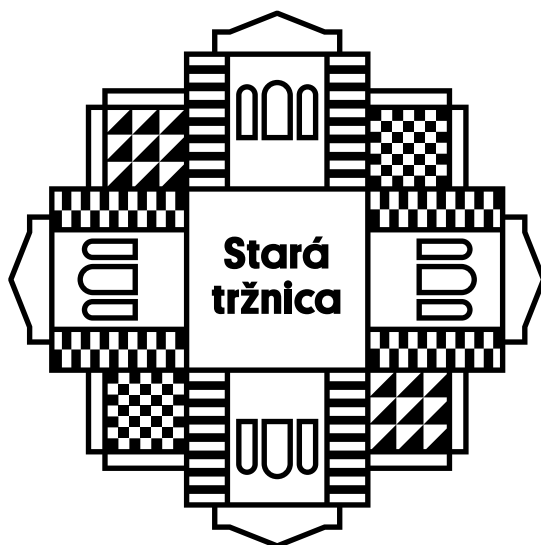


The Old Market Hall



10

10 Years of the
Old Market
Hall Alliance
and its
Activities



When an empty space is responsive to new challenges



Sometimes, places lose or can no longer serve their original function. Some simply fade into hollow reminders of the past, but elsewhere, this emptiness generates new opportunities and solutions to more immediate challenges. Venues that have outlived their usefulness can be revitalised to meet the latest demands and needs of their communities. They come alive with gatherings, transform into new public spaces, and even address current climate issues. And this is the story of the Old Market Hall.

The Old Market Hall was built in 1910 in response to the city's need for a cleaner market site. Its aim was also to supply the people of Pressburg (as the city was then known) with fresh, seasonal food every day, all year round.

More than a hundred years since its inception, this market hall has been given a new lease of life to reflect the needs of 21st-century Bratislava. We at the Old Market Hall Alliance (Aliancia Stará tržnica) strongly believe that creating a space where people can rediscover the values of localism, sustainability and living life at a slower pace is one of the most important challenges we face today. The Old Market Hall is a great spot where people can plan to meet friends or just happen to bump into someone they know. They can revive the Saturday market, bringing back a tradition that had disappeared from the city. On the green rooftop, they will be introduced to permaculture, and in the basement they can learn about composting.

It is also a place where culture thrives, where banners are created for public rallies and protests, and where funds are raised for those most in need. But this hall is also an example of how civic engagement can bring about positive change. Many worthwhile projects, no matter how infeasible they may seem, can be accomplished at the grassroots level by combining good energy and committed people. Ten years is less than ten per cent of the time that the Old Market Hall has been in existence. The last decade has breathed life into the hall, and we believe that this period has also pointed to the direction in which the building and its surroundings should head.

Here's hoping the markets, culture, art, community bonds, sustainability, civic engagement, new traditions, and everything else that keeps the Old Market Hall vibrant continue to grow and flourish for the next 100 years. We also hope that the commitment to addressing topical challenges, which is particularly important to us at the Old Market Hall Alliance, endures for as long as possible.

Members of the Old Market Hall Alliance team

The Story
Old Man

The Story
Old Man

ry of the kret Hall

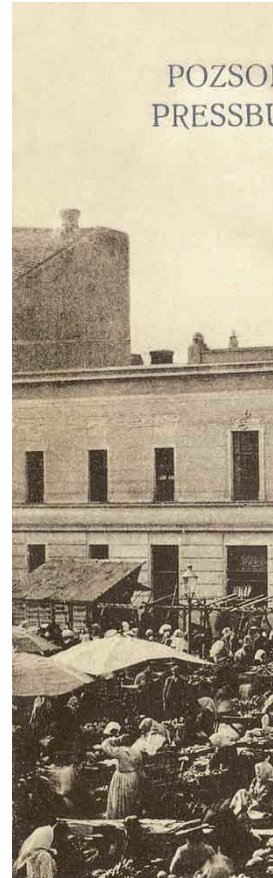
It may be over a century years old, but the Old Market Hall has been closed to the public for the best part of 50 years, erasing memories of its markets for an entire generation. Fortunately, this story has taken a positive turn.

ry of the kret Hall

THE HISTORY OF THE MARKET HALL

From a guarantee of fresh food for the people of Pressburg to a lively meeting place for the residents of Bratislava

The history of the Old Market Hall dates back to 1910. Originally designed to host markets, it had also served as the premises for television studios and warehouses at different points in time. Now, after more than a hundred years of existence, it is once again fulfilling its original role as a venue for local food markets, while also serving as a hub for culture, art, and civic activities.



1461 – 1910

Back in 1461, what is now the Slovak National Uprising Square (Námestie SNP) was called Prot Marckht (The Bread Market). Over the years, the name of the square changed to reflect its various functions. For most of its existence, the word “markt” was part of its name because markets were held

here regularly. In 1910, the place underwent a makeover in response to concerns over poor hygiene and unpredictable weather. The old open-air market gave way to a new landmark building in the heart of Bratislava – the Old Market Hall



NY.
JRG.

Vásárcsarnok.
Markthalle.

1910

The first market in the 3,000 m² indoor market hall was held on 31 October 1910. From the outset, the building was equipped with electricity, central heating, a water supply, lifts, and refrigeration

technology. Market traders rented individual stalls within the hall, while some continued to sell their wares in the square in front of the building.

1960 – 1996

Between 1960 and 1996, the building served as studios and warehouses for Slovak Television. Then, in 1999, after three years of refurbishment, the building was reopened, furnished with fully-fledged markets and units, including a canteen, a wine bar,

and a variety of shops. Within a few years, the basement area began to close down, followed by the departure of retailers and smaller businesses, and the building ended up empty again.



2013

The Old Market Hall Alliance, a civic association, brought together 11 experts in various fields to draw up a project and a detailed financial, technical, fundraising, and architectural plan. Despite the city's initial reluctance to engage with the civic sector, the alliance

was eventually granted a lease on the Old Market Hall building in June 2013. The aim was to restore it to its original use and turn it into an urban centre for markets and cultural events without putting a financial strain on the city budget.



SATURDAY MARKETS

Trh-Piac-Markt adds to the atmosphere of Bratislava on Saturdays

The Old Market Hall entered a new era in the public spotlight on 21 September 2013, when the first food market, TRH-PIAC-MARKT, was held. Today, the markets have become a staple of the city's Saturday scene, offering a wide range of goods and featuring numerous side events.



The name Trh-Piac-Markt alludes to the trilingual tradition of markets in Bratislava. The Saturday markets were the first activity to be revived by members of the Old Market Hall Alliance.

●
Every Saturday, except over the Christmas holidays, the Old Market Hall is filled up with around 80 market stalls run mostly by regional farmers and producers who sell local and seasonal food.



Trh-Piac-Markt prefers to work with small farmers, family farms, and artisanal food producers from the region. Vendors of foreign goods offer high-quality traditional specialties, artisanal foods, and organic or fair-trade products. Our

preference is for smaller importers who specialise in a particular product or region and maintain direct contact with local farmers and producers.





We are keen for the catering businesses here to source some of their food directly from local farmers and producers.





The Saturday markets are not just about food. Children's theatre, film screenings, and plant and clothing fairs are all part of the programme. During the markets,

the entire balcony is dedicated to a book exchange, where various sellers also stock records, stamps, old postcards, paintings, and magazines.



4500 visitors

In 2023, traffic at each of the Saturday markets averaged 4,500 visitors.



• During the markets there is also a pop-up kitchen called Kantina, where you can enjoy lunch made with fresh ingredients sourced from the market vendors.







SITES AT THE MARKET HALL

The symbiosis of a fermentation kitchen, taproom and plant haven

Once the markets were established, another important task was to enliven the various zones of the hall. The guiding principle is for the various businesses to support each other. The establishments operating in the hall change according to how they fit into the vision of the space and what added value they can offer. The Old Market Hall Alliance team's vision from the very beginning has been that each establishment, in addition to its primary function, should also add value to its surroundings and be willing to work with other businesses. These values can even reduce the rent. And what is the added value involved? The Lab, for example, is both a café and a shared workshop, while the Fermentation Kitchen operates *Kan-tina* on Saturdays. Take a look at the different zones currently present in the Old Market Hall and how they work together.





OASIS

The Oasis (Oáza) zone serves as an adoption centre for plants. This green retreat is filled with plants that, for various reasons, are no longer able to decorate the homes of their owners. Several

times a year, Oasis hosts a plant exchange, complete with an indoor-plant consultation service, and clothing swaps. Oasis is also a space where various side or community events can be held.





ARTIST RESIDENCY

The third floor of the administrative building houses a space used for artist residencies. Originally, it served as accommodation for maintenance staff, but today it is made available to artists and professionals for short-term educational stays, during which

they contribute to the development of the Old Market Hall with their work. The artist residency apartment adds to the overall sustainability efforts by sourcing furniture and fittings from Kolo, the Bratislava reuse centre.

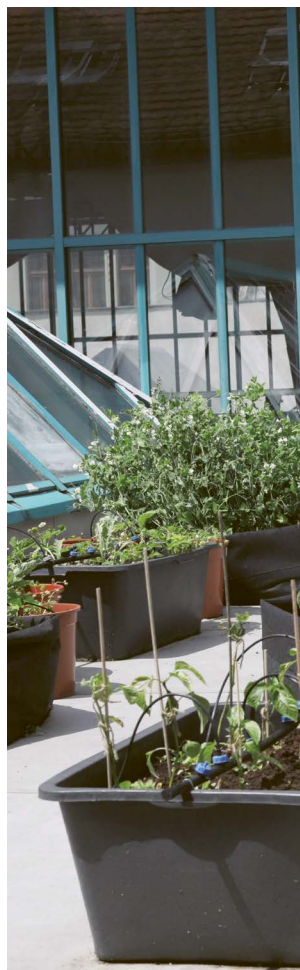




COMMUNITY GARDEN

A community garden was installed on the roof of the Old Market Hall in response to the climate crisis. It was created by members of the Old Market Hall Alliance in partnership with permaculture specialists and landscape architects. The garden is gradually

becoming a rooftop space in the city centre that promotes biodiversity. It also serves as a venue for community meetings and events on the theme of urban cultivation, sustainability, and permaculture.





LAB

The Lab is a space combining a café and a community workshop. The Lab.cafe is often used for workshops, concentrated work sessions, and smaller seminars, lectures, and training sessions. There is also a coworking area here. The Lab.workshop is situated in the basement, where

3D printers, laser cutters, sewing machines, and other gadgets are available to the public. The shared workshop and its equipment can be used by visitors to prepare school projects, set up their own business, or, for example, make home accessories.





ERNÓ'S TAPROOM

Ernó's Taproom (Výčap u Ernóho), a popular place among Bratislava residents and tourists alike, does brisk business year-round. The presence of a taproom fits in with

the harmonious coexistence of the market hall's various units. The beers served here are brewed at the Shenk Brewery in the basement of the Old Market Hall.





Who's the taproom's namesake?

From 1910 to 1918, the site of today's taproom was occupied by a shop called White Dove (U bieleho holuba), which was owned by Ernő Dworák. His shop was located here even before the market hall was built, but it had to be demolished to make way for construction. As compensation, Dworák was given rental space in the market hall. The shop stocked a wide range of household goods, including foreign products that could not be bought anywhere else in Pressburg, such as Angel's insect repellent powder or Christoph's varnish, the finest possible finish for floors.

1



How we resolved the over-exuberant nightlife

The revival of the market hall created more of a buzz around it than we had anticipated. The hundreds of people crowding both Nedbalova Street and Velvet Revolution Square (Náměstie Nežnej revolúcie) every day became clearly untenable, and the neighbours' protestations that it could not go on like this were entirely justified. Recognising that we had made a mistake by not regulating evening activities, we produced a manual outlining seven steps on how to close down each night so that we were able to keep the peace at night without making people feel like they were

being thrown out. We reached an agreement with the zones in the market hall to limit the range of spirits available. At weekends, last orders are called half an hour before closing time, and the establishments close in stages and earlier than city regulations dictate. Closing involves several phases: starting the cleaning process, turning on the cleaning lights, and finally switching off the additional lighting, leaving only the public lights on. This approach has resulted in a completely conflict-free and step-by-step closure of the building.

SHENK CRAFT BREWERY

Shenk is a family-run craft brewery that concocts its own beer recipes with quality ingredients and isn't afraid to experiment. Their beers are made not only from water, barley malt, and hops, but also from wheat, rice, corn, and rye. A spontaneous

collaboration with the Old Market Hall and the Strekov 1075 winery resulted in a special edition beer called eSko. The fresh, non-filtered and non-pasteurised craft beers brewed in the market hall's basement are a fixture at Ernő's Taproom.





NATURAL VINTNERS WINERY

Natural Vintners Winery (Viecha naturálnych vinárov) revives the traditions of Pressburg winemaking and the vineyards typical for the area. This wine bar specialises in wines made by natural winemakers from all over

Slovakia – those who produce chemical-free wine in their own vineyards. Besides its exceptional wines, the winery also serves products from Saturday market stalls and serves as a venue for piano concerts.





FOODSTOCK

Foodstock is a vegetarian bistro best known in Bratislava for its crispy Japanese gyoza dumplings, served with a delicately sweet sauce. The focus is on Asian cuisine, with miso soup and

hummus also being a fixture. The menu is regularly refreshed, and every Saturday, a special dish is prepared using ingredients from the Trh-Piac-Markt market.





LANGOS BAR

The Langos Bar also uses food from the market stalls on Saturdays. It offers a daily selection of sourdough lángos with atypical accompaniments, such as jalapeño peppers,

pecorino cheese, fresh bryndza, or lightly smoked pastrami. At the Langos Bar, these unconventional ingredients transform this traditional snack into a modern culinary experience.





2



How we stopped imposing our ideas on businesses

We ran into problems when selecting establishments for the Old Market Hall. Looking back over our ten years at the market hall, one of the key mistakes we recognise is that we tried to create a more theme-based mix of establishments. We aimed for a space for children, a place that added social value, and similar zones. However, none of these spaces succeeded, evoking a sense of compulsion to operate in accordance with our vision. We changed our philosophy and invited interesting

entrepreneurs to do what they do best, offer added value, in return for a reduction in rent calculated on the basis of the value they add.

RODKVA FERMENTS

In the basement of the Old Market Hall, chef Daniel Karas works on his Rodkva Ferments project, dedicated to vegetable fermentation. He specialises in fermented delicacies such as kimchi and pickled bok choy with shiitake mushrooms. His products are

available for sale at the Saturday markets. The Fermentation Kitchen (Fermentačná kuchyňa) also runs the Kantína on Saturdays in the market hall, where it prepares dishes with ingredients sourced from the market stalls.





SÓDOVKÁREŇ

Sódovkáreň is a small soda water production facility that continues one of the old traditions of the market hall as a collection point for soda bottles. Fresh soda water is served from soda siphons at

the markets on Saturdays, at Ernő's Taproom daily, and at numerous establishments across Bratislava, where the siphons are delivered by cargo bike.





POTTERY WORKSHOP

Next to Oasis is a pottery workshop. Monthly pottery classes are held here during the week, and during the holidays, it hosts a pottery summer school. When the markets take place on Saturdays, the workshop functions as an

open studio, where visitors can come along and watch. Here, they can find out what is needed to make ceramics and how a potter's wheel and a kiln work.





BRATISLAVA VOLUNTEER CENTRE

The Old Market Hall is also home to the Bratislava Volunteer Centre (Bratislavské dobrovoľnícke centrum). The centre matches willing volunteers with organisations in need and coordinates projects

and programmes for volunteers. Its public activities include organising of Dates with Volunteering (Zoznamky s dobrovoľníctvom) and hosting training sessions for organisations.





EVENTS AND CULTURE

The hall also attracts visitors through culture and art

The Old Market Hall's central hall is also a hive of culture and art. Concerts, conferences and other events are held there in the evenings and on weekdays. We curate events so that both the programme and the funding are balanced. Some events are free to the public, others have an entrance fee, and some are private. In this way, commercial revenues help to fund and support public events that need to be subsidised. Three regular events are at the core of the market hall's programme: the monthly Street Food Park, Art in the Market Hall during the summer, and the Christmas Market during Advent.



↓
Viva Musica and the Tube installation
by the Croatian-Austrian creative
group Numen for Use



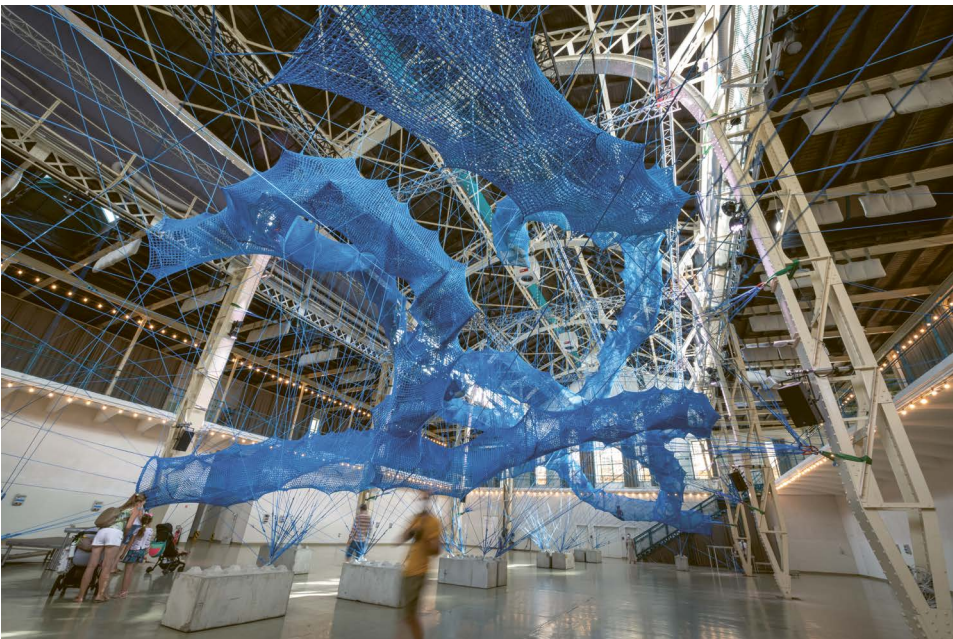
ART IN THE MARKET HALL

Art in the Market Hall is a project designed to surprise visitors with world-class art in places they wouldn't expect. Since 2021, the public has been able to enjoy large-scale interactive works directly in the central hall during the

summer months. So far we have exhibited *Tube and Tape* – works by the Croatian-Austrian creative group *Numen for Use* – and *Inner Life*, an installation by the French artist known as *Maotik*.

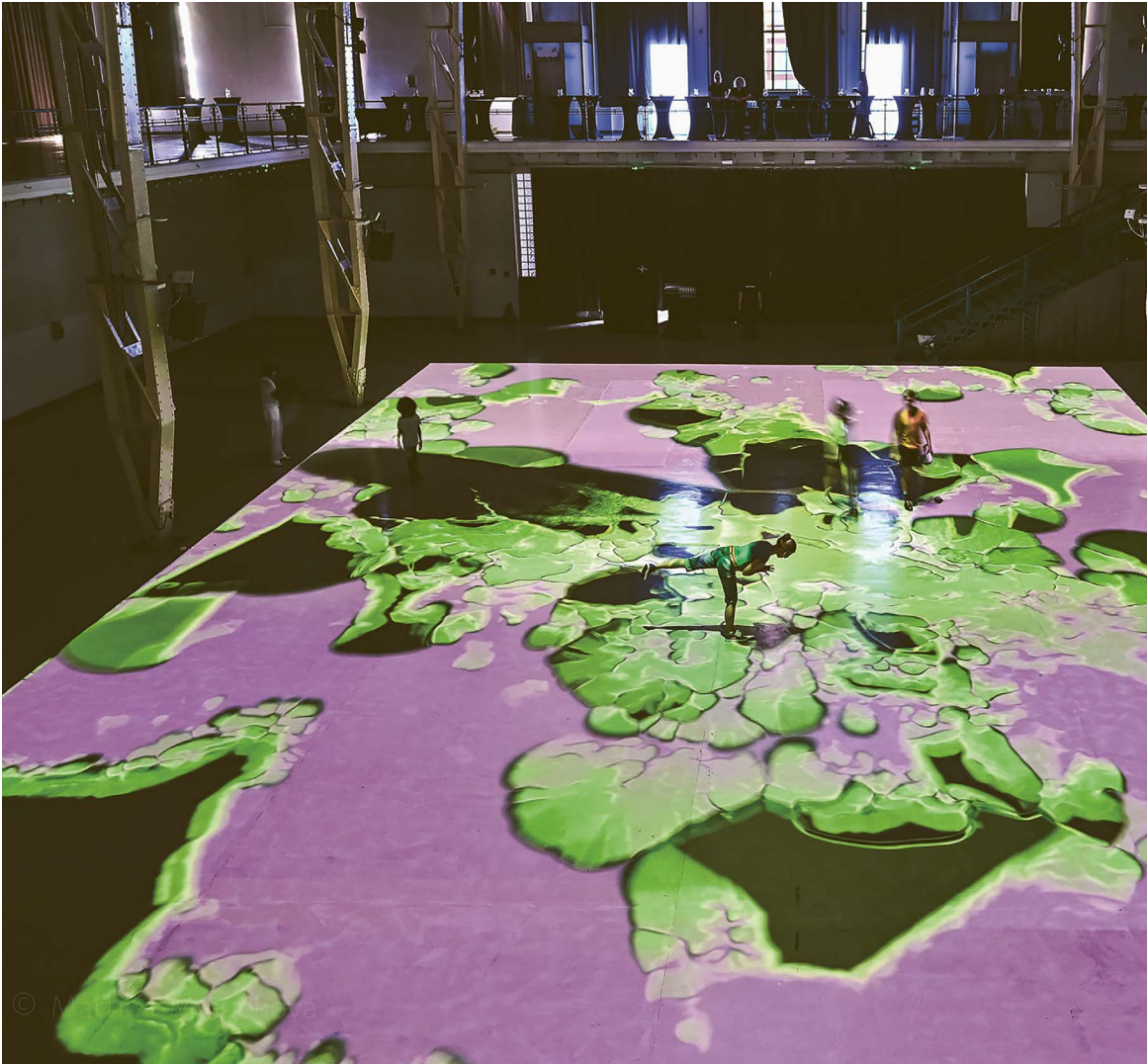


Tube, by the Croatian-Austrian creative group *Numen for Use*





↙
Inner Life, by the French
artist known as Maotik







Tape, by the Croatian-Austrian creative group Numen for Use



STREET FOOD

Between March and October, Street Food Park, now an established event offering a variety of street food, is held once a month on the square in front of the market hall. First held in September 2015, it has been a zero-waste event since November 2017:

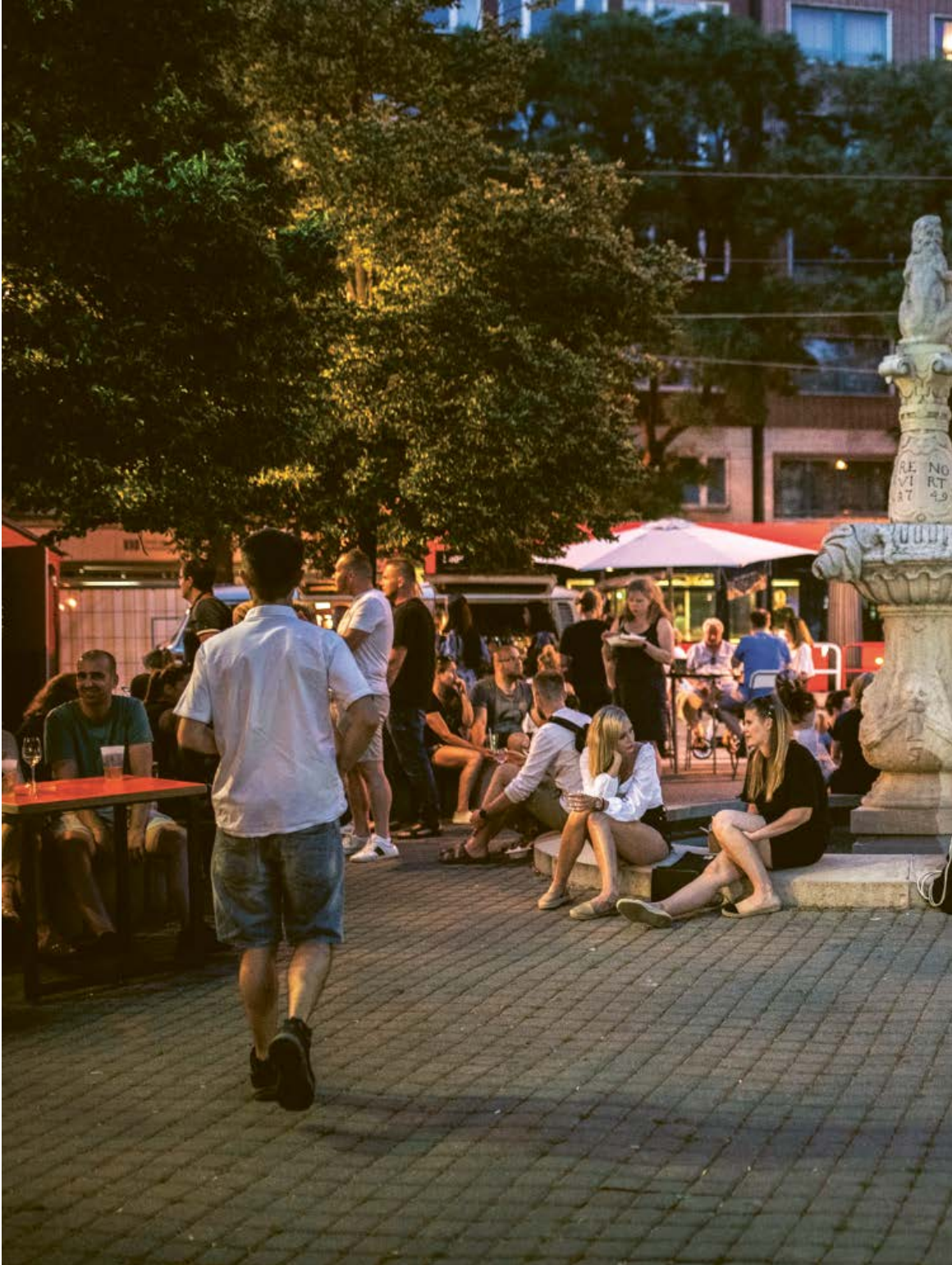
drinks are served in returnable cups, food is served on biodegradable plates, and all waste is separated and recycled, with compostable waste is processed in our composting station.

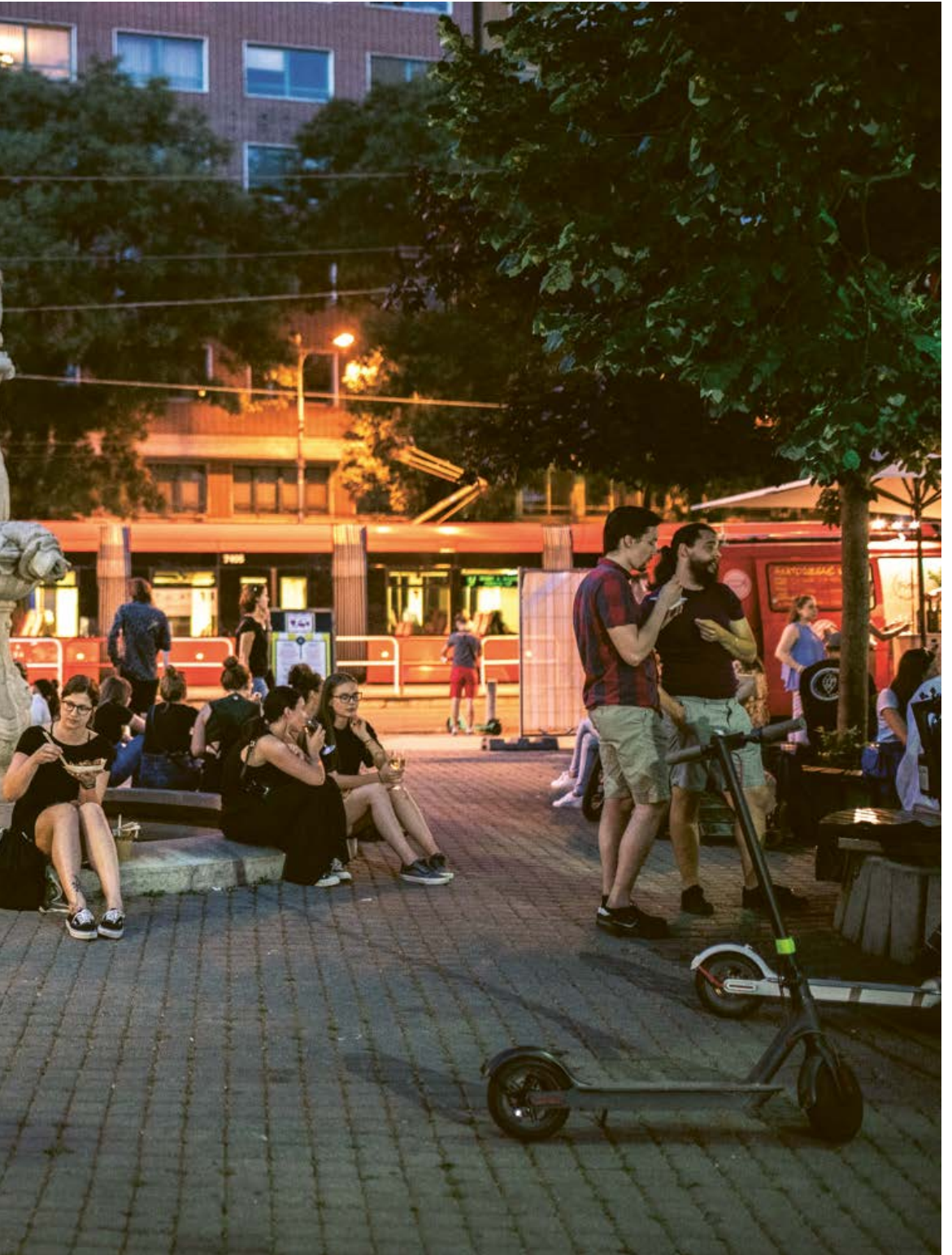










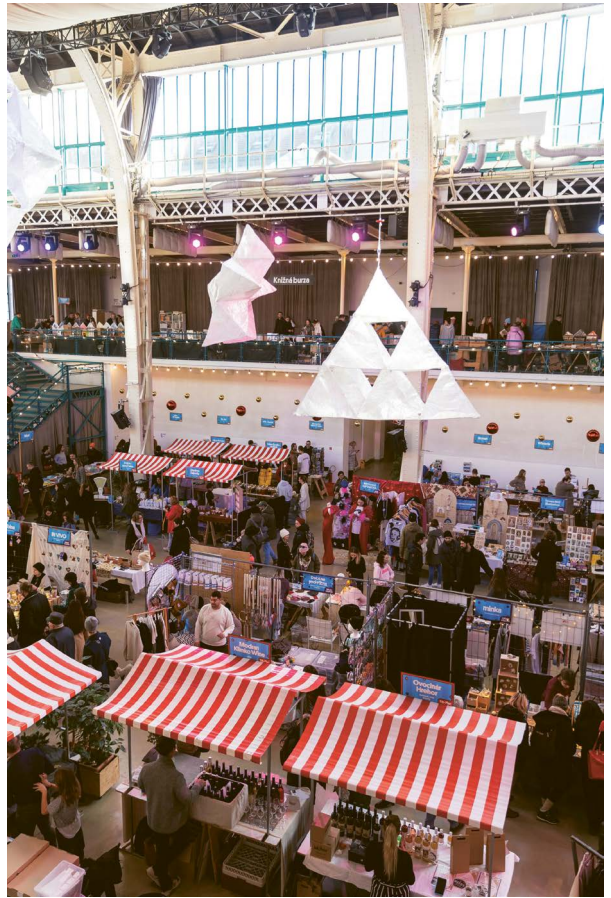


CHRISTMAS MARKET HALL

In December, the market hall is full of local art and design, books and treats. The Christmas Market Hall is an event that brings together BRaK (the Bratislava Book Festival), Urban Market, and our Trh-Piac-Markt market vendors,

allowing visitors to buy unique gifts for their loved ones and, in doing so, support local brands, small and larger publishers, artisan food producers, and artists.

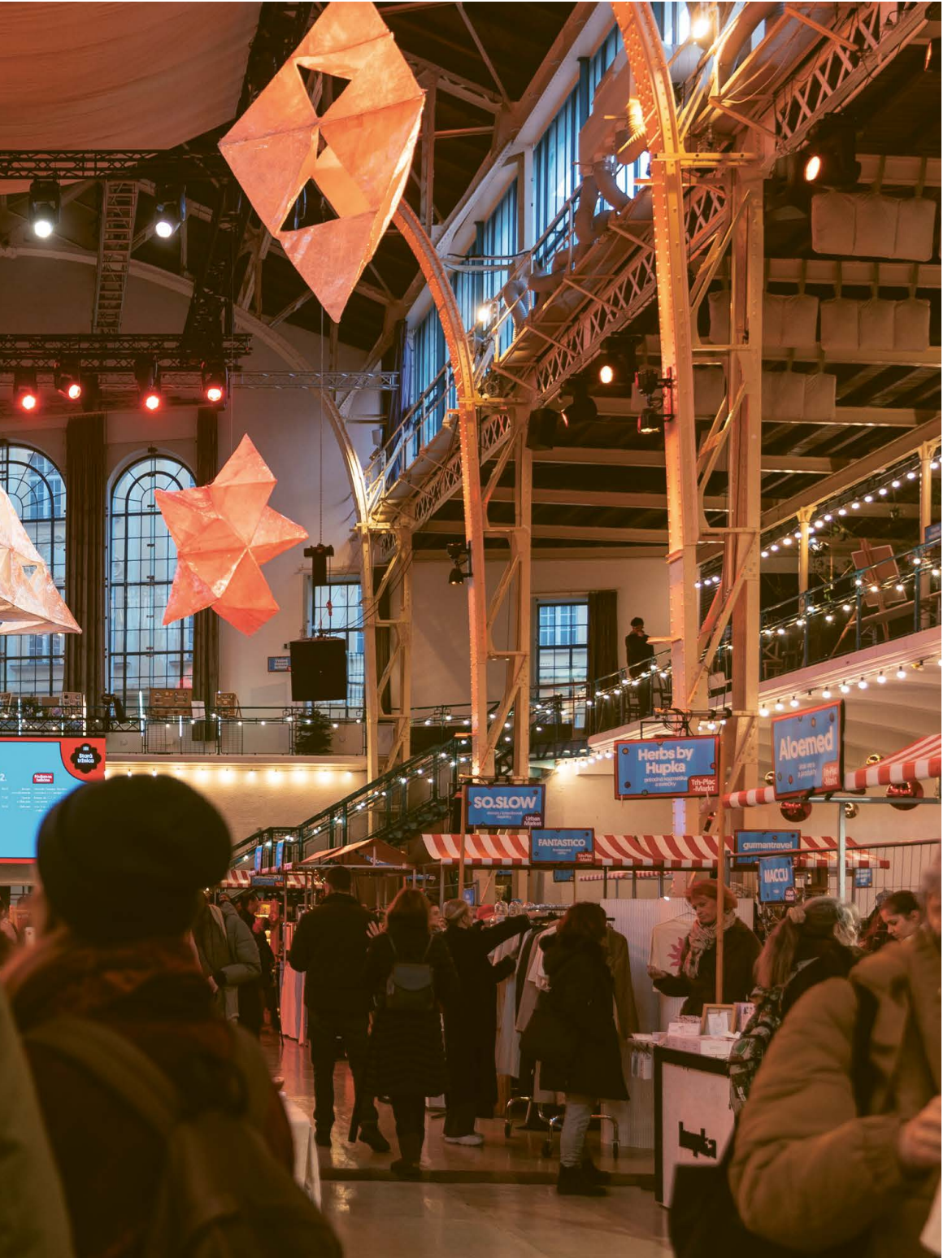




More open every year

Over a 10-year span, the Old Market Hall has steadily increased the number of markets and events. While in 2013, the market hall was open 28 days a year and hosted 4 markets, by 2023, it was open 230 days a year and held 51 markets.





3



How we were too noisy (and learned from it)

In the early years of the revived Old Market Hall, we held concerts that, unbeknownst to us, exceeded noise limits, and it didn't take long for the neighbours to complain. This was a mistake that we learned from, prompting us to take corrective action. We initiated a number of noise-mitigation measures, including installing soundproof glass, introducing indoor noise metering with alerts when the noise exceeds permitted levels, and reorganising the structure of events. Today, we know exactly how to deal with sound - which frequencies to

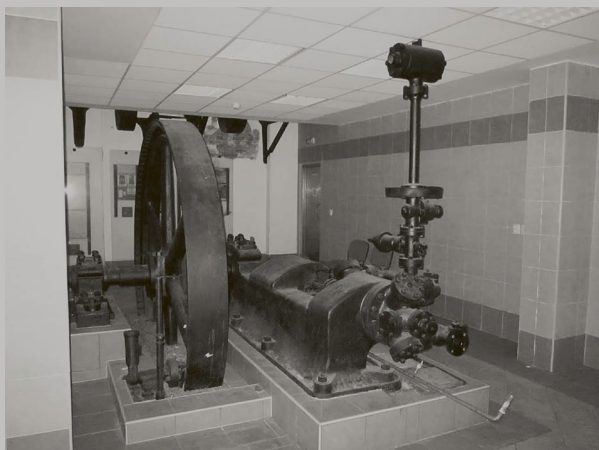
attenuate because they resonate not only in the building, but also in the surrounding area. Drawing on this experience, we are now able to stage a mix of events without upsetting our neighbours.

BUILDING RENOVATION

Fulfilling our commitment to continually maintain and improve the market hall building

When the Old Market Hall Alliance took over the lease of the building in 2013, it undertook not only to open it to the public, but also to invest 10 thousand euros every month in its refurbishment. Little by little, we invested. We ploughed the rent from the first unit into another and, step by step, we used the income from events to renovate the toilets, build a new sewage system, fix the fire alarm system, refurbish the windows, replace all the flooring, and much more. Over time, we even addressed areas of the market hall that weren't essential but in some ways took the venue a step forwards. This created a space for an artist residency, a rooftop with a community garden, improved acoustics, and a composting station.

LAB – DIELŇA



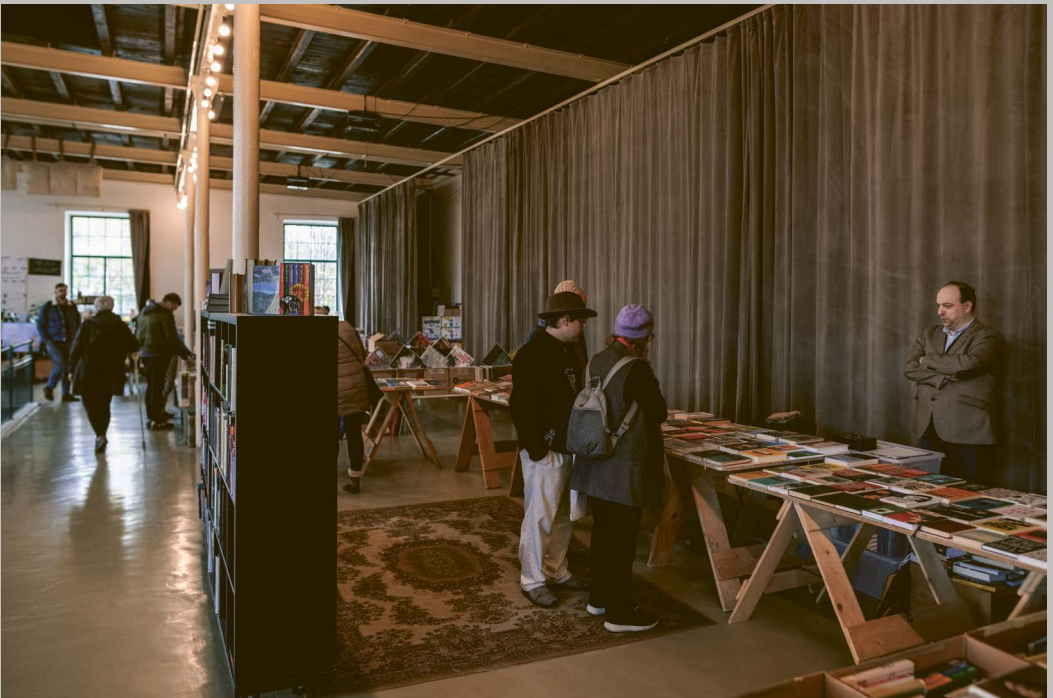
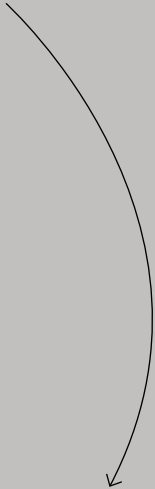
FOODSTOCK



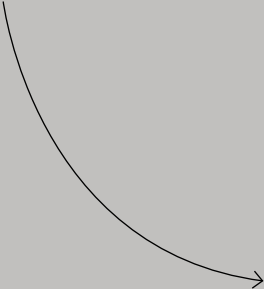
GREEN ROOFTOP



BALCONY

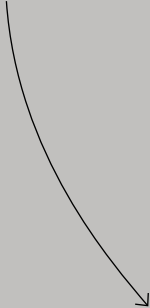


POTTERY WORKSHOP

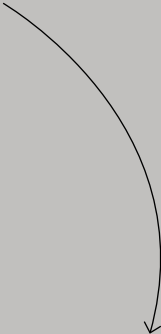




NATURAL VINTNERS WINERY



OASIS

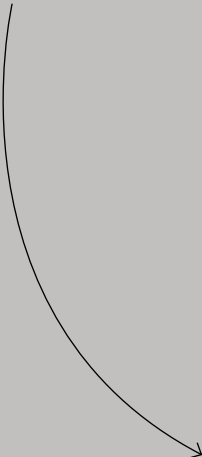


LAB - CAFÉ





ERNŐ'S TAPROOM



GREEN MARKET HALL

Throughout the market hall, there are green solutions at work – some obvious, others hidden

Sustainability has long been an important focus of the Old Market Hall and all its activities. In addition to common measures, such as banning plastic straws, using returnable cups in restaurants, and sorting waste, the green agenda team regularly comes up with new ideas and solutions on how to be as sustainable as possible and inspire our visitors to do the same.





The rooftop of the Old Market Hall now serves as a community garden, where locals grow their own vegetables year-round.

Currently, this is an experimental phase for the green rooftop, but we plan to scale it up so that it reaches its full potential.





The establishment of a composting station was one of the first sustainability initiatives at the market hall. Our long-term ambition is to minimise the amount of waste we generate together. Compostable waste – vegetable and flower cuttings from the Saturday

markets, food scraps, used compostable dishes and packaging from the Street Food Park, waste generated from brewing beer in the basement of the hall, and various other waste from the venue's shows and events – makes up the bulk of our waste.

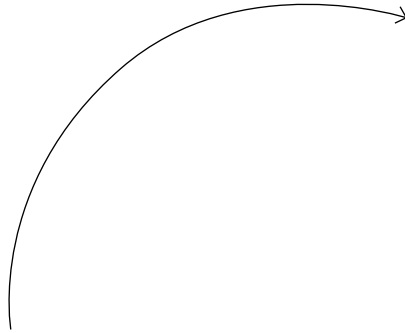




The fact that the Old Market Hall has its own composter reduces the volume of municipal waste by up to 80%. As a result, the area around the hall is less affected by the smell of rubbish, and bin lorries come around less often, creating less noise from rubbish bins being picked up.



• The compost we create goes to the community garden on the roof of the hall or is returned to the soil on our market vendors' farms.





Our target is to compost 50 tonnes a year

The Old Market Hall's composter can process 165 kg of waste per day, which is a phenomenal 50 tonnes of waste per year. We are steadily moving towards the goal of using its capacity to its full potential.

•
We use cargo bikes for deliveries, distributing soda and beer within the city centre. They are also used for smaller or larger moves, such as transporting plants to Oasis.





One of the principles of sustainability is to give things a second chance, an idea that the Old Market Hall pursues and spreads. An example is Oasis, which takes care of plants that their owners might otherwise throw away. Cuttings are taken from them so that visitors to the plant exchange

can take them home in return for a voluntary contribution. The idea of a second chance is also at play at the clothes exchange and the biggest exchange, for books, which takes place every Saturday alongside the markets.

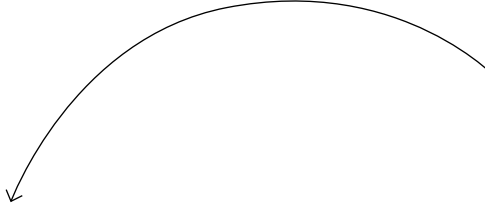


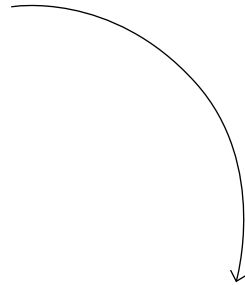
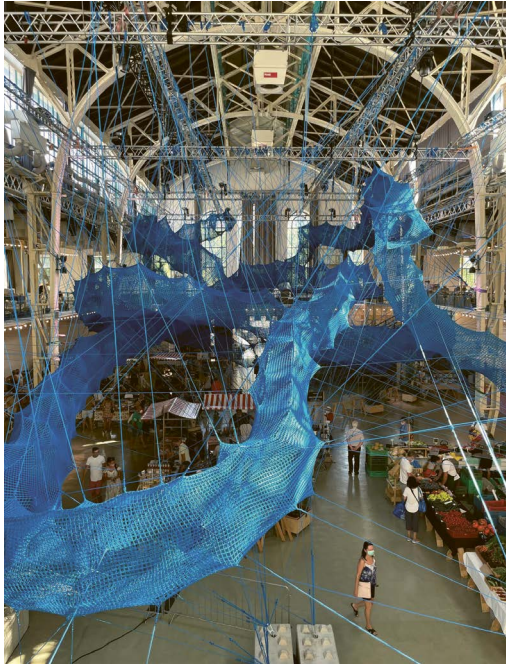
200 plants

So far, about 200 plants have found a second home at Oasis. Here, you will find a wide range of indoor greenery – small cacti, young cuttings, and even three-metre-long araucarias and a 50-year-old Chinese rose.

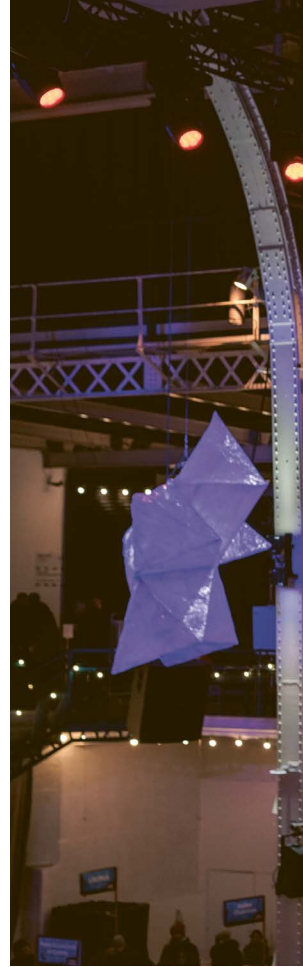


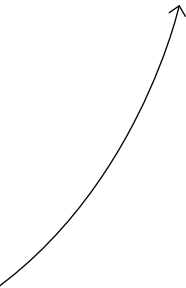
● Recycling and upcycling are steadily being incorporated into many of our activities. We now actively consider how to reuse various materials in every project. For example, waste from the Tube installation was used to create a number of useful items, such as dog leads.





● We used material from the Tape installation to make Christmas decorations. The exhibition banners have been repurposed into seating bags for the children's corner at the Saturday markets.





• Sódovkáreň is responsive to local tradition and the environment. It offers soda in returnable all-plastic or antique glass bottles. Soda for customers, cafés, restaurants, and offices can be collected in person or delivered by bicycle courier.



•
The collection of used oil, dry pastries, and egg cartons for reuse at the Saturday markets is one of our small solutions for the sustainable functioning of the Old Market Hall.







How we changed the use of the seating in front of the market hall

Some of the plans we had for the public space in front of the Old Market Hall turned out to be a mistake. We had to adapt and change them to the reality of the situation. Initially, the establishments here only had seating along the façade. The Living Square initiative in 2018 introduced the Sit Down! project to create free seating at red tables and chairs in the square. However, many visitors began using them to consume beer or wine they had purchased

from establishments in the building, which violated rules on the consumption of alcohol outside designated areas. In response, we legalised the area of the square as outdoor seating for businesses. At the same time we wanted to keep the space there public, allowing anyone to sit down, eat their salad, or drink a mineral water from the nearby grocery store.

LIVING SQUARE

The revived market hall gave rise to Living Square

The revitalised Old Market Hall breathed new life into its immediate surroundings. A continuation of the work being done by the Old Market Hall Alliance was the Living Square project, which aims to improve the quality of public space in the city centre. Numerous steps – big and small – have been taken under this project to help open up not only the squares directly adjacent to the hall but also other public spaces.



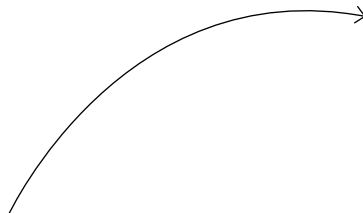
The Living Square project was an initiative of the Old Town Hall Alliance in cooperation with its partners – the Slovak Governance Institute (SGI), architectural studies 2021, and Labak. The goal was to link up the neighbourhood,

focusing on a participatory process and data collection. We proposed changes that could be implemented quickly on a limited budget, but had the potential to significantly improve the quality of public space.



More than 100 solutions have been implemented under the Living Square initiative, including mobile greenery on Klobočnická Street, the removal of kiosks on Kamenné

námestie, the installation of additional lighting in poorly lit areas, the removal of concrete planters, and the creation of seating areas around the trees in front of the Old Market Hall.

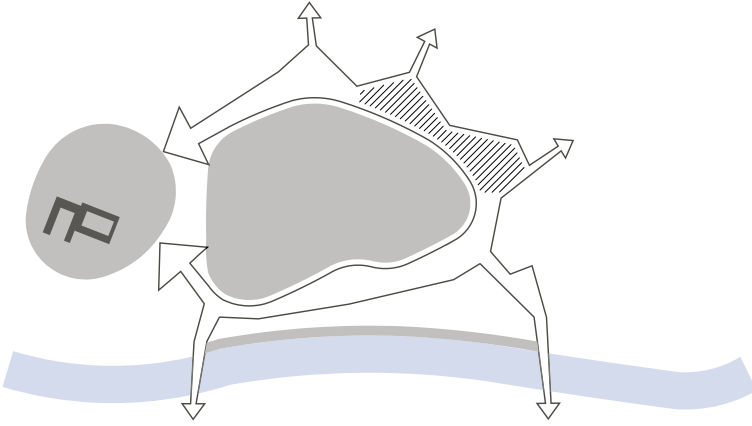




↖
Mobile greenery on
Kloboučnická Street



Using documentation supplied by the Old Market Hall Alliance, the city held an international architectural competition, which was won by the Berlin-based Loidl studio. Their design influenced not only the square itself, but also introduced the concept of a green belt around the historic core of the city. This idea of a green belt led to projects such as the Old Town Plateau, and the redevelopment of Comenius Square and the area around Zochova Street.





THE FUTURE

The future is an open market hall responsive to the city's contemporary challenges

Over the last decade, the city has undergone a great deal of transformation. One of the major changes in the pipeline is the interconnection of public spaces around the historic core. This green belt can reposition the Old Market Hall without the building actually moving, while also bringing other changes to its existence. So what are we considering for the future of the market hall? Sustainability, accessibility, and responsiveness to the needs of the city and its residents are crucial.

01

Our short-term vision for the building is to continue the Green Market Hall project. This includes thinking about opportunities to use alternative energy sources, especially for heating. Within two years, we plan to upgrade the boiler room with a heat pump. The building's indoor climate could benefit from a passive

night ventilation system, which can be activated by making the original slats at the highest point on the roof movable. This ventilation system was used when the market hall opened in 1910, but in the 1990s, the slats were sealed during reconstruction work. Our plan is to return to this original means of ventilation.

02

Within a five-year timeframe, we plan to restore the horizontal roofs to create a full green rooftop that is 100% covered with vegetation. We want the rooftop

to continue to serve as a permaculture community garden while also retaining rainwater and naturally insulating the building.

03

Our long-term vision for the Old Market Hall also involves the redevelopment of the square. We want to make the market hall even more open to the public within ten years. We are striving to open it more often, to make it local and accessible, so that it can be a space responsive to current

challenges. Whether it hosts the point of first interaction for foreigners coming to our city, a fermentation shop, a used furniture restoration workshop, cargo bike rentals, more art, or more food, it will be important that the building responds – as it has so far – organically to the city's current needs.





Who we
helped

Who we
helped

have

The story of the revitalised Old Market Hall is not just about the building. Above all, it is a story about people, with a central message that even when financial resources are scarce, bringing the right individuals together can make a big difference. We are proud that the Old Market Hall Alliance has inspired other initiatives and that we have been able to share our experience and help get similar places up and running in Slovakia and neighbouring countries.

have

WHO WE HAVE HELPED

Passing on experience gained from the Old Market Hall

For ten years, members of the Old Market Hall Alliance have helped various organisations work towards revitalising empty spaces. Our help has taken many forms – sometimes a workshop, other times assistance with a lease agreement, consultation on renovation, or project financing. We have highlighted a few initiatives that we were pleased to support so that their projects could come to life.



Kláštor Cultural Centre, Rožňava

We assisted the Kláštor Cultural Centre in Rožňava in their efforts to lease a historic building from the town. Our cooperation continued during the transformation of the space into a cultural centre and the construction of accommodation. We were pleased to support the idea that more and more people should discover not only the former Franciscan monastery there, but also the whole of Gemer.



Hunyadi téri vásárcsarnok market hall, Budapest

We helped the Hunyadi téri vásárcsarnok market hall in Budapest prepare documentation for its renovation. The building is currently being renovated according to these plans and, like our market hall, will have a composting station, a green rooftop, and versatile spaces.



Lucerna rooftop, Prague

As part of the Lucerna Rooftop project, we teamed up with our friend Ondřej Kobza to launch the regeneration of the 1,000 m² area on the roof of the Lucerna Palace in Prague, which now serves as a space for art, culture, events, and the development of community life.



New Market Hall, Bratislava

We worked with the New Market Hall in Trnavské mýto to prepare a plan for the initial steps to revitalise this place.



Sit Down project

The Sit Down project was originally part of the Living Square initiative. Over time, however, it became clear that it would make sense to expand it across Bratislava. The city adopted this initiative, along with the idea of red chairs, from the Old Market Hall. The red chairs are gradually becoming a symbol of safe, quality public space in Bratislava.



Civic and charitable activities

The Old Market Hall has often hosted unplanned activities in response to current events. Here, warm clothes have been collected, banners have been made for the For a Decent Slovakia (Za slušné Slovensko) rallies, and a Christmas dinner was organised for the homeless. During the Covid-19 pandemic, we stored military beds and food for the elderly, and right after the invasion of Ukraine, the market hall served as a contact point for people fleeing the war.



Inspiration for sustainable markets

Through our open food code, we have supported the creation of other quality markets in Slovakia. Our compostable waste team regularly delivers presentations on our experience and encourages the development of local composting stations.

People from
Old Marl
Alliance

People from
Old Marl
Alliance

From the Market Hall

At the beginning of the Old Market Hall's modern-day story were eleven people united in their dissatisfaction with the state of a magnificent historic space right in the heart of the city. In the more than ten years since the revival of the hall, dozens of people have joined the original Old Market Hall Alliance, contributing their energy and expertise to the ongoing development of the site.

From the Market Hall

The multidisciplinary team that brought the Old Market Hall to life

The Old Market Hall Alliance (Aliancia Stará tržnica – AST) is a civic association founded in 2012 by a group of eleven professionals from fields as diverse as fundraising, architecture, design, cultural management, and law.

At that time, the building was officially under the management of the Bratislava Information and Cultural Centre (BKIS). However, the owner, the city of Bratislava, had handed BKIS the reins without a clear plan or financial support.

AST members decided to use their professional experience to create a project that would revive the Old Market Hall, allowing it to serve as an urban centre organising markets and cultural events for



residents and visitors without placing a financial strain on the city budget.

We spent a year working on a detailed project. We prepared comprehensive financial, technical, fundraising and architectural plan, kept in close contact with our partners, and reached out to the media.

However, despite our commitment, there was considerable scepticism about working with a citizens' initiative. We faced rejection from many quarters, with predictions that we would not get a lease and that, even if we did, it would end in fiasco. That made the negotiations and discussions extremely challenging.

After months of preparation and active communication with experts, representatives of City Hall and city MPs, on 7 February 2013 the City Assembly approved the Old Market Hall Urban Centre project. In June 2013, a lease agreement was signed between AST and the City of Bratislava, and in September, the association took over the building.

This was despite the fact that, until then, it had been unthinkable for such an important building belonging to the local government to be managed by a civic association. To our delight, this practice has proven to be effective – and not only for the Old Market Hall. Since then, several initiatives have emerged in Slovakia that have leveraged a similar framework for successful cooperation with local government.

A huge milestone for the Alliance team was 21 September 2013, the date of the first Trh-Piac-Markt. Thanks to the way in which responsibilities are shared, the constantly flowing ideas, the energy, and the willingness to work together, every year brings several additional important dates when something new is launched.

For ten years, each member of the team has brought energy to the building through their work, always taking it a little bit further.

We would like to thank all those who have been involved over the years and who have helped to make the Old Market Hall what it is today:

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The Old Market Hall

10 Years of the Old Market Hall Alliance and its Activities

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