

Bled

Villa Ana

Ribenska cesta 4

56 km
81 C1
C3

Alternative name:

Villa Generös

Year of plan and completion:

1906

Designer, contractor and investor:

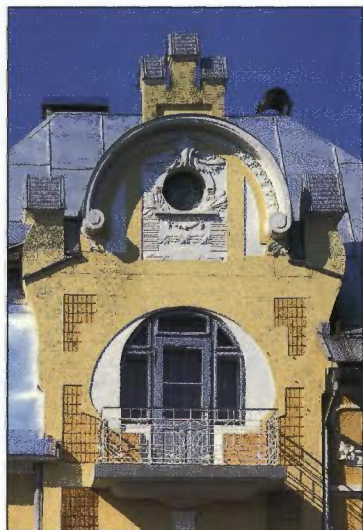
Josef Hronek

Building type:

residential villa

Josef Hronek, a master builder from Radovljica, designed a villa for himself and his family on the outskirts of the fashionable health resort of Bled. He bought a site in the immediate vicinity of the main Radovljica - Bled road. The villa was thus built on a site that does not boast a view of Lake Bled and is fairly distant from Rikli baths; however, Hronek did not need peace and fresh air, but a base for his business contacts with rich visitors to Bled and the surroundings among whom Hronek obtained clients who commissioned summer residences from him. He built at least seven villas in the ten years or so up to the beginning of the first world war.

Hronek's villa in Bled is a unique catalogue, in which a variety of architectural "bravura" are collected. It has to be understood as a status symbol, though also a guarantee of the quality of his building services. It is constructed in a mixture of romantic Historicism and Secession according to the contemporary fashion. It has an articulated plan. Its roof is steep and picturesque, since the flow of the roof eaves, for example, is interrupted by gables, and a corner turret with its own bell-shaped roof.



The eminence of the building is also stressed by a piano nobile. In other words, the house has a rather low ground floor, with the main floor above it with higher ceiling and windows.

The exterior presents a variety of architectural-decorative elements. The windows of the piano nobile are linked by a course of green and pale yellow tiles in a chessboard pattern. The course runs around the building. Some of the windows are stressed by surrounds of darker yellow tiles. Above the windows on the ground floor is a pattern of green tiles. The oriel on the north-western façade is set on a shell-shaped corbel. Above it is a wooden balcony with its own pitched roof, whose line is repeated in the attic gable. The gable is decorated with an imitation of timber framework. There is a cylindrical projection on the ground floor on the main





façade and on this, in the piano nobile, a semicircular balcony with a "stone" parapet, and above it a smaller balcony with ironwork railings. The balcony door on the first floor has a fanlight. Around the upper door is a lighter, oval, plaster frame, and immediately above, a semicircular gable terminated with volutes and decorated with tiny Secession decorations in plaster. On the southern corner there is a two-storey turret with large openings and a bell-shaped roof. The axis of the south-eastern façade is marked by two wooden balconies, set one above the other. They are crowned with a gable with "timber-framing". The wooden balcony balustrade has been carved in curved Secession lines. The next corner of the house is fitted with a two-storey wooden veranda. The entrance to the house is at the rear. The wooden entrance door and door

jambes are Secession. The garden fence also follows Secession lines.

The interior of the villa no longer shows Secession features, with the exception of the inner swing door which leads from the hall to the staircase, and a beautiful fireplace in one of the rooms on the first floor.

Judging from the description, it is difficult to imagine that all the elements listed could have possibly been crammed onto a single house. One look at it, however, is enough to show that we have not mentioned everything. In short, Villa Ana is like a young lady who, to attract suitors, loads herself with all the jewellery she can carry. In order to be even more elegant, she tops everything with a hat crowned with peacock feathers.

Literature:

Nika Leben, *Počitniške vile na Bledu od leta 1850 do druge svetovne vojne: diplomsko delo*, Univerza v Ljubljani, Filozofska fakulteta, PZE Umetnostna zgodovina, 1990 (typescript), p. 37, cat. 71.

