

0.1 Picture of building/site

depicted item: The “MOVILĂ-TECHIRGHIOL” Casino”

source: Overview from 1935, private collection

date: 1935



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

1.1 current name of building

Eforie Sud Casino

1.2 variant or former name

The “Movilă-Techirghiol Casino”/ Movilă Casino/ Eforie Sud Casino

1.3 number & name of street

Tudor Vladimirescu Street/ Dr. Climescu Street

1.4 town

Eforie Sud

1.5 province/state

Constanța

1.6 zip code

905360

1.7 country

Romania

1.8 national grid reference

Lat: 44° 1'46.33"N

Long: 28°39'11.67"E

1.9 classification/typology

REC - commercial building, Restaurant-club

1.10 protection status & date

proposed for listing, A group, at national level, 2012

2 History of building

2.1 original brief/purpose

The casino building was raised during the years 1931-1935 as a completion to a whole series of buildings with a leisure character, its silhouette becoming emblematic for that period. The building is part of the wide series of casinos built in resorts dedicated to health, cure and relaxation. On the Romanian coast of the Black Sea there are two other similar buildings having the same function, hosting theater shows, balls and relaxation for tourists: the Casino of Constanța (1909-1910) and the Casino of Mamaia (1935).

2.2 dates: commission/completion

1931-1933

2.3 architectural and other designers

The architect was Arta Cerchez.

2.4 others associated with building

2.5 significant alterations with dates

By initializing the listing procedure, the arbitrary modifications to the interior and exterior of the building will be stopped and the carpentry change as well. The arbitrary extensions in the adjacent park to the casino will be limited.

2.6 current use

The casino did not change its initial function.

2.7 current condition

The building is in a good state of preservation. The investments made during the time, did not change the initial concept of the design.

3 Description

3.1 general description

The building was part of the urban complex destined for cure and treatment as well as for sea travels, whereas the construction started with the year 1899. The casino, which was built between 1931-1935 in the estival center of Eforie Sud locality, is part of the last achievements of the period which preceded the Second World War. Among the component elements of this spa centre, one can mention: The Hotel of Movilă-Techirghiol Society and Movilă-Techirghiol Baths, designed by the same architect Arta Cerchez.

The building of Eforie Sud Casino is a representative objective for the maritime architecture of the Art Deco style; together with the Casino of Mamaia which was built in the same period, it symbolizes one of the forms of the European modernism which was present on the Romanian seaside. The building is representative for the inter-war period.

3.2 construction

The building is made of reinforced concrete and masonry.

3.3 context

Ioan Movilă is considered the founder of the Eforie Sud resort, whose act of birth was signed in the last year of the 19th century. Ioan Movilă was a landlord with progressive ideas, with studies achieved in the Western Europe, who knew the spa resorts in Europe, thus appreciating the therapeutic value of the mud of Techirghiol Lake and that of the marine solar rays, a value which was confirmed by the results obtained by the military doctors, who, ever since 1894, had been treating suffering military men from the Division of Dobrudja. In 1899, he decided to establish a spa resort, on the property which he had bought between the Black Sea beach and the Techirghiol Lake. Using the funds obtained from the exploitation of his domain and the loans acquired from the banks of that time, Movilă started bringing doctors and chemists from Vienna in order to analyze the water and the mud and then started the construction of two hotels – the “Park Hotel” of today and a sanatorium for warm baths. In 1909, *Eforia Spitalelor Civile/The Board of Civil Hospitals* in Bucharest established, on the sea shore, the Sanatorium for the treatment of bone tuberculosis for children, using warm bath installations, cataplasms applications and heliotherapy. Until 1916, a park with planted vegetation was set up, having both a recreational purpose and the aim of consolidating the sandy terrain.

In the year 1925, *Eforia Spitalelor Civile/The Board of Civil Hospitals* in Bucharest brought doctor Victor Climescu in Eforie Sud, who, after the Second World War, established a true Romanian school for osteoarticular surgery for the treatment of bone tuberculosis. Until the year 1968, more than 50,000 patients were hospitalized in that sanatorium. The Eforie Sud resort did not have streets until the year 1920, although, from the very beginning it was meant to be built on the basis of a design system conceived in 1906.

4 Evaluation

4.1 technical

The ground floor has a large rectangular hall functioning as a restaurant, with a niche for the orchestra and spaces for kitchens and bathrooms. The access to the floor level, in the former ballrooms is achieved through two interior symmetric stairways and an exterior one, which reaches the ample terrace opening to the sea. The exterior stairway is approached as a smooth elegant ramp which participates esthetically in the architectural composition. The secondary ways of access simplify the traffic in the superior halls, avoiding any junction between the public and the waiters. On the ground floor there are also several commercial spaces: hair-dresser, mail office.

4.2 social

The Eforie Sud Casino has a very great symbolic value for the local community and for tourists who come every year to the seaside, during the estival season. The building became one of the representative objectives for the estival architecture of the 1930s.

4.3 cultural & aesthetic

The architectural approach of the casino's volume is according to the Art Deco style, which was characteristic for interwar Romania, starting with the twenties of the 20th century. The estival building located independently and singularly in the central park, being completely directed towards the sea, follows strictly the classic canons of its style. The typology of the *Urban Palace* is hereby found, being of medium height, with a predominantly horizontal development, with the spatial-volumetric solution of a block margined by streets on two parallel sides (a block with double orientation), thus making the settlement of commercial galleries and of simple linear commercial passage ways possible. Thereby, the traffic between the seashore and the commercial street in the back of the casino could be assured. All the described details are a frequent feature in the Art Deco architecture.

The architecture style of the present building extends the role of the terrace to that of a cover as well, due to the step-by-step withdrawal of the last levels, a formula which generates a complex and dynamic silhouette. The *step-by-step motif* is present with the two symmetric towers which flank the horizontal volume of the edifice. The horizontal volume ends with a terrace. The facades are

decorated with simple *linear mouldings* which always accompany and shape the silhouette of the buildings, the main registers, the setbacks or projections of this style. Whatever the location might be, the terrace setback of the superior storeys appears as a *leitmotiv* which always softens, through simplified shapes, the generally massive volume, most common for the urban palace.

The casino has a more elaborate solution in this case, by integrating two symmetric towers in a horizontal volume, a solution which usually uses just one tower. At the endings of the superior level, there are several windows which create a belvedere and a strongly pyramidal projected roof with consoles and steps.

The exteriors are sober. The large parietal surfaces, the pavements become decorations themselves. The exterior finishing meant to be neutral, with white, smooth surfaces, according to the modernist repertoire. *The plaster* is a texture which appears as a parietal decoration. One can notice the choice of white or yellowish plaster, natural nuances of the simili-stone plaster in smooth or rough version.

4.4 historical

The building was part of the urban complex destined for cure and treatment as well as for sea travels, whereas the construction started with the year 1899. The casino, which was built between 1931-1935 in the estival center of Eforie Sud locality, is part of the last achievements of the period which preceded the Second World War. Among the component elements of this spa centre, one can mention: The Hotel of Movilă-Techirghiol Society and Movilă-Techirghiol Baths, designed by the same architect Arta Cerchez.

4.5 general assessment

At national level, the building is a unique objective in the architectural, structural field as well as from the point of view of its functionality. Due to the technical solution of covering and of conceiving the free ground floor by means of a reinforced concrete structure with a spectacular span, a singular presence in the civil architecture of the postwar era in Romania.

5 Documentation

5.1 principal references

Article

The „Arhitectura” Review, 1931-1933

Books

Mihaela Criticos, *Art Deco sau modernism bine temperat*, Simetria Publishing House, 2009

5.2 visual material attached

1. Current survey
2. Drawings, epoch images from “Arhitectura” Review from the years 1931-1933.

3. Epoch photographs

recent photographs and survey drawings:

4. Overview photographs, 2012, author Aurelian Stroe/Ruxandra Nemțeanu

5. Detail photographs, 2012, author Aurelian Stroe/Ruxandra Nemțeanu

6. Interior photographs, 2012, author Aurelian Stroe/Ruxandra Nemțeanu

5.3 rapporteur/date

Nemțeanu Ruxandra
2012.

6 Fiche report examination by ISC/R

name of examining ISC member:

date of examination:

approval:

working party/ref. n°:

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