

Sender:

Dr. Petr Duchon
Radnice
Dominikánské nám. 1
60167 Brno
TSCHECHISCHE REPUBLIK

Villa Tugendhat

Dear Mayor Duchon,

Villa Tugendhat, by the architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, is not only an exemplary Modernist building of great architectural significance, it also represents a unique piece of cultural heritage – a status endorsed by its inclusion in the UNESCO World Heritage list. As the current owner of Villa Tugendhat, the City of Brno is both morally and ethically responsible for ensuring that the singular and unmodified existence of this major monument is preserved for posterity, in compliance with the international convention outlined in the UNESCO Charter.

It is with dismay that we have followed the competition launched for the restoration of the building, which concentrates on commercial interests and consequently threatens the preservation of this priceless piece of architecture. According to our reliable sources the current winners of the competition, the firm Omnia, has no documented experience in this sector which qualifies it to carry out such a project as its business to date has been in trading real estate and software products, photocopying services, project assistance for extensions and technical advice on civil engineering issues for construction projects.

Furthermore, the firm concerned does not have a single registered qualified architect on its staff who would be capable of ensuring the necessary quality to fulfil the brief. It comes as no surprise that the firm Omnia has also provided false credentials, for instance, in references to the world respected conservator Ivo Hammer and Daniela Tugendhat as consultants, which are obviously intended only as an entirely unethical attempts to mislead the jury.

These indisputable facts are extremely worrying and highly disconcerting.

We fear that the destruction of Villa Tugendhat is going to be sanctioned with the result that not only the City of Brno but the history of world architecture is about to irrevocably lose one of its major monuments. We would therefore urge you to take all necessary steps for the conservation of Villa Tugendhat and to reconsider whom you award the commission to in the light of all these facts, and to put the necessary restoration work in the hands of experienced architects and experts qualified and recognised in the field of modern architecture conservation. It is essential that you fulfil your role in the international arena as guardian of this major building. We beg you not to waste this opportunity for your City of Brno to maintain the respect it deserves as a guardian of its own cultural history and that of world architecture before it is too late!

Yours sincerely,