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הודיעו השני' מלא היות לכל דבר'
דכ"ל משיפטי'ו

THE RESTORATION OF
**TEMPEL
SYNAGOGUE**

KRAKOW, POLAND

WORLD MONUMENTS FUND





Tempel Synagogue, used during World War II as a stable by Nazi occupying forces and afterwards neglected for decades, was once the most magnificent synagogue in Krakow. Today it is restored to its original splendor. Tempel is one of only seven synagogues in Krakow to have survived the war and is the only intact nineteenth-century synagogue left in Poland. The war decimated Krakow's Jewish population—60,000 in 1939, only a few hundred today—and the synagogue was essentially abandoned. But in 1990—less than a year after the fall of Communism in Poland—a new era of open discussion and examination of Polish-Jewish relations was already beginning. The United Jewish Appeal chose Tempel as the site of a “Concert of Remembrance and Reconciliation” featuring the Krakow Philharmonic Orchestra. The city cleared decades of debris from the building in preparation for the concert, and a packed house marveled at the splendid interior that had rarely been seen since the war.

Beginning in 1991, World Monuments Fund (WMF) drew international attention to the plight of this survivor of a violent era and began to garner support for its restoration. This ambitious project was a collaborative effort of the Jewish Community of Krakow, the City of Krakow, and the WMF Jewish Heritage Program, under the leadership of the Hon. Ronald S. Lauder. Today, the fully restored Tempel Synagogue serves as a sanctuary for religious services and a venue for concerts and other cultural events.

World Monuments Fund Jewish Heritage Program was founded to address the critical situation resulting from the systematic destruction and widespread neglect of the architectural heritage of once vital



Jewish communities—particularly in former Soviet bloc countries. In 1996, WMF published a list of ten Jewish heritage preservation priorities, five of which have since been saved. The restoration of Tempel Synagogue marks a significant milestone in this effort. WMF and the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation are confident that its success will inspire other Jewish heritage projects in urgent need of attention.

Tempel Synagogue, a glorious survivor with a proud and noble past, stands today as a symbolic link in a chain of culture that has spanned thousands of years. Its revival honors the memory of those who once worshipped there and pays tribute to Jewish continuity. The spirit of understanding and respect that now informs its walls affirms the strength of renewal and promises a more positive future.

—The Hon. Ronald S. Lauder

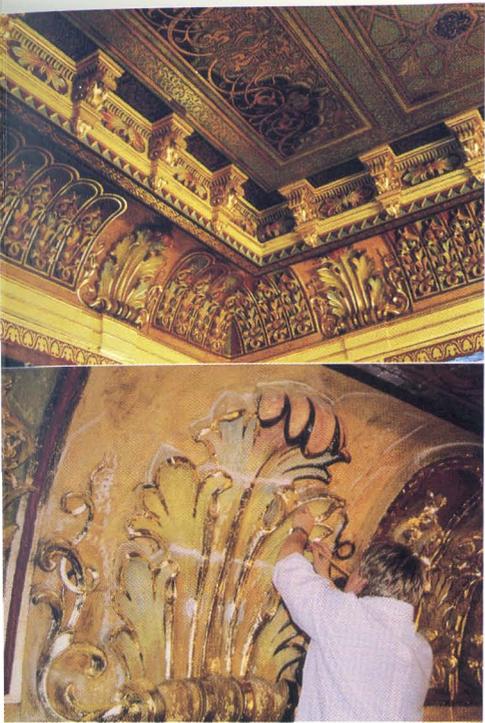
HISTORY AND DESIGN

Tempel Synagogue, also known as the Progressive Synagogue, was originally erected by the Association of Progressive Israelites in 1860–62 and greatly expanded by major renovations and expansions in the 1890s and again in the 1920s. It is located at the entrance of what was historically the Kazimierz—an independent Jewish town—which is today incorporated into Krakow and one of its oldest and most architecturally distinctive neighborhoods. The nineteenth century saw the greatest expansion of Polish Jewry and its most prolific architectural activity; Tempel's prominent siting and size is a testament to this and to the growth of Judaism's Reform Movement.

Reform Judaism developed in Germany in the first quarter of the nineteenth century as part of the Rationalistic Movement of European Jews called Haskalah. Reform-minded Jews believed in modernizing the prayer service and synagogue design. In 1810, Israel Jacobson first used the word “Tempel”—a reference to the

Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem—for a synagogue. (“Tempel” is the Polish spelling.)

Tempel's architecture, like its patronage, expressed the cultural cross-fertilization of nineteenth-century Poland and is an important example of the eclectic style of the time in which Polish and German-speaking Jewish patrons strove to rival church architecture while maintaining a distinct Jewish stylistic identity. The building is longitudinal, with a progression of spaces culminating in the Holy Ark (Aron-ha-Kodesh) at the east end. Like all Reform synagogues, it had no central reader's



platform or table (bimah), although today a small bimah is located in the main nave.

Its relatively simple exterior—a mix of Romanesque and Renaissance revival elements—contrasts with the striking richness and vivid polychromy of the interior where the walls, ceiling, cornices, and other elements are ornamented in an eclectic Moorish style. Some of the ornamentation is typical of decorative patterns derived from the Alhambra in Grenada, Spain, popularized in the late nineteenth-century by widely circulated books and prints.

Tempel was the spiritual home of Rabbi Ozjasz Thon (1870–1936), a brilliant and articulate modern Jewish religious leader. At the height of its activity between the two World Wars, its 800-member congregation included many of Krakow's leading businessmen, industrialists, bankers, writers, musicians, and other notable people.

RESTORATION

Forty-five years after the Nazis had defiled the space and it ceased to be actively used, the synagogue's glorious interior was crumbling—plaster was falling from the walls and ceiling and the bright patterns were dark and dull. While Tempel was partially restored after the war and occasionally used by Krakow's Jewish Community through the 1960s, it was neglected until 1989 when the local monuments authority restored the stained glass windows.

In 1994, WMF commissioned a comprehensive building survey and designed a preservation plan. Over a two-year period, the stucco-covered brick and masonry exterior was painted and repaired, the roof replaced, the foundation stabilized, and a central heating system installed. The exterior restoration was funded by the Citizens' Committee for the Renovation of Krakow's Monuments.



On the interior, conservators tested and took paint samples from the walls, ceilings, and pilasters and generated a definitive stratigraphy (identification of paint layers) and found a total of 12 chronological layers. The exterior restoration was straightforward but the interior posed complex conservation issues: What was the appropriate response to areas where little or no original fabric remained? Considering three distinct decorative schemes had been found, which historic period should the restoration reflect? What was the appropriate level of conservation intervention?

After much discussion, the team reached consensus on these issues aided by two serendipitous events—the discovery of a photograph that clearly showed the interior appearance during the 1920s and the exposure of vividly-colored stencil designs, which had been concealed behind memorial plaques. The 1893 “Eclectic Campaign,” which had been enhanced by the 1924 expansion and addition of stained glass windows, was selected as the best reference point for the restoration. This decision also took into account the significance of the pre-war period as a time of great growth and prosperity for Polish Jews and the synagogue.

Once the scheme was decided on, craftsmen and conservators painstakingly cleaned and repaired every inch of surface. Since 80 percent of the original finishes were intact, in-painting was only done where absolutely necessary. Decorative elements originally covered in gold leaf that had darkened with age were re-gilded and patinated.



JEWISH HERITAGE PROGRAM PROJECTS 1989–2001

Belarus, Slonim, Great Synagogue of Slonim
 Britain, Liverpool, Prince's Road Synagogue
 Bulgaria, Sofia, Central Synagogue
 Czech Republic, Boscovice, Great Synagogue of Boscovice
 Czech Republic, Čáslav, Čáslav Synagogue
 France, Alsace, Pfaffenhoffen Synagogue
 France, Carpentras, Carpentras Synagogue
 Greece, Hania (Crete), Etz Hayim Synagogue*
 Greece, Rhodes, Kahal Shalom Synagogue*
 Hungary, Mád, Mád Synagogue
 India, Cochin, Paradesi Synagogue
 Italy, Rome, Jewish Catacombs
 Italy, Saluzzo, Saluzzo Synagogue
 Italy, Venice, Ancient Jewish Cemetery on the Lido
 Italy, Venice, Scuola Canton
 Lithuania, Kalvarija, Kalvarija Synagogue Complex
 Morocco, Fès, Rabbi Shlomo Ibn Danan Synagogue
 Poland, Krakow, Tempel Synagogue
 Poland, Pińczów, Pińczów Synagogue
 Poland, Warsaw, Prozna Street*
 Romania, Piatra Neamt, Piatra Neamt Synagogues
 Suriname, Redi Doti, Jodensavanne Archeological Site*
 Ukraine, Kiev, Kiev Choral Synagogue
 Ukraine, L'viv, Tsoni Gilod Society Synagogue
 Ukraine, Zhovkva, Zhovkva Synagogue*
 United States, Newark, Oheb Shalom Synagogue
 Yugoslavia, Subotica, Subotica Synagogue*

* *Included on the World Monuments Watch List
of 100 Most Endangered Sites*

CREDITS

This project was a collaboration of World Monuments Fund, the Municipality of Krakow, the Jewish Community of Krakow, and the Citizens' Committee for the Renovation of Krakow's Monuments. Leadership was provided by the Hon. Ronald S. Lauder, Chairman, Jewish Heritage Program and Vice Chairman, WMF.

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Photography by Jacek Kubiena, WMF staff, and consultants.