THE RESTORATION OF

THE GREAT SYNAGOGUE

OF BOSKOVICE

BOSKOVICE, SOUTHERN MORAVIA, CZECH REPUBLIC

WORLD MONUMENTS FUND®
Constrcuts in the wake of the Thirty Years' War—at a time of widespread and violent discrimination against the Jewish people—the Great Synagogue stands as a moving testament to the resilience of Jewish culture. The 17th-century synagogue is the only survivor of three synagogues known to have been built in the historic Jewish quarter of Boskovice. Although located in a rural Jewish ghetto, the Great Synagogue became a major center of Torah and Talmudic study.

Today, the longstanding Jewish community of Boskovice, which can be dated to the 14th century, no longer exists due to the systematic destruction of Czech Jewry during the Holocaust and earlier emigration patterns in the late 19th century.

During the first half of the 19th century, the interior was richly ornamented with frescoes that offer a rare look at a full wall painting program in a masonry synagogue. The frescoes resemble those found in earlier synagogues now lost. They depict sacred Hebrew texts embellished with folkloric plant and floral motifs typical of Moravia. Uncovered in 1988 during the restoration, they had been covered by layers of whitewash. Some of the painted upper sections, especially those found in the women's gallery, were remarkably intact at the time of their discovery.

The restoration was originally funded by city and state sources and later continued by the Jewish Community of Brno and the Municipality of Boskovice. By 1994, the building had been stabilized and most of the exterior renovations were complete. Conservation of the invaluable frescoes and other historic parts of the interior remained to be done. In 2000, the project received a grant from the Jewish Heritage Grant Program of the World Monuments Fund, and additional funding from The Blanche & Irving Laurie Foundation, that made completion of this work possible.

The synagogue will present exhibits on the Jewish history of the region held by the Town Museum of Boskovice. Its excellent acoustics create a special venue for concerts and other cultural activities to enhance the offerings of the historic district. No longer endangered, the Great Synagogue of Boskovice will honor and preserve the memory of its community, further contributing to the world's knowledge of Jewish and European cultural heritage.

The Jewish Heritage Grant Program was established to address the critical situation resulting from the destruction and widespread neglect of the architectural heritage of once vital Jewish communities. Chaired by the Honorable Ronald S. Lauder, a Vice Chairman of the World Monuments Fund, the program unites communities worldwide with public and private agencies committed to the protection and preservation of Jewish cultural heritage.

Founded in 1988, the program has since made striking progress having addressed the preservation needs of 28 different sites in 18 countries, with special emphasis on synagogue architecture. The Great Synagogue of Boskovice was among the first ten synagogues to be prioritized for attention, and it represents the others like it that have not survived.
Belarus, Slonim, Great Synagogue of Slonim
Britain, Liverpool, Prince's Road Synagogue
Bulgaria, Sofia, Central Synagogue
China, Shanghai, Ohel Rachel Synagogue*
Czech Republic, Boskovice, Great Synagogue of Boskovice
Czech Republic, Caslav, Caslav Synagogue
France, Alsace, Pfaffenhoffen Synagogue
France, Carpentras, Carpentras Synagogue
Greece, Hania (Crete), Etz Hayim Synagogue*
Greece, Rhodes, Kahal Shalom Synagogue*
Hungary, Mad, Mad Synagogue
India, Cochin, Paradesi Synagogue
Italy, Rome, Jewish Catacombs
Italy, Saluzzo, Saluzzo Synagogue
Italy, Venice, Ancient Jewish Cemetery
Italy, Venice, Scuola Canton
Lithuania, Kalvarija, Kalvarija Synagogue Complex
Morocco, Fes, Rabbi Shlomo Ibn Danan Synagogue
Poland, Krakow, Tempel Synagogue
Poland, Pinczow, Pinczow 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, Tsori 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

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