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Rehabilitation of the Austrian Mint, a Historic Monument

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Summary

The Vienna mint edifice, A-1030 Vienna, Am Heumarkt 1 is the visible expression of the 800 years old Austrian tradition in coin- and medallion minting. The historical continuity of minting had to be carried on into our days, modernizing the mint- and medallion striking by setting-up hitech production methods.

Keywords: Planning hitech parallel out-dated production, strengthening vaults and walls, static safeguarding, historic façades, stone monuments, two-storied basement in inner courtyard.

1. Introduction

After the decision by the Board of the Austrian Mint, the company's edifice in Vienna, a historic monument from Biedermeier period, built 1835 – 1838 by the famous Austrian architect Paul E. SPRENGER, had to be converted into a hitech coin- and medallion production centre and renovated for preservation in many sections of the building and in architectural details of the historic substance. All measures had to be coordinated with the Austrian Federal Monument Administration. The Austrian coinage has continuity since 1194, but from the year 1918 the only Austrian mint remained in Vienna with now remarkable high quality coining - especially known are the gold coins "Wiener Philharmoniker" since 1989, celebrating the worldwide famous Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra and since 1998 the actual new European currency "Euro".

The edifice was built conform to the last century's art and craft of coining: heavy brickwalls and brickbasements, vaults and piers in the lower parts, systems of dowelled waney wooden beams in the upper floors – in dimension and loadbearing capacities dependent on equipment weights and life loads necessary for production and office rooms in those times.

Developments in the minting technology became absolutely imperative to modernize all mint production processes, although the running mint production had not to be interrupted during these activities. That required to reorganize the arrangements of the production areas. The engineering necessities resulted in ingenious ideas for strengthening of vaults and walls in order to bear heavier loads, penetrations of wall-zones and wide tasks in static safeguarding and building stabilizing. All engineering work was carried out successfully, ecologically and economically throughout the period of planning, building and renovating phases since 1989.

2. Planning – Preparing the technology

Description of the planning concept, the ways of its realisation besides the existing production full in function and the measures in restoring the edifice as a historic heritage

3. Strengthening of Vaults

3.1. Main Purposes for the Measures

Report about the necessity of the strengthening measures and the engineering challenges in the course of the works

3.2. Chosen Method of Strengthening

Presenting one typical example out of a large number of treated cases; structural analysis and parameters in the chosen method

4. Preservation of the Edifice

4.1. Main Purposes for the Preservation Work

The importance of the preservation of the historic heritage; pointing out the damages of the façade-crowning group of stone figures

4.2. Methods of Repair

Explanation of the renovating and preservation measures for the above mentioned stone structure

5. Inner Courtyard

Planning and constructing a new part of the building situated in the underground of the inner courtyard

6. Discussion and Conclusions

7. References



Fig. 1: Aspect of the renovated and strengthened edifice from the main road "Am Heumarkt 1"