

Minimum Documentation Fiche 2003

composed by national/regional working party of:

0.1 Picture of building/site

depicted item: source: date:

1. Identity of building/group of buildings/urban scheme/landscape/garden

1.1 current name of building The Fantasio Hall of the Constantza State Theatre

1.2 variant or former name The Fantasio Variety Theatre (1969), the Music Hall Section of the Constantza Drama and Comedy Theatre (1956), "The Theatre of the Cultural League" (1942), "The Tranulis" Hall (1927)

1.3 number & name of street 11 Ferdinand Boulevard

1.4 town Constantza

1.5 province/state Dobruja

1.6 zip code 900726

1.7 country Romania ROU

1.8 national grid reference 44°11' (N); 28°39' (E)

1.9 classification/typology REC

1.10 protection status & date It is protected by the national legislation as a part of the architectural site "The urban Site named Peninsular Area Constantza"

2 History of building

2.1 original brief/purpose In 1915 the City-Hall donated the piece of land to "The Cultural League for the Unity of Romanians Worldwide", Constantza branch, for the construction of a theatre (it is worth mentioning that Dobruja, the province where the building in question is located, was annexed to the Kingdom of Romania only in 1915, and "The Cultural League for the Unity of Romanians Worldwide" played an important role in the establishment of the national state, militating for the crystallization of the national consciousness through culture).

2.2 dates: commission/completion Due to the outburst of World War I and the financial problems entailed by this period, the building's erection started only in 1927. According to its initiators, the future hall was meant to become the premises of "the first Romanian theatre in Dobruja". The festivity of laying the foundation stone was held on the 27th March 1927. The building was completed in late summer,

2.3 architectural and other designers

2.4 others associated with building

2.5 significant alterations with dates c. 1950; c. 1970

A monograph-guide of the town of Constantza, published in 1962 states that “The building was almost completely restored in 1954. On that occasion, the hall was extended, in order to better meet the requirements of a permanent theatrical activity, and was reshaped in the style of the time. To the initial hall was added the foyer and the exit areas, as well as the wing covering the stage machinery and the actors’ cabins. We could not find photos prior to this transformation, so that we can just suppose that the height of the old “Tranulis” hall was raised on that occasion and was given the present composition of volumes. The architectural decoration adopted for the new building was selected from the range of the Socialist realism style, imposed by the political leaders of the time. In 1969, the Music Hall Section of Constantza Theatre became an independent institution, under the name of Fantasio Variety Theatre. The interior hall underwent a number of transformations on that occasion, meant to improve the hall’s acoustics.

2.6 current use theatre hall

2.7 current condition good condition

3 Description

3.1 general description The building of the Constantza State Theatre is a corner construction, with an “L” shaped floor plan, its main side facing Ferdinand Bd./Mihai Viteazul St. and the short side facing the nearby park. The main side is formed by the hall and the reception areas, the basilica volumetric construction suggesting the inside structure: the elevated performance hall, with a ridged roof and a gable, flanked by the exit areas and the foyer, with a terrace-roof. The silhouette of this building side has the parallelepiped-shaped volume of the stage in the background. The other side of the building, the ground-floor, shelters the show preparation areas and, due to its location, it is not a part of the general configuration of the building in question.

The 260 seat auditorium is an Italian style hall, shaped as a continuous amphitheatre, with lateral circulations, a row of rear loges and the balcony. The technical booths are situated in the balcony area and the lights are above the stage and also on the auditorium’s sides. The stage is provided with wings. A large technical space lies beneath the stage and the half front stage. The walls of the performance hall are covered with panelling and modern sound-proof materials. They contrast with the ceiling outline, underlined by decorative profiles, which evoke a previous time to the building’s

history. The foyer and the exit area towards Mihai Viteazul St. are richer in architectural decorations. Two rows of arches on pilasters divide the foyer into three longitudinal areas. The ceilings of the areas fronting the street and the hall are decorated with lateral rectangular profiles, covered by dentils. The arcades' keystones are marked by S-shaped brackets and their outlines are emphasized by profiles, which also underline the pilaster edges.

The median area has a more elaborate decoration: the passages of its narrow sides, leading to the exit areas, are brought out into relief by arches and encased by mirror panels. The pilasters bordering the long sides have fashioned capitals surmounted by the profiles which give prominence to the arches' outline and the shafts are adorned with mirrors. Ceiling medallion rosettes are placed between the arches. Transversal beams divide the ceiling in panels outlined by rectangular profiles covered by dentils; the panels' corners are marked by buttons; medallions with guilloches alternate with lamps adorned with stylized vegetal ornaments. The ceilings of the exit areas, with uneven compartments suggesting the hall structure, are outlined by profiles and the lateral openings are marked by brackets with volutes.

On the outside the conception of the main façade is remarkable, combining elements of the Socialist realism style with discreet reminders of the archaeological memory of the site.

3.2 construction

3.3 context The Fantasio Hall of the Constantza State Theatre is located in the historic centre of the town

4 Evaluation

4.1 technical

4.2 social The building in question is representative for the urban and architectural program/politics, specific to the 1950's of the 20th century, which provided the edification of theatres in the big cities of the country and the working centres.

4.3 cultural & aesthetic The architectural appearance of the façades and the interiors of the reception areas, as well as the facilities and the lights, are characteristic of the Socialist realism style.

4.4 historical The construction is a material evidence of the cultural emancipation activity carried out, during the interwar period, by “The Cultural League for the Unity of Romanians Worldwide”, a cultural organization promoting the Romanians’ cultural emancipation and union prior to the establishment of the national state. The building’s evolution during the post-war period is typical of the controlled implementation of the Socialist realism style, which became mandatory, particularly for the built/restored public constructions, during the 1950’s of the 20th century, the dawn of Communist dictatorship in Romania. The “Fantasio” Hall of the Constantza State Theatre is one of the few buildings known to have been restored during that period in order to meet the new political commandments in architecture.

4.5 general assessment The Fantasio Hall of the Constantza State Theatre is a representative example of socialist realism style which became mandatory for all public buildings at the beginning of the communist dictatorship in Romania.

5 Documentation

5.1 principal references

1. Badea, Jean, *Fantasio 40. Monografie*, Constanța, Editura LEDA, 1998.
2. Locotenent M. D. Ionescu, *Cercetări asupra orașului Constanța, geografie și istorie*. București, 1897
3. *Constanța* [album], text de Radu Tudoran, fotografii de S. Medrea, București, Editura Meridiane, 1970.
4. Șerbănescu, Mihail, *Constanța, priveliști dobrogene*, Constanța, Editura Romart Design, 2009.
5. Petrila Tiberiu, Popescu Demetru, Porumbescu Marin. *Constanța și împrejurimile ei*, 1960, București, Ed. Științifică.
6. *Constanța litoral*, București, ed. Științifică, 1962
7. Elena Borodi și colab. *Constanța – Monografie*. București, Ed.Sport-turism, 1980
8. *Constanța și Tekirghioulul. Ghid Ilustrat*. Constanța, Inst. Grafic "Albania", 1924
9. Aurelia Lăpușan, Ștefan Lăpușan. *Constanța. Memoria orașului*. Vol. I 1878-1940. Constanța, Ed. Muntenia, 1997
10. Mihai Măldărescu – *Din istoricul orașului Constanța*, 1935

11. P. Vulcan, *Istoricul oraşului Constanţa* , Constanţa, Institutul de Arte Grafice al ziarului Dobrogea jună, 1929

12. *Tomi-Constanţa. Monografie alcătuită de col. Ionescu M. Dobrogianu*, Constanţa, 1931, Tipografia Lucrătorilor Asociaţi

Archives: Romania, Constantza. The National Archives: County Direction Constantza, Fund of Mayoralty, 1/1927, 29/1945, 24/1947, 19/1948, 3/1938, 23/1945, 32/1945 , 24/1947 , 29/ 1945 , 19/1948, 28/1924 , 2/1928, 56/1928 , 3/1942, 1/1940,

5.2 visual material attached

5.3 rapporteur/date

6 Fiche report examination by ISC/R

name of examining ISC member: date of examination:

approval:

working party/ref. n°: NAI ref. n°:

comments:

The fiche is composed within a project of Inforom Cultural Foundation, financed by the Administration of the National Cultural Fund of Romania

