

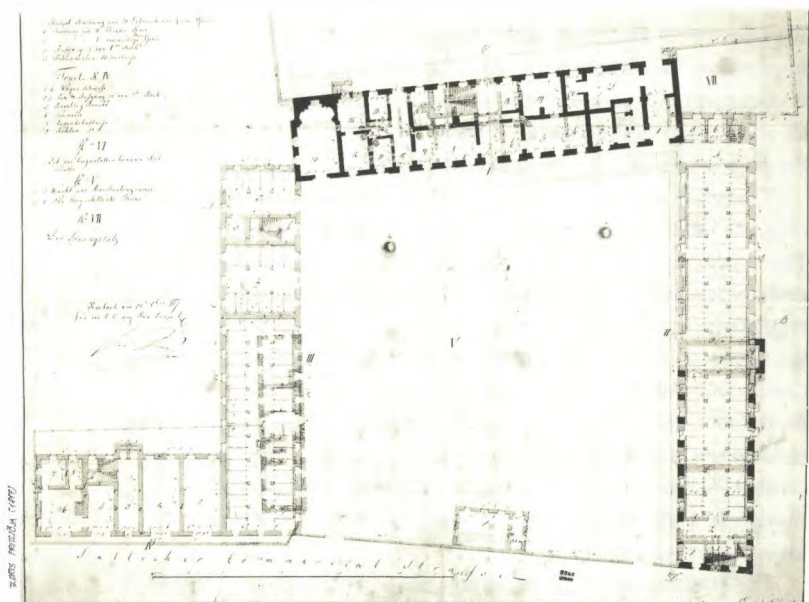


## Selo Manor

IRN1119

<i>Location</i>	Ljubljana, Moste
<i>Address</i>	Zaloška Cesta 69
<i>Time of origin</i>	first half of 18th century
<i>Time of restoration</i>	since 1995
<i>Chief Conservator</i>	Mojca Arh Kos and assistants Lidija Avbelj Jelovac and Irena Vesel Kopač
<i>Visits</i>	Visitors have to be booked in advance with the proprietor, Givo Real, Real Estate Agent, Zaloška 69, Ljubljana.

The area of the village of Selo in Moste near Ljubljana was recorded in written documents as early as the 14th century. Selo Manor was built in the middle of the 18th century as a summer residence in the then rural environment for the Jesuit College from Trieste. The most important manufacture was located opposite the manor – a cloth mill that proved very influential in its subsequent development and existence. The states of Carniola (present-day Kranjska) were granted the imperial privilege to set up the mill in 1724. The mill was of great benefit to the states since it provided their frontier regiments with cloth of their own making. A water mill on the River Ljubljanka was transformed for the use of the cloth mill where the production of cloth increased greatly. Since the mill was largely dependent on merchants, primarily on the dealers Peter Anton Codelli from Ljubljana and subsequently on Michelangelo Zois, who collected all the profits, it was not financially consolidated. In 1747 the estate was bought by the merchant Friderik Weitenhiller from Ljubljana, who was granted the same privileges by Empress Maria Theresa as were formerly en-



- ▲ Floor plan of the ground floor, DAs, map 11/19 from 1817.
- ◀ "The outstanding Baroque elements have been preserved in the interior of the manor as well, i.e. the painting and the stucco decorations."

joyed by the states. However, Weitenhiller sold the entire estate again to Valentin Ruard, a merchant from Vienna, as early as 1762, and to Josip Desselbrunner from Ljubljana, who became the only proprietor of the cloth mill in 1781. His name has remained as the synonym for Selo Manor: the Desselbrunner manor.

The mill and the manor soon became Desselbrunner's exclusive possession and developed into the leading factory in the Austria of that time. However, the factory became heavily burdened with debts in the course of time due to several family withdrawals, shares and



Renovated entrance wing of the manor: "Despite all transformations in the historical construction development, the Selo Manor complex has been preserved."

large payments associated with them. The factory was additionally impaired by Napoleonic Wars. War contributions, disrupted traffic connections with markets and difficulties with the purchase of raw materials and the sale of products all plunged the mill into a severe crisis. All the possessions of Josip Desselbrunner went bankrupt in 1803.

The estate and manor were bought at auction by Andrej Malič in 1817. He built a flour mill there and sold his product as far as Trieste. The entire complex of the manor was handed over by Malič to the military administration as early as 1820. In view of the project for the regulation of the bed of the River Ljubljana between the estuary of the Grubar canal and the rapids near Studenec beneath the Fužine Castle, and with regard to a new initiative for the drainage of the Barje moor following the Ljubljana Congress in 1821, the government ordered the demolishment of the Selo dam in 1824. The Malič mill came to an end. The premises of the mill were transformed into a residence, while the warehouses were used by innkeepers of Ljubljana as wine cellars.

The entire complex of the manor passed over to the military administration in 1854, and a stud farm was organized in the out-houses. The complex was owned by the military administration until 1918, and subsequently it served similar purposes.

The former Malič complex by the River Ljubljana was bought by Kristina Bernard, the establisher of a mendicant order in Ljubljana in 1887. She donated it to the Carmelite convent for their premises in

1889. The western wing of the former mill was transformed into the convent and the Church of St. Joseph was erected there in 1890. The church was badly damaged in an earthquake and subsequently pulled down in 1891.

The Ministry of agriculture moved the stud farm from the complex to the castle in Ponoviče near Litija in 1937. The entire complex was assigned to a boy's school. However, history repeated itself. After the Second World War, the complex was again allotted to military purposes, until it passed over to a construction company in the second half of the 20th century. The company used it for their administration, workshops and warehouses.

The renovated house at Zaloška 58, standing opposite the complex, is at present the seat of the Minorite Province of St. Joseph of Slovenia – the so-called Koblarjev Dom.

The purpose of the Selo Manor complex and the activities taking place there have completely changed with the planned renovation during recent years. The present proprietor wants to revitalize the complex on the basis of a conservation plan.

Despite all the transformations in its historical development, the Selo Manor complex has been preserved. Moreover, a comparison of the present appearance of the manor with the depiction by Leopold Wiser from the middle of the 18th century reveals that the architectural elements of the Baroque facade have remained in their original form. The outstanding Baroque elements have been preserved in the interior of the manor as well, i.e. the painting and the stucco decorations.

The proprietor began with a planned functional renovation of the complex on the basis of a conservation plan in 1995. Initially, the works presented merely an improvement of the existing bad conditions of the roofs and rooms. After a structural and construction evaluation of the building and the anticipated works involved it was acquired by the proprietor. Improvement works on the roof began, including renovation of the rooms on the mezzanine for future offices. Stucco decorations have been preserved on the ceilings of the halls on the first floor, and two vedutas painted in the fields above the door in the central hall. In the first phase, essential improvement works were performed on the stucco to be followed with restoration works on the stucco as well as the painting. A fairly well preserved Baroque painting was subsequently discovered in an auxiliary room next to the right-hand staircase beneath a thick layer of plaster. The pilasters with golden yellow Corinthian capitals surrounded pink fields in Baroque forms with broad ochre borders and stucco ornaments painted in white. The paintings in oil were decorated with sparse branches of greenery with red and blue blossoms occasionally intertwining the fields and connecting them with architectural elements. The lower part consisted of a stone parapet painted in the Baroque illusionistic style with wreaths, pilasters and pink oblong coffers. The jams of the windows were formed in the same manner.

The first phase of the renovation consisted of strengthening the marl base and the removal of installation remnants. Old damaged areas were used for new installations so as to avoid new damage. The restoration works planned for the future include the precise cleaning of the painting surface, puttying the damage, application of new plas-



terwork where necessary, microinjection of hollow areas and, finally, a complete reconstruction.

The functional programme of the renovation dictated the preservation and renovation of the reception rooms adjoining the connecting Baroque staircases. The rooms at the rear side underwent several transformations in the historical development of the manor. The rear rooms were renovated for offices and business activities including the intermediate hallway. The hall with the preserved stone supports of the ceiling and the central column in the right-hand wing of the

Baroque mirror staircase:  
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manor was renovated and is intended for formal business activities. Regrettably, there are no traces left of the former Baroque chapel in the left wing of the manor that was recorded in archival documents from the year 1817. The architectural scheme and plan of the renovation were entrusted by the proprietor to architect Jani Vozel, who followed the established principles and conditions of renovation of the manor. Due to the complexity of the renovation works (e.g. of the painting and the portal) and great financial burden for the investor, the renovation has lasted for five years and is far from concluded. With the purpose to attract the attention of the public to the valuable Baroque external appearance of the manor, the investor has already executed the improvement and renovation works on the facade, prior to the final works in the interior. Regrettably, the execution has not taken into consideration all the provisions for the conservation renovation of Baroque plasterwork. The sculptor and restorer Bine Ambrožič renovated the front of the facade in voluted forms including the clock and stucco decorations and additionally the central com-

position of the rich portal made of tuff. Simultaneously, the rear facade of the right-hand building was renovated in 1999. The ground floor rooms were cleared since they used to function as stables and subsequently as warehouses. All the Baroque columns and the vaulted construction have been preserved.

The restoration works are to continue in this year in the painted room that is intended for official purposes. Renovation of the connecting staircases is also taking place. This, regrettably, does not include the renovation of the existing stone-flagged paving due to a shortage of funds. The improvement and renovation of all the doors and windows on the facades as well as in the interior is in progress. Numerous wooden elements (e.g. bars and ornamentation) have namely disappeared during the renovation works and are therefore to be made anew on the basis of existing models.

Apart from the art historical evaluation of the Baroque manor complex in its historical architectural and construction development, the preservation of the entire complex is of crucial importance. Despite several transformations that took place in its historical development, Selo Manor has preserved its original architectural groundwork to the present. The floor layout and heights, including the shape of the roofs, have basically not changed since the planning of major construction works on the complex in 1817. Therefore it is preserved and protected as such, and all the anticipated renovation works, regardless of the proprietor and investor, are to be subordinated to the recovery and preservation of the historical urban planning and architectural properties. They have to be presented and emphasized, which means that all the inappropriate extensions and transformations are to be removed. The planned architectural works are to be subordinated to the basic historical and architectural properties of individual rooms and buildings as entities.

## MOJCA ARH KOS

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