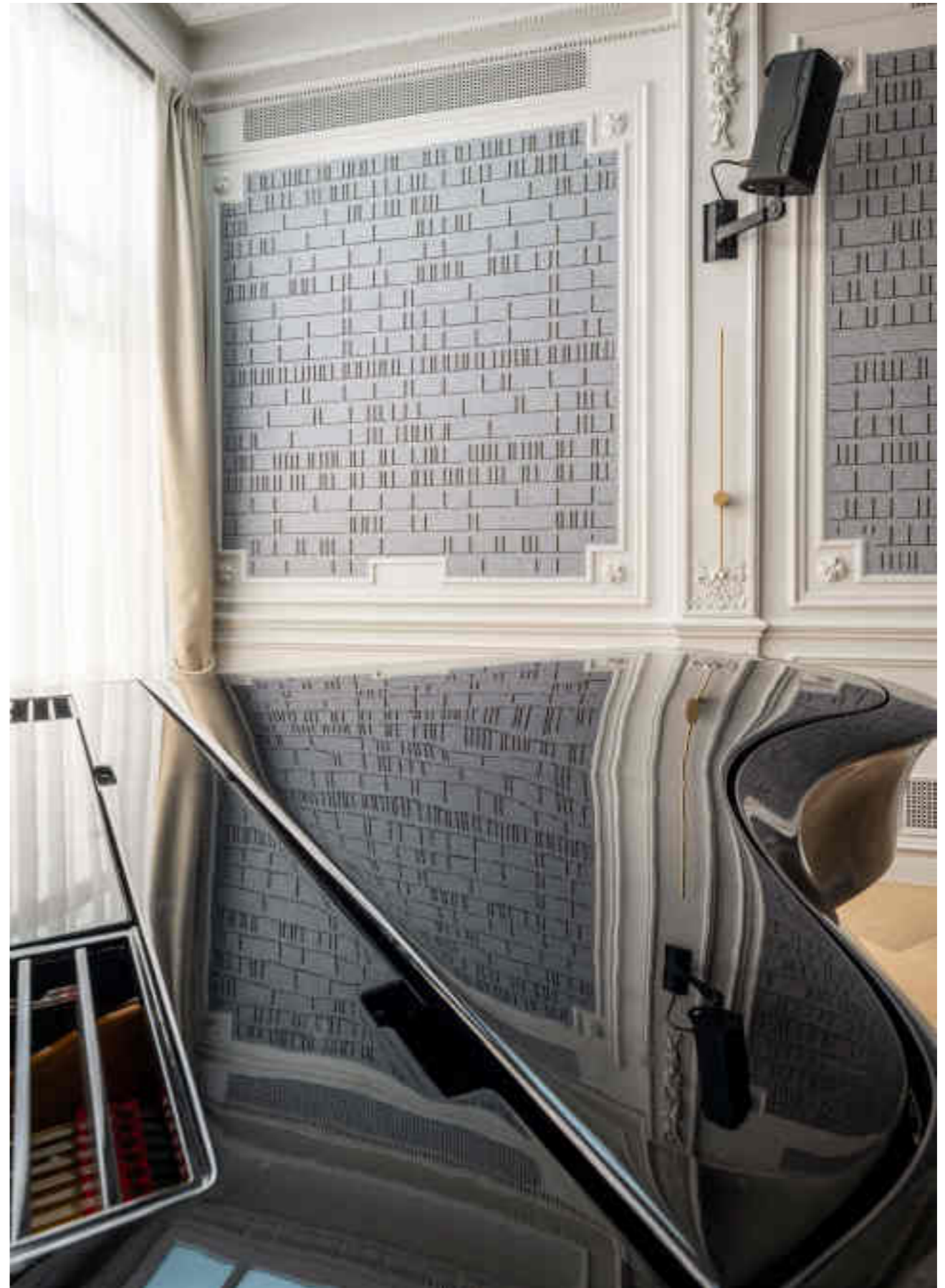


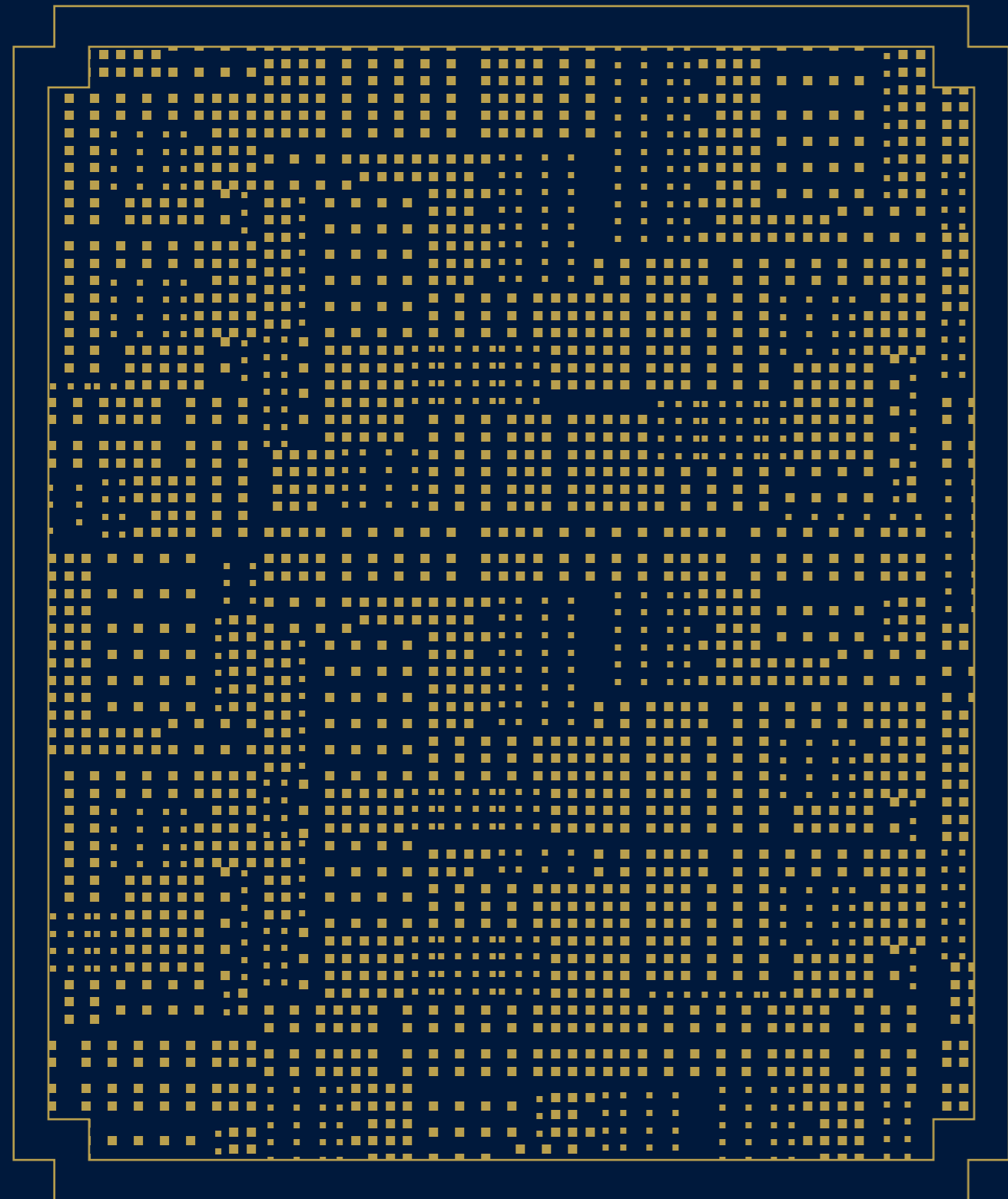
## The Bogányi B-292 Concert Grand Piano

The Bogányi B-292 concert grand piano redefines the boundaries of both sound and design. Measuring an impressive 296 cm in length, 188 cm in width, and standing 100 cm tall, this 650 kg masterpiece represents a decade of innovative craftsmanship. Its resonant tone rivals the world's leading piano brands, thanks to its advanced composite structure that ensures a longer lifespan, alongside transformative updates to its mechanics. A unique feature of the Bogányi design is its dual function as a sound deflector, a groundbreaking addition that marks a new chapter in the evolution of the instrument.



Gergely Bogányi by the piano



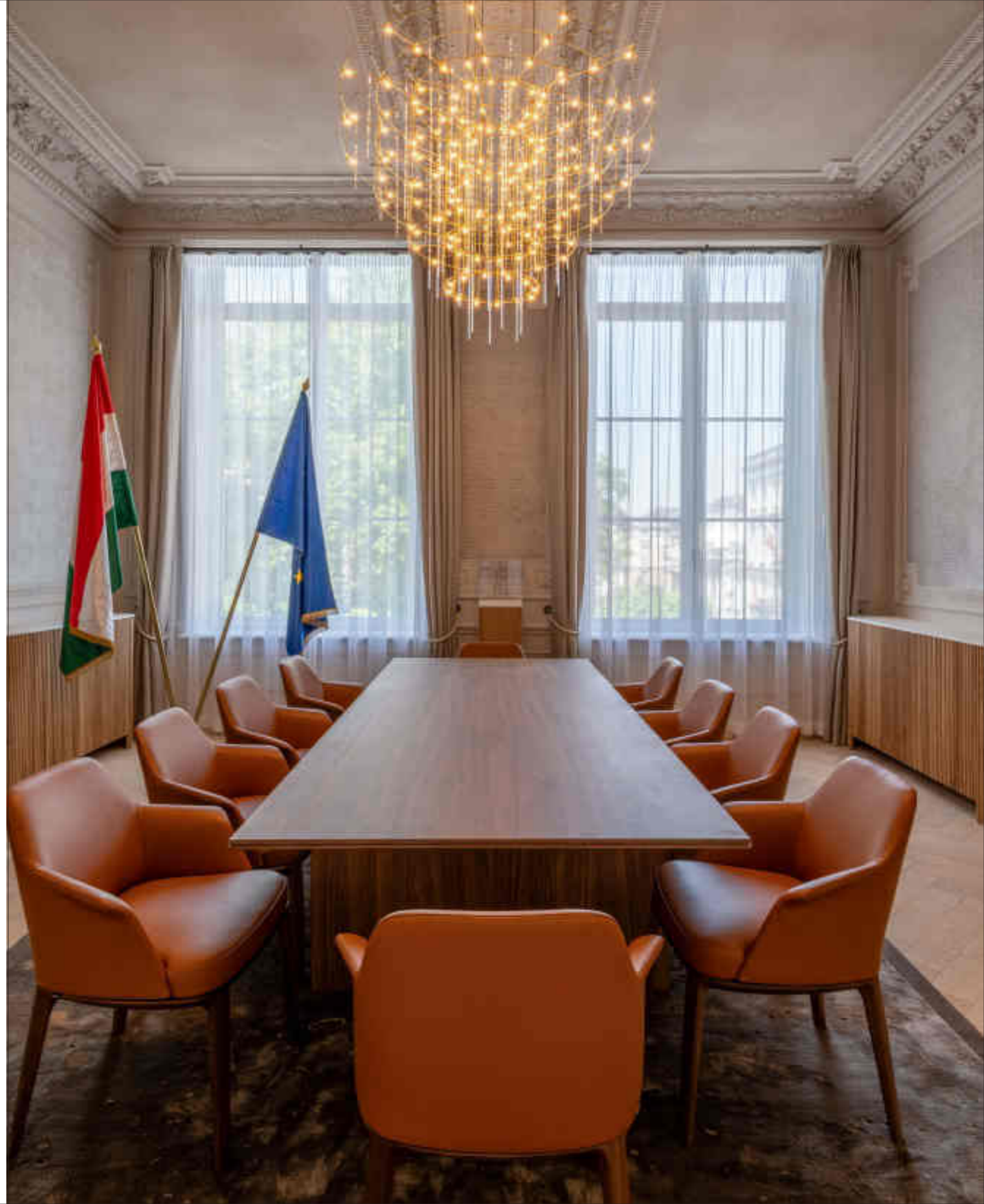


SALON  
NEUMANN



**H**onouring Hungary's ground-breaking contributions to science, the Salon Neumann is a sophisticated venue for diplomatic conferences and intellectual exchange. The room's design draws inspiration from the brilliant mind of John von Neumann, with intricate reliefs symbolizing the innovative thought processes behind his pioneering work in computing









**VALENTIN LEÓ PANTOCSEK, DECORATIVE GLASS, 1860–1870  
ZLATNO, SLOVAKIA**

Thanks to doctor-chemist Valentin Leó Pantocsek, Hungary was among the first countries to produce iridescent glass in the spirit of historicism. This creative process was inspired by archaeological glass finds originally corroded underground. The shapes of these glass objects also evoke ancient and early medieval glassware.







# INNER COURTYARD

Embraced by the soothing scent of Hungarian lavender, the Inner Courtyard offers a tranquil yet dynamic space that connects the library and grand hall. This versatile area, sheltered by louvered coverings, is ideal for intimate gatherings, informal meetings, or moments of reflection. In this space, nature and architecture merge harmoniously, creating a serene hub that can be enjoyed in every season.



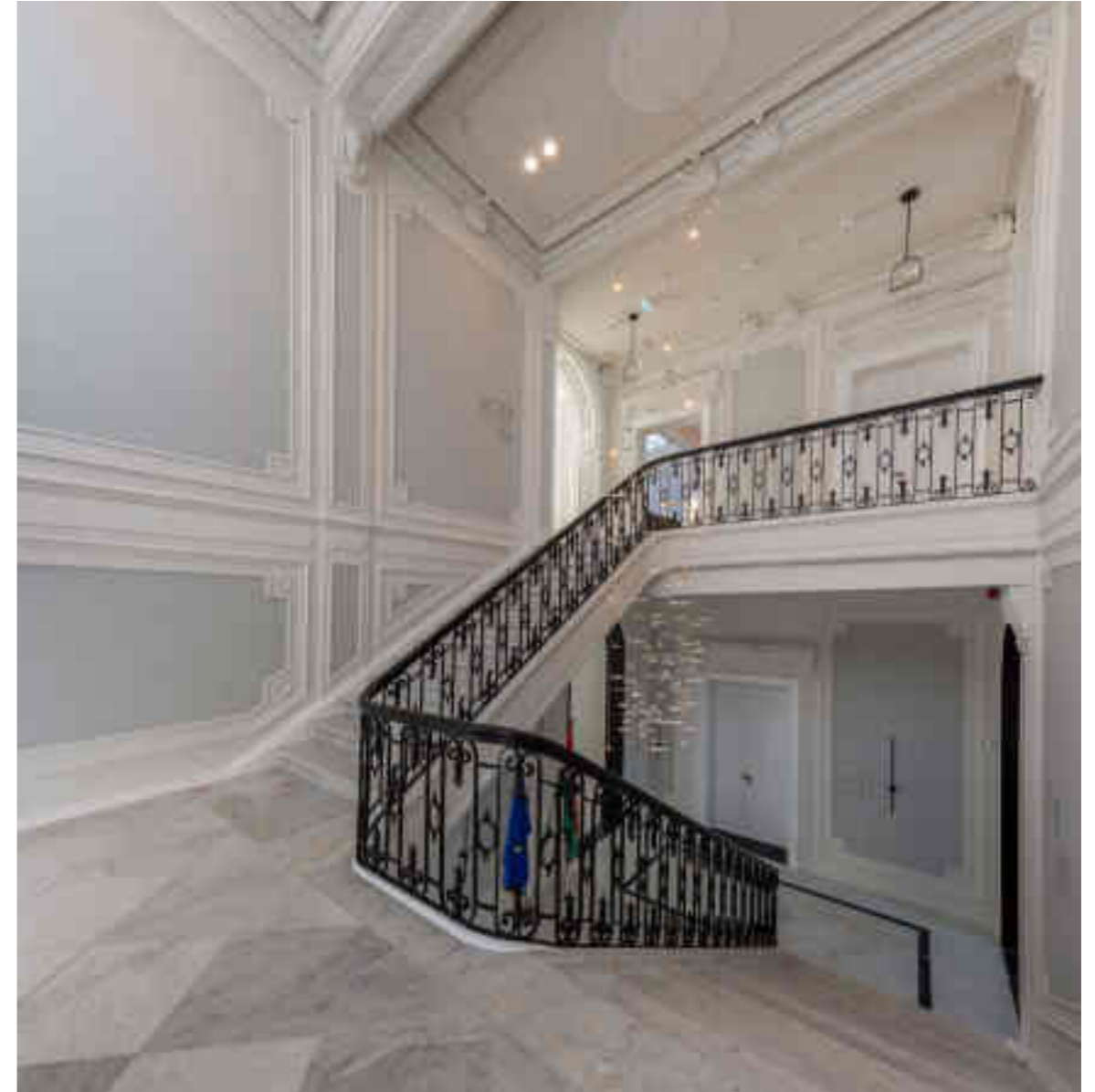


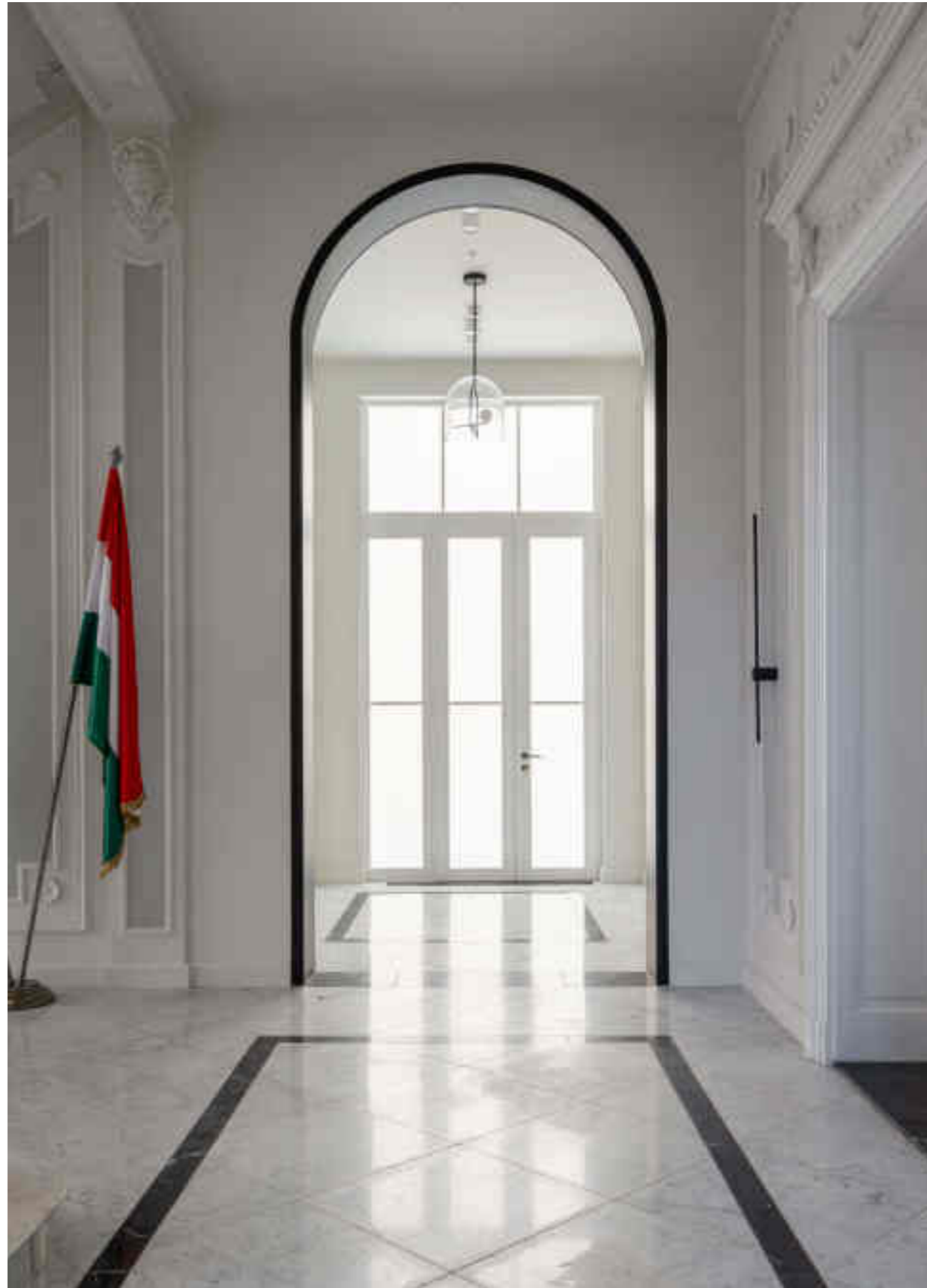


# IN BETWEEN

The transitional spaces of the House invite multiple interpretations, evoking a sense of poetic continuity. The recurring bird motif, inspired by the "messenger bird" of Hungarian folk art, serves as a powerful metaphor for connection and diplomacy, symbolizing the bridging of people, nations, and eras. Far from being merely decorative, this motif is thoughtfully reimagined in a contemporary context, seamlessly integrated into the lighting elements of the hallways and staircases.



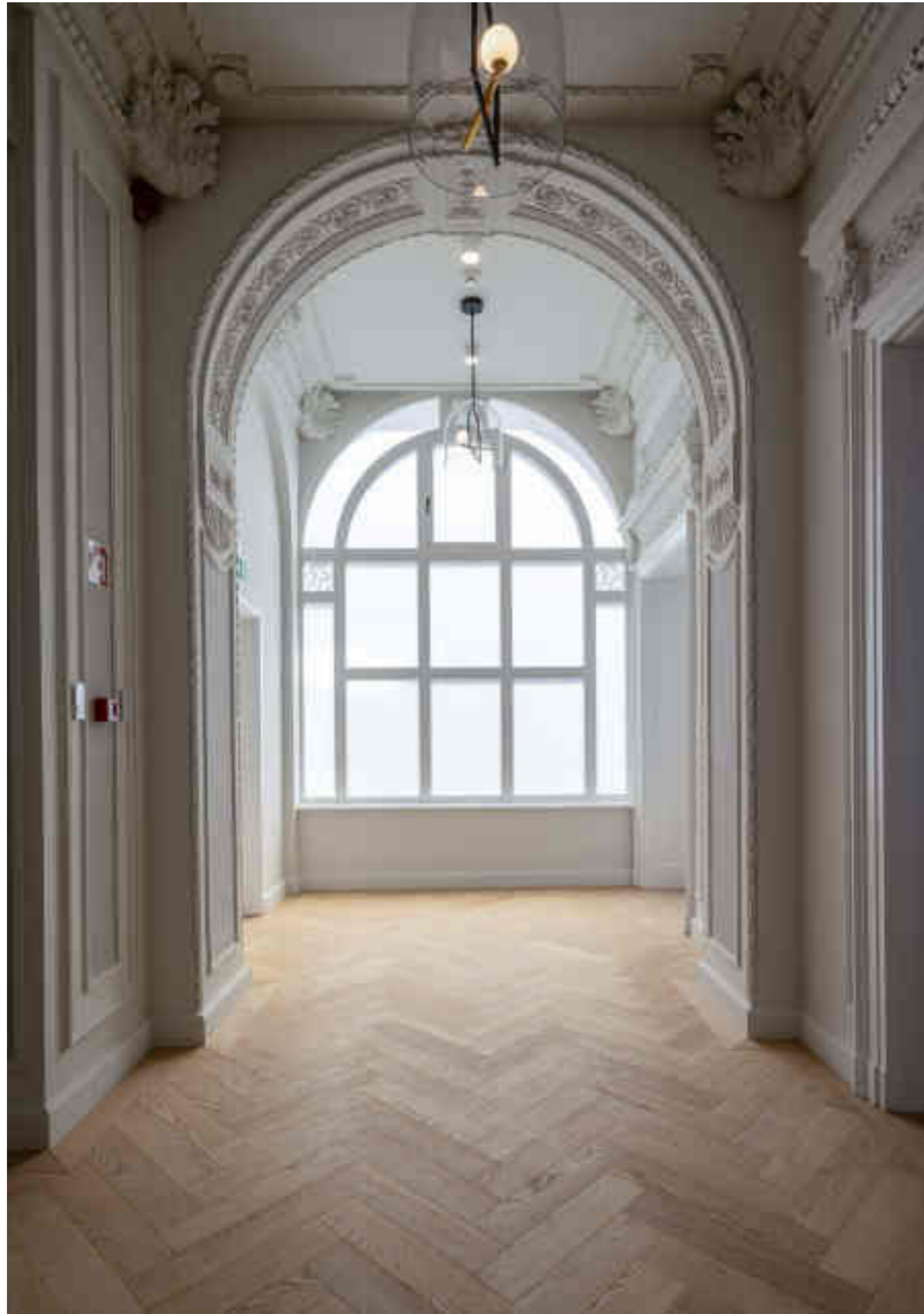


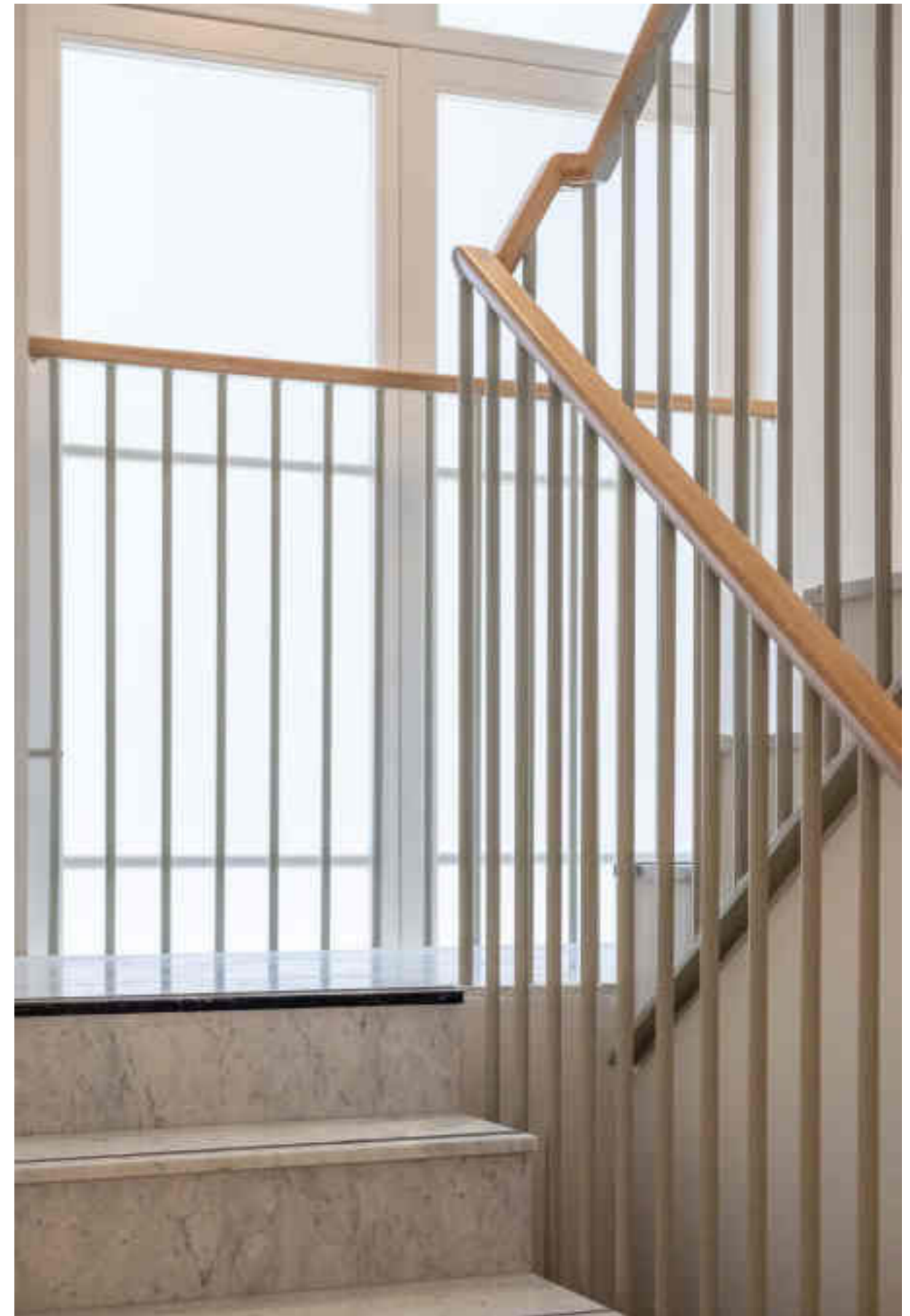










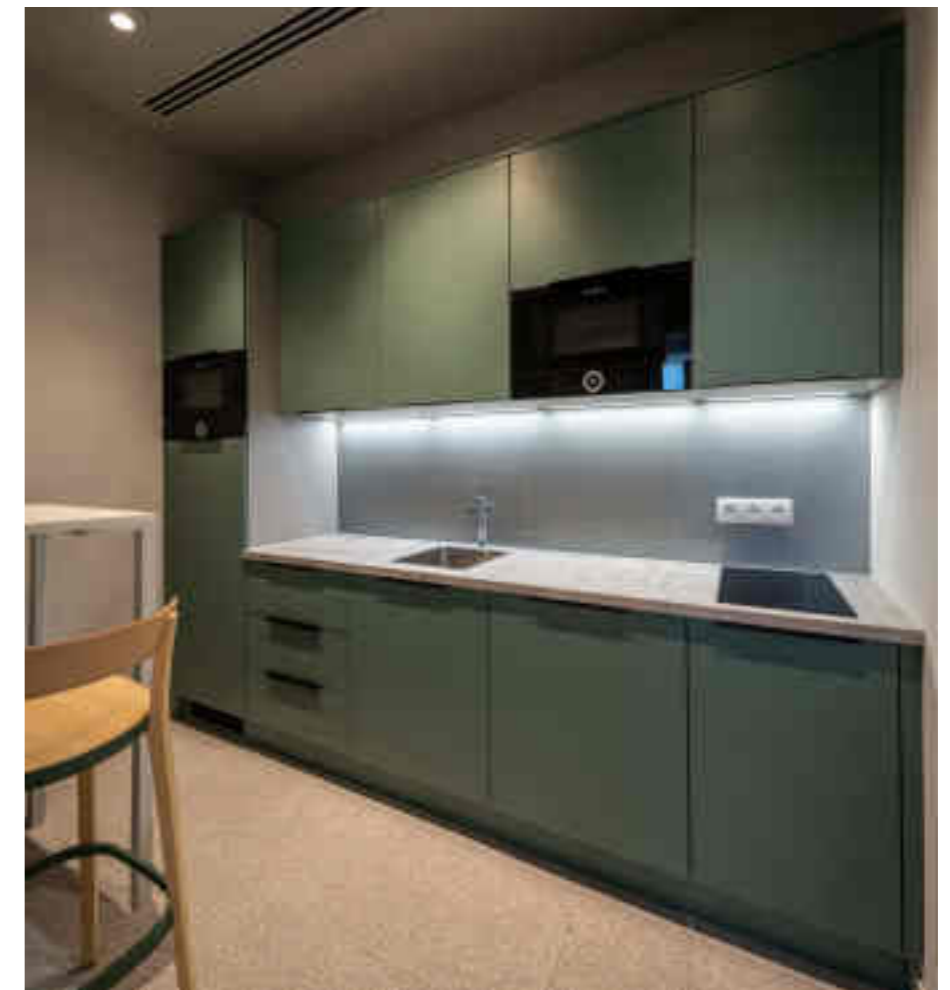
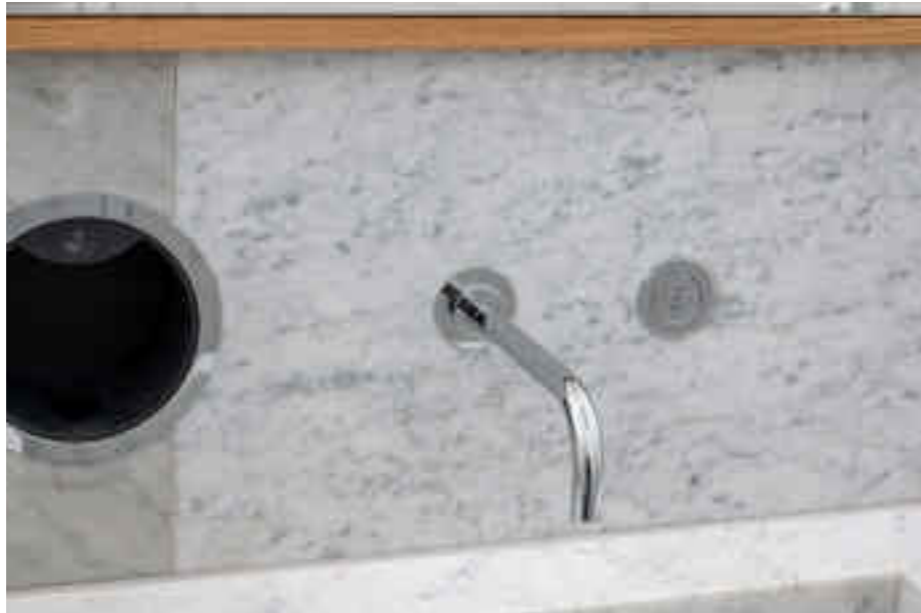


# *From* ATTIC *to* ASSET

The top floor of the house underwent a remarkable transformation, turning an unusable, labyrinth-like attic into a fully functional office level. Ingeniously designed within the existing structure, it even incorporates mechanical elements, showcasing the perfect blend of utility and innovation.



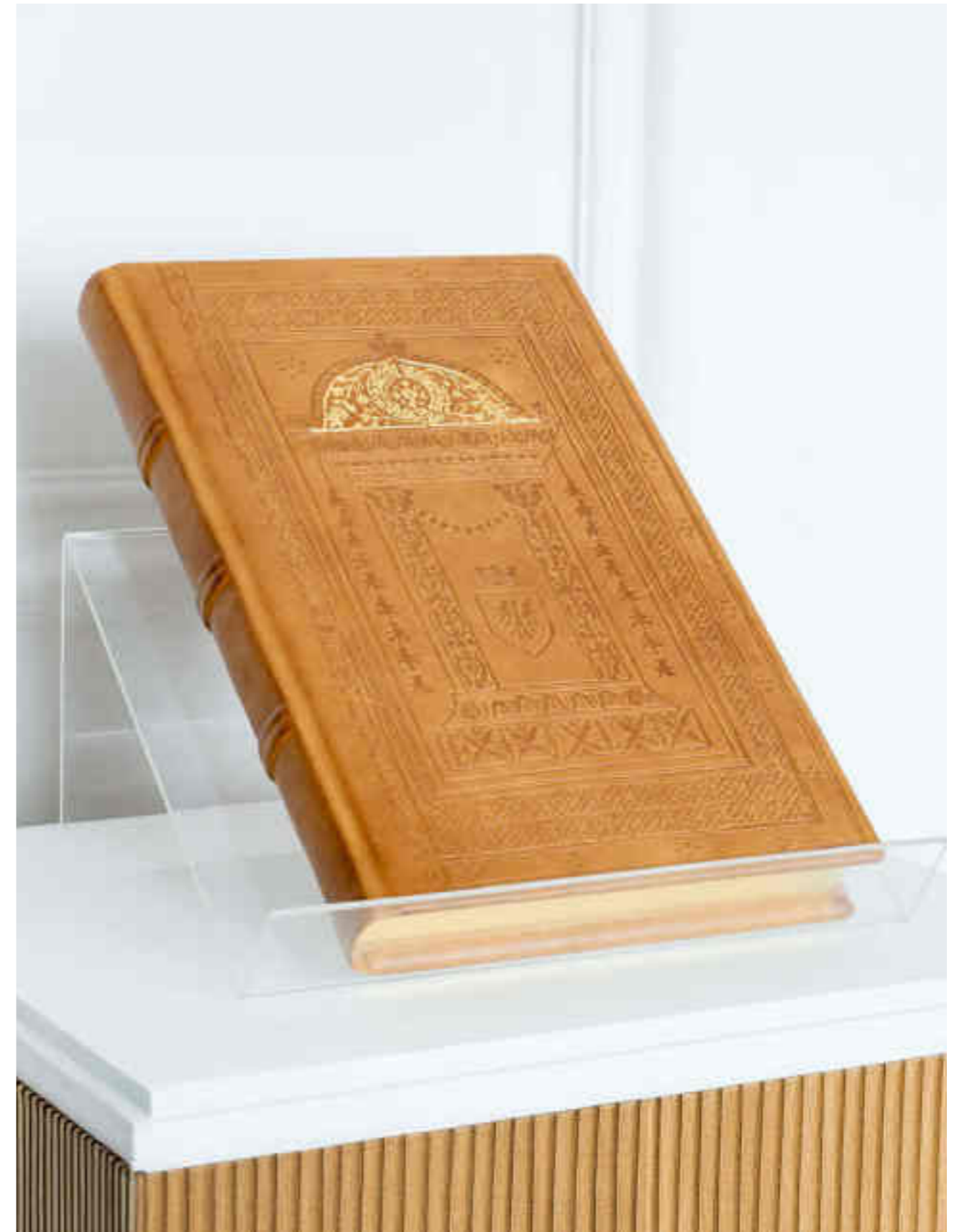




*Showcasing*  
HUNGARY'S  
*rich culture*  
and *values*

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A conversation with CSABA KÁEL,  
CEO of MÜPA Budapest,  
Hungarian Film Commissioner



**WHAT PRINCIPLES GUIDED THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CULTURAL PROGRAM FOR THE HUNGARIAN EU PRESIDENCY, AND HOW DOES THE HOUSE OF HUNGARY IN BRUSSELS CONTRIBUTE TO THIS?**

**Csaba Káel:** When designing the cultural program for the Hungarian Presidency, our goal was to highlight Hungary's rich and diverse culture, showcasing its deep roots and its close connection to Europe's historical and cultural heritage. We aimed to emphasize the multifaceted nature of this tradition-based culture, which is deeply intertwined with Europe's story. The House of Hungary in Brussels serves as a vital base and platform for communicating these values.

**WHAT FEEDBACK HAVE YOU RECEIVED FOLLOWING THE OPENING EVENT?**

**CS. K.:** I am proud to say the opening event was an enormous success, with many attendees remarking they had never experienced anything like it. It demonstrated how European culture is built upon the interwoven heritages of individual nations. The event began with works by Johann Sebastian Bach and Béla Bartók, which captivated the audience. Their standing ovation was a testament to the impact, with many attendees of previous presidency openings expressing that this was an entirely new and surprising experience for them. This concept defined the event's essence: a celebration of European culture as a tapestry of the diverse heritages of its peoples. The brilliance of two composers, Johann Sebastian Bach and

Béla Bartók, perfectly embodied this idea, showcasing the depth and richness of European cultural unity.

**WHAT INSPIRED THE PROGRAM FOR THE OPENING EVENT?**

**CS. K.:** Johann Sebastian Bach drew inspiration from European folk music, blending traditional melodies into his orchestral works and demonstrating how music is deeply rooted in the cultures of European peoples. Similarly, Béla Bartók, through his collections of folk songs from the Carpathian Basin and beyond, integrated these traditions into his compositions. Through the works of these two geniuses, Bach from the 18th century and Bartók from the 20th, we can see that Europe's cultural richness is founded on its diversity.

**THE BUILDING'S CULTURAL CORE IS FORMED BY SEVEN THEMED SALONS, EACH NAMED AFTER A KEY FIGURE IN HUNGARIAN HISTORY, CULTURE, OR SCIENCE. HOW DID THE IDEA OF THESE SALONS COME ABOUT, AND WHAT CRITERIA WERE USED TO SELECT THE NAMESAKES?**

**CS. K.:** Our aim was to highlight Hungary's contributions to Europe across politics, culture, and science by showcasing figures whose achievements are recognized internationally. We chose individuals who were deeply connected to significant European events and movements, allowing visitors to feel as though they had stepped into a Hungarian intellectual environment. Beyond carefully selecting the names, we designed



The House of Hungary conveys the values of Hungary's rich culture. Csaba Káel (on the right) is seen here during the construction.





From left to the right:  
Zsuzsanna Barsi,  
Ambassador Tamas Iván  
Kovács, Csaba Káel,  
Gabriella Nagy,  
Attila Ságghi, Miklós Both,  
Lajos Kemecsi



From left to the right:  
Attila Ságghi, Csaba Káel,  
Ambassador Tamas Iván  
Kovács, Zsuzsanna Barsi,  
Lajos Kemecsi, Miklós Both

the furnishings, wallpapers, and atmosphere of each salon to create an authentic sense of connection to Hungarian heritage.

**EACH SALON'S INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE IS DISTINCTLY UNIQUE, SUCH AS THE "BLUEPAINTING" THEME IN SALON ANDRÁSSY OR THE FRIEZES IN SALON BARTÓK THAT EVOKE HIS COMPOSITIONS. HOW DOES THE VISUAL DESIGN REINFORCE EACH SALON'S THEME?**

CS. K.: We crafted the ambiance of each salon to reflect the personality of its namesake and the artistic genre they represent. For instance, we incorporated musical notation in Salon Bartók and "bluepaint" motifs in Salon Andrásy. Even the library furniture was arranged to embody the spirit and values of the individuals they honor, making each space a visual and thematic extension of their legacy.

**WHAT KINDS OF PROGRAMS CAN AUDIENCES EXPECT IN THE SALONS?**

CS. K.: Our vision is to organize events that align with the spirit of the salons. These will include professional, diplomatic, and political forums aimed at reinforcing our guiding principle: that Europe's foundation lies in the uniqueness, character, and knowledge of its peoples. We plan to host conferences, discussions, presentations, and debates in the fields of science, art, and politics to foster dialogue and collaboration.

**THE HOUSE OF HUNGARY ALSO FEATURES ASPECTS OF THE LIGET BUDAPEST PROJECT. WHY WAS THIS PROJECT CHOSEN FOR INCLUSION?**

CS. K.: The House of Hungary represents not only the past but also the present and future. The Liget Budapest Project is one of Hungary's most ambitious and forward-looking cultural initiatives. At a time when large-scale, government-funded cultural investments are rare in Europe, it's essential to highlight Hungary's leadership in this area. By showcasing this project, we aim to raise awareness of Hungary's cultural development and the direction it is heading.

**WHAT ROLE WILL THE BUILDING PLAY IN CULTURAL DIPLOMACY AFTER THE PRESIDENCY?**

CS. K.: Our intention is to build on what we have started, organizing programs that further emphasize Hungary's cultural heritage and values. We want visitors to feel immersed in a Hungarian environment, enhanced by gastronomic experiences, exhibitions, and events. This will ensure that the House of Hungary continues to serve as a vibrant space for cultural diplomacy.

# LIGET BUDAPEST PROJECT

LÁSZLÓ BAÁN, Ministerial Commissioner  
of the Liget Budapest Project

The Liget Budapest Project is currently Europe's largest cultural urban development, recognized with prestigious international awards. Its aim is the comprehensive renewal of the 100-hectare City Park in Budapest, which includes the restoration and expansion of the park's green spaces and recreational facilities, as well as the revitalization of its centuries-old network of cultural institutions. This historic government initiative and its first decade of achievements are showcased in a spectacular photo and mockup exhibition at the House of Hungary in Brussels.



László Baán, Ministerial Commissioner of the Liget Budapest Project presents the historic renewal of the City Park in Budapest



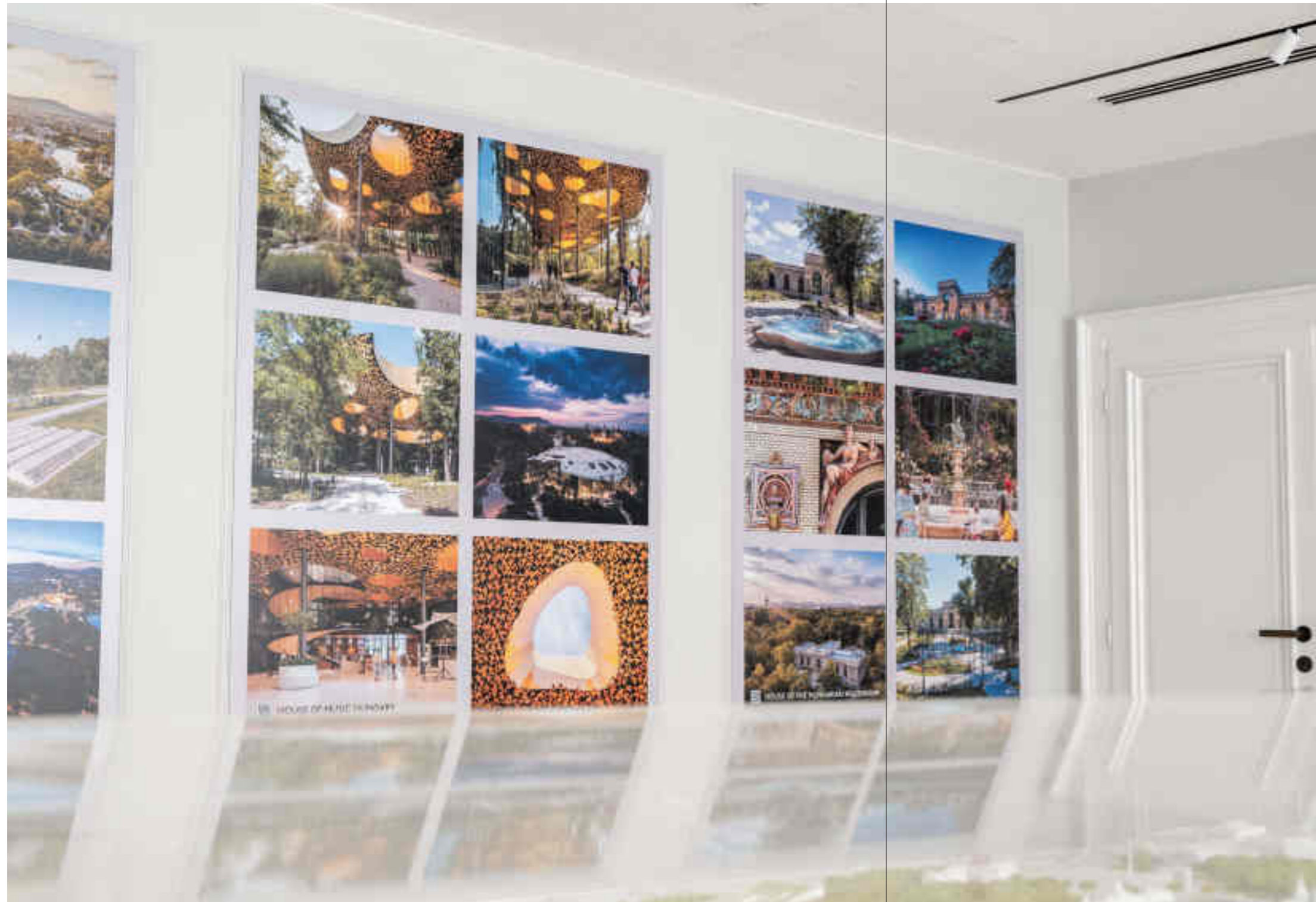
Budapest's City Park (Városliget) is the most beloved park in the Hungarian capital, home to a unique blend of cultural and recreational institutions for over a century. Its 100 hectares include landmarks such as Vajdahunyad Castle, the Széchenyi Baths—Budapest's largest bathing complex—the Zoo, Europe's oldest and largest outdoor ice rink, and several museums. Few public parks in the world can rival this rich integration of institutions within the park itself, rather than around it. A comparable example might be Forest Park in St. Louis, USA, which features a zoo and science center alongside art and history museums.

The City Park's golden age began in the late 19th century and lasted until World War II, but the second half of the 20th century saw its gradual decline. For decades, the park suffered

from neglect, with overgrown vegetation, derelict buildings, and abandoned areas in desperate need of renewal.

Nearly 15 years ago, a decision was made to address this long-standing neglect with a comprehensive and innovative revitalization project that honored the park's unique traditions. While this timeframe represents a significant chapter in an individual's life, it is but a fleeting moment in the history of a city, and even more so in a nation with a thousand-year legacy. Occasionally, history offers rare opportunities to reshape the future, much like at the turn of the 20th century, when Budapest underwent an unprecedented transformation into a European metropolis. This era gave rise to iconic institutions such as the Parliament, the Hungarian State Opera House, the Museum of Applied Arts, and the Liszt Academy, alongside





the creation of City Park's diverse cultural ecosystem embedded in its green spaces.

Today, the Liget Budapest Project aspires to a similar legacy. Existing buildings in the park are being restored, new cultural institutions and museums are being created, and the surrounding green spaces are being rejuvenated and expanded. This effort has already led to the renewal of the Museum of Fine Arts and the House of Hungarian Millennium, as well as the construction of one of Europe's largest and most advanced museum facilities, the National Museum Conservation and Storage Centre. World-class landmarks like the House of Music Hungary, designed by Sou Fujimoto Architects, and the Museum of Ethnography, by Napur Architect, have opened their doors, drawing hundreds of thousands of visitors and becoming symbols of modern Hungary.

Significant portions of the park's neglected green spaces have also been transformed, introducing new facilities that millions now enjoy, such as the Main Playground, sports fields, running tracks, and even adventure parks for dogs.



One of Europe's most awarded contemporary buildings, The House of Music in the City Park of Budapest

Thanks to these achievements, the City Park has become a hub of Hungarian national culture and a symbol of the country's international prominence. Leading experts in culture, architecture, and tourism now regard the Liget Budapest Project as a benchmark and reference point, as evidenced by the numerous prestigious international awards it has garnered.

While the project's first decade represents unparalleled progress in Hungary's cultural development, its full vision has yet to be realized. If the New National Gallery—designed by the Pritzker Prize-winning Japanese firm SANAA—the House of Hungarian Innovation, and the Városliget Theater are completed, they will stand as enduring monuments to this ambitious undertaking. These additions will solidify the park's place as a site of historical significance and immense value to the nation.

The past 15 years have marked a new golden age for City Park, as the attention, investment, and care it has received have restored it to a position

of national pride. The beautifully restored House of Hungary in Brussels offers visitors a glimpse of this transformation, and we hope the exhibition inspires them to visit Budapest and experience Europe's most comprehensive cultural quarter firsthand.

László Baán  
Ministerial Commissioner  
of the Liget Budapest Project



László Baán with the architectural model of the New National Gallery

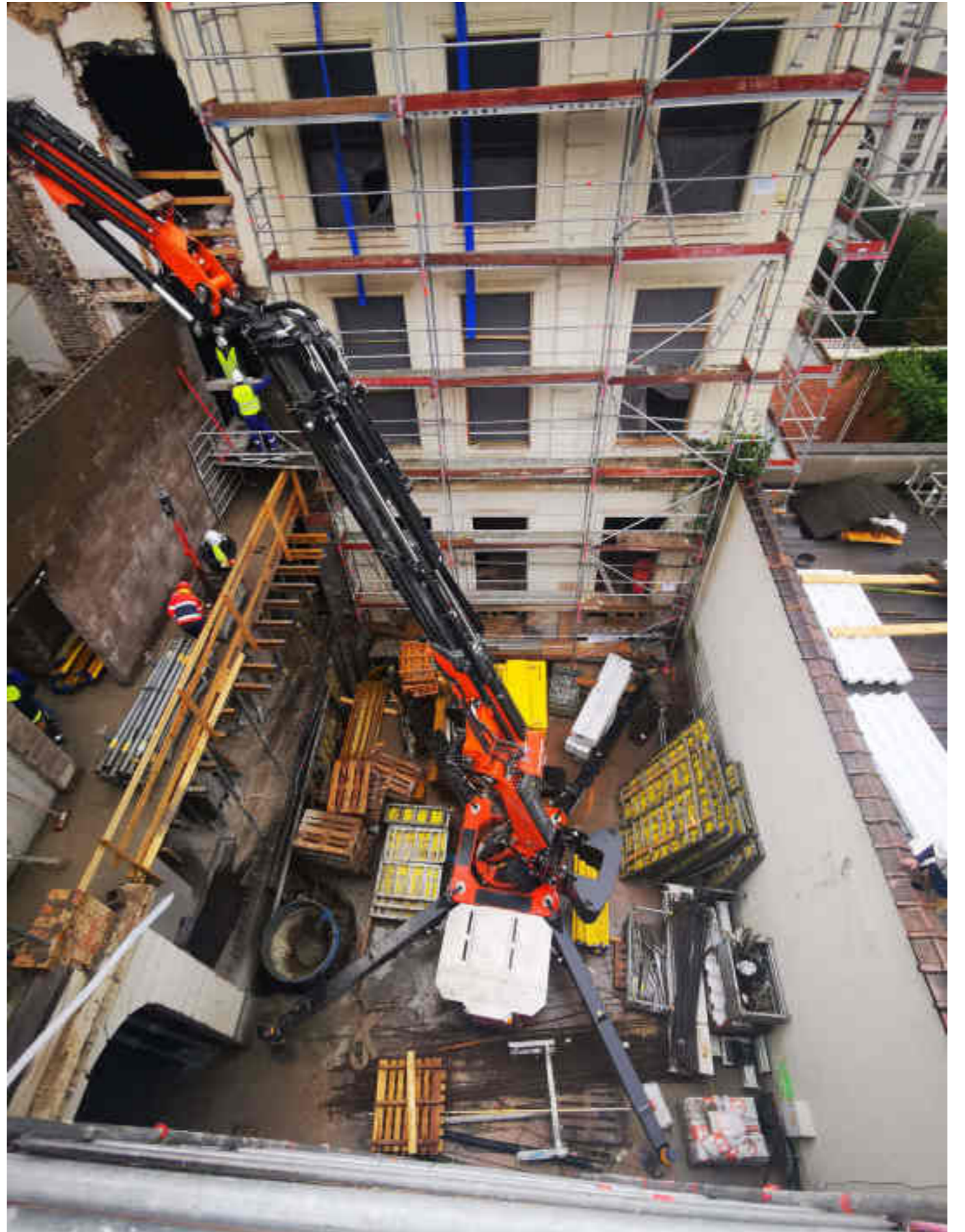
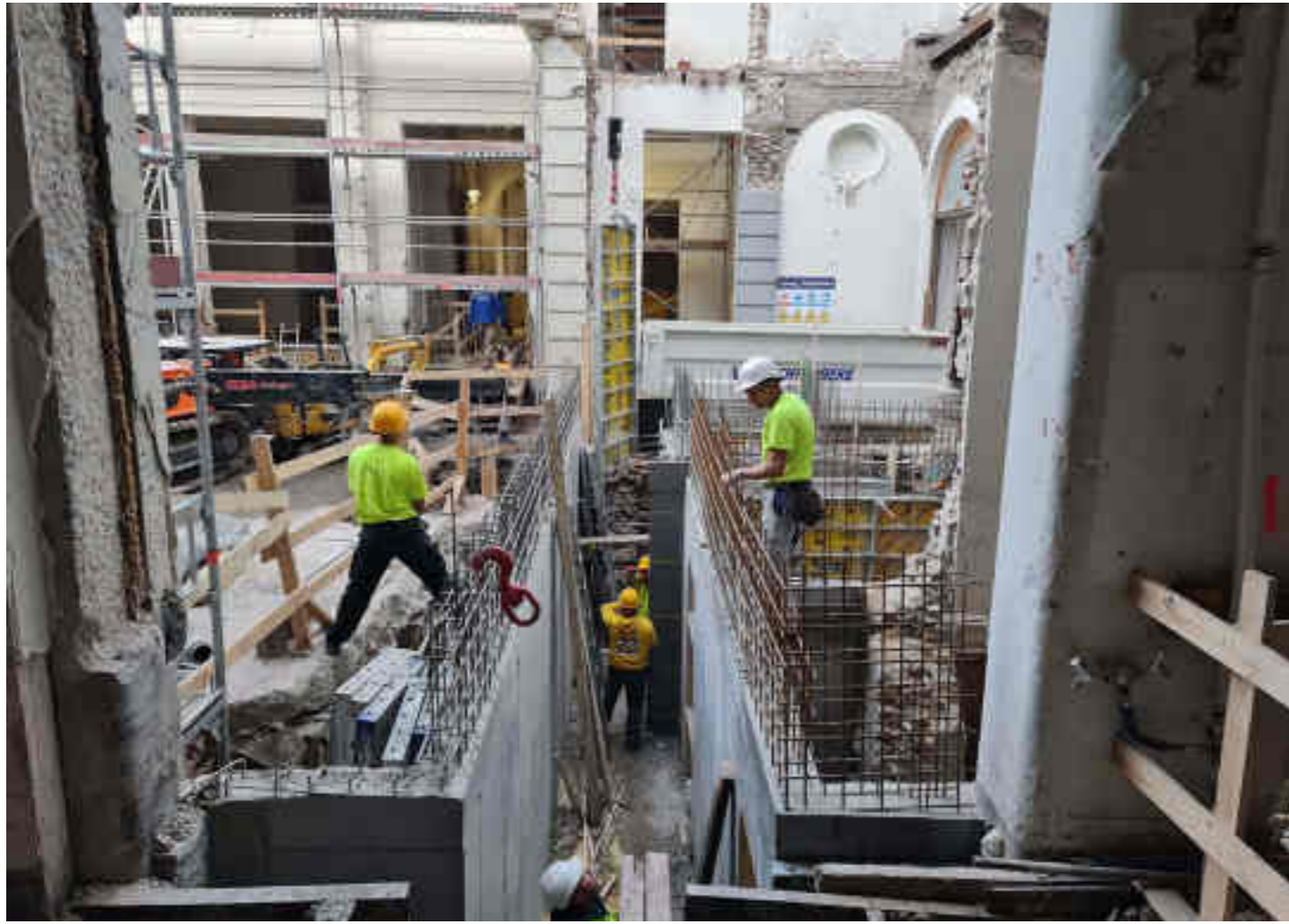
# LATEREX Építő Zrt.



LATEREX Építő Zrt., a fully Hungarian-owned company, has been a major player in the building construction sector for nearly two decades, having completed more than a hundred domestic and international projects. As a general contractor, LATEREX is able to provide complex and sophisticated architectural solutions and full project management at the highest level, with references including the construction and renovation of numerous church and monumental buildings, educational, office/commercial/industrial, accommodation, sports, leisure and cultural facilities, and health care institutions.

A particular speciality is the renovation of monuments, which requires specific and specialised expertise in each individual case. For every specific project, the team is put together, the competences required are assessed and the project office is set up accordingly. Among their monument references, there are such prestigious projects as the Esterházy Palace in Tata or the Archbishop's Palace and the St. Michael's Cathedral in Veszprém. The latest jewel in the company's portfolio is the House of Hungary in Brussels, which the group completed in just ten months, including the design of the representative interior spaces.









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