

GROHMAN'S VILLA

Festival Centre is the place where we will present the „I*NETWORK” exhibition. You will also find there festival’s office and shop, press office, café, reading-room, book shop and the space for meetings. It will all take place at Grohman’s Villa which history we present below.

The Grohman family came to Lodz from Saxony in the 1840s, and soon they managed to open a cotton factory that became one of the leading companies in Lodz. The end of the 19th century was the golden age of the factory empire. Ludwik Grohman was its manager at the time. It was he who had the Villa at ul. Tylna 9/11 constructed. It was one of the first residences of a factory owner in Lodz that was so impressive. This Italian renaissance style building was designed by the most famous architect in Lodz – Hilary Majewski. The Ludwik Grohman Villa was constructed in 1881, and in the 1890s a winter garden was added to the building. Before World War I the building was expanded with a two-storeyed adjoining building with a separate entrance.

The entrance to the Villa has remained the same from the very beginning – one enters the Villa from Tylna Street through a wrought-iron gate bearing the ornamented initials of its first owner. The main entrance decorated with a four-column portico leading to the hall and staircase. Both residential and company rooms were located on the ground floor. In the Villa, one could find among others: a living room, studies, a ballroom and dining room. All the rooms were richly ornamented with decorative moulding, polychrome, marble and panelling.

The Villa complex also has a coach house and a stable. Currently, the whole complex is separated by a fence from the park that originally belonged to the Villa. The Jan Kiliński Park with an expansive area of more than 3 hectares was made available for public use after 1949.

Ludwik Grohman was one of the few Lodz factory owners who took pride in higher education. He paid a lot of attention to education, and his sons were part of the educated elite. The Grohman family belonged to the group of art connoisseurs. They collected paintings and invited actors, literary men and painters to artistic evenings. The artistic elite gathered at the Ludwik Grohman Villa. The Villa was visited by such luminaries as the poet-writer Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński and the renowned artist Witkacy.

The Grohman family was evicted of the Villa during World War II. A large part of the Grohmans’ property, including paintings, was seized and sold. After the Palace was seized by the NKVD in the aftermath of WW2, most elements of interior furnishing were plundered. The Villa gradually fell into ruin. Initially, the building housed an institutional day nursery and kindergarten. When the museum was closed down, the interior of the Villa was damaged to a large extent. Since 1998, the building has been the property of private persons and has already frequently changed owners, and as a result is in a state of disrepair while awaiting restoration and renovation. The Villa has served for many years as the site of many cultural events including Fotofestiwal.

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