

THE VIENNA PROJECT: HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WIENER RINGSTRAÙE

Site 1: Resselpark 1040 Wien



Resselpark represents the memory of the many homosexual men were arrested here. Public baths, parks and public toilets were the main meeting places for these men, who lived under conditions where their sexual relations were illegal and required secrecy. Many victims were arrested in police raids on such locations.

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Site 2: Wiener Staatsoper/The Vienna State Opera House Opernring 2, 1010 Wien



The Vienna State Opera House represents the memory of musicians from the State Opera Company and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, whose members were chosen from among musicians in the State Opera. It was the one of the first places where Jewish artists were fired from their jobs, later to be persecuted and some murdered. Beginning in 1938, Jews, Roma and Sinti, and other groups were banned from attending operas in the theater as part of new laws restricting their access to Viennese society.

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Site 3: Mahnmal gegen Krieg und Faschismus/The Monument against War and Fascism Albertinaplatz, 1010 Wien



Foto © Kate Melchior

In German, *Mahnmal* signifies a specific type of monument meant to act as “a warning to future generations.” The *Mahnmal gegen Krieg und Faschismus* was designed by Alfred Hrdlička and unveiled in 1988. There are four separate sculptural entities spread across the plaza: a two-column structure called the Gates of Violence; the “street washing Jew”; an abstract image of “Orpheus Entering Hades,” or the victims of the war encountering death; and a tall column engraved with passages from the Austrian *Staatsvertrag*, the 1955 treaty that established Austria as an independent and neutral country.

In several portions of this monument, chunks of granite from the Mauthausen concentration camp quarry were used in the sculptures. A plaque informs visitors that in March 1945, a bomb destroyed the Phillipshof apartment house on this site, trapping and eventually killing several hundred citizens inside.

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Site 4: Heldenplatz 1010 Wien



Foto © Kate Melchior

On the 12th of March 1938, German troops entered Austria. This event, which incorporated Austria into the German Third Reich, became known as the “Anschluß”. The annexation received the enthusiastic support of a large number of Austrian citizens, and the German army’s march through Austria was met with such joy that it was nicknamed the “Blumenkrieg,” or the War of the Flowers. The march through Austria ended in Vienna on March 15th, and Hitler joined the troops in a parade through the center of Vienna, which ended in the Heldenplatz (Hero’s Square). There, Hitler stood in the balcony and gave a speech in front of over 200,000, saying “As Führer and Chancellor of the German Nation and the Reich, I report before history the entry of my homeland into the German Reich.”¹

¹ Lehrer, Steven. “Heldenplatz.” *Books by Steven Helrer*. N.p., n.d. Web. 17 Sept. 2014. <<http://www.stevenlehrer.com/heldenplatz.htm>>.

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Site 5: Naturhistorisches Museum / Natural History Museum Burgring 7, 1010 Wien



In 1939, the Museum of Natural History organized the anti-Semitic exhibit “The Physical and Spiritual Attributes of the Jews” („Die körperlichen und seelischen Eigenschaften der Juden“). It used many objects that had been confiscated from the Jewish Museum, and the head of its department of anthropology, Dr. Josef Wastl, wanted its science to serve Nazi ideology about race.

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Site 6: Parlament/Parliament Dr. Karl Renner-Ring 3, 1010 Wien



In this building, the laws that prepared the way to the “Anschluss”, the annexation, were passed. Many demonstrations took place here. This building, the seat of today’s Parliament, served after March 1938 as the “Reich commissariat for the reunification of Austria with the German Reich”. From 1940 to 1945 it was called the “Gauhaus”, the seat of the Gauleiter, the Viceroy for the province, called a “Gau” in the Nazi terminology. It was also the main office for handling racial-political and family-descendance matters, both used to “scientifically” justify the murderous Nazi policies. The “Gauhaus” was also the seat of the NSDAP, the National Socialist Workers’ Party, (official name of the Nazi party) for the Gau, i.e. the province, of Vienna.

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Site 7: Universität Wien / University of Vienna Universitätsring 1, 1010 Wien



At the University of Vienna in 1938 – the year National Socialism, the Nazi party, took power – 2,700 members of its community were fired for racial and/or political reasons, and consequently exiled or murdered. Most of these people were Jewish, but this group also included anyone with a political, racial, or national background that the Nazis disapproved of. This process included professors, students, administrative personnel and over 200 graduates whose academic credentials were set aside.