

THE VILLA AND ITS HISTORY



Ludwig Mies van der Rohe
(1886–1969)

The most important German modernist architect, the last director of the Bauhaus School of Art, Design and Architecture, and the author of the concept of a “free-flowing” or “unbounded” space, which he also developed in this Brno villa. He worked in the United States from 1938.

Lilly Reich
(1885–1947)

A German textile designer and stylist; she formed a creative partnership with Mies van der Rohe from the mid-1920's. She also participated in the design of Villa Tugendhat. From 1932 she worked as the head of the weaving studio and construction department of the Bauhaus school.

1930–1938

THE TUGENDHAT FAMILY LIVES IN THE VILLA

Fritz and Grete, together with their children Hana, Ernst and Herbert, lived in the villa for only 8 years. Just because they were Jews, they had to leave the villa and Czechoslovakia. They first emigrated to Switzerland and then to Venezuela. After the war, the family moved back to the Swiss city of St. Gallen.

1945

THE RED ARMY ARRIVED IN THE VILLA

During the liberation of Brno by the Soviet army in April 1945, Marshal Malinovsky's cavalry troops caused devastation to the house. The soldiers housed their horses directly in the main living room.

1929–1930

LUDWIG MIES VAN DER ROHE BUILDS VILLA TUGENDHAT

Villa Tugendhat was designed for the newlyweds Grete and Fritz Tugendhat by the German architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. However, the whole construction was financed by Grete's parents – Alfred and Marianne Löw-Beer, important Brno entrepreneurs. The construction lasted only 14 months and the family did not set a financial limit, so the house could be built to include advanced technical equipment (such as an air-conditioning control room or window control room) and luxury furniture.



Grete Tugendhat
(1903–1970)

Grete, née Löw-Beer, became actively involved in the Brno branch of the League for Human Rights, which she chaired during the interwar period and where, after 1933, she also helped political emigrants from Germany.



Fritz Tugendhat
(1895–1958)

Although he originally wanted to study medicine, he eventually settled in the traditional family textile business. He was a passionate photo and cinema amateur, capturing the family atmosphere in the villa in many pictures (which you can see in our permanent exhibition on the technical floor).

1939–1945

THE VILLA IS PROPERTY BY GESTAPO

During World War 2, the villa became the property of the German Empire and its new tenant, Walter Messerschmidt, made several construction modifications to the villa. For the sake of easier heating of the house, for example, he had the living space divided into several parts. He was also the last person to use the villa as a family home.



1950–1958

A REHABILITATION CENTRE WAS ESTABLISHED IN THE VILLA

The villa also served as a rehabilitation centre for children with spinal defects and was managed by the nearby Children's Hospital. The living space became a gym; the bedroom floor was turned into a doctor's consulting rooms.

2001

THE VILLA WAS ENTERED ON THE UNESCO CULTURAL HERITAGE LIST

Thanks to its timeless equipment, technical design, but also the setting in the surrounding landscape, the villa was ceremoniously inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List on 16 December 2001.

1946–1950

DANCE WAS TAUGHT IN THE VILLA

Another inhabitant of the villa, Karla Hladká, was a professor at the Brno Conservatory, who ran her dance school, or the "Karla Hladká Institute of Physical Education" in the villa. They danced mainly in the main living room and in the garden.



1992

THE DIVISION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA WAS SIGNED IN THE VILLA

In June 1992, representatives of today's Czech Republic and Slovak Republic, Václav Klaus and Vladimír Mečiar met in the villa, to discuss the division of the then Czechoslovak Republic. In August of the same year, the signing itself which confirmed the division took place in the villa.

2010–2012

THE VILLA HAS UNDERGONE RESTORATION

Between 2010 and 2012, the villa was completely closed to the public and underwent extensive renovation, during which it was returned to the form first designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe.

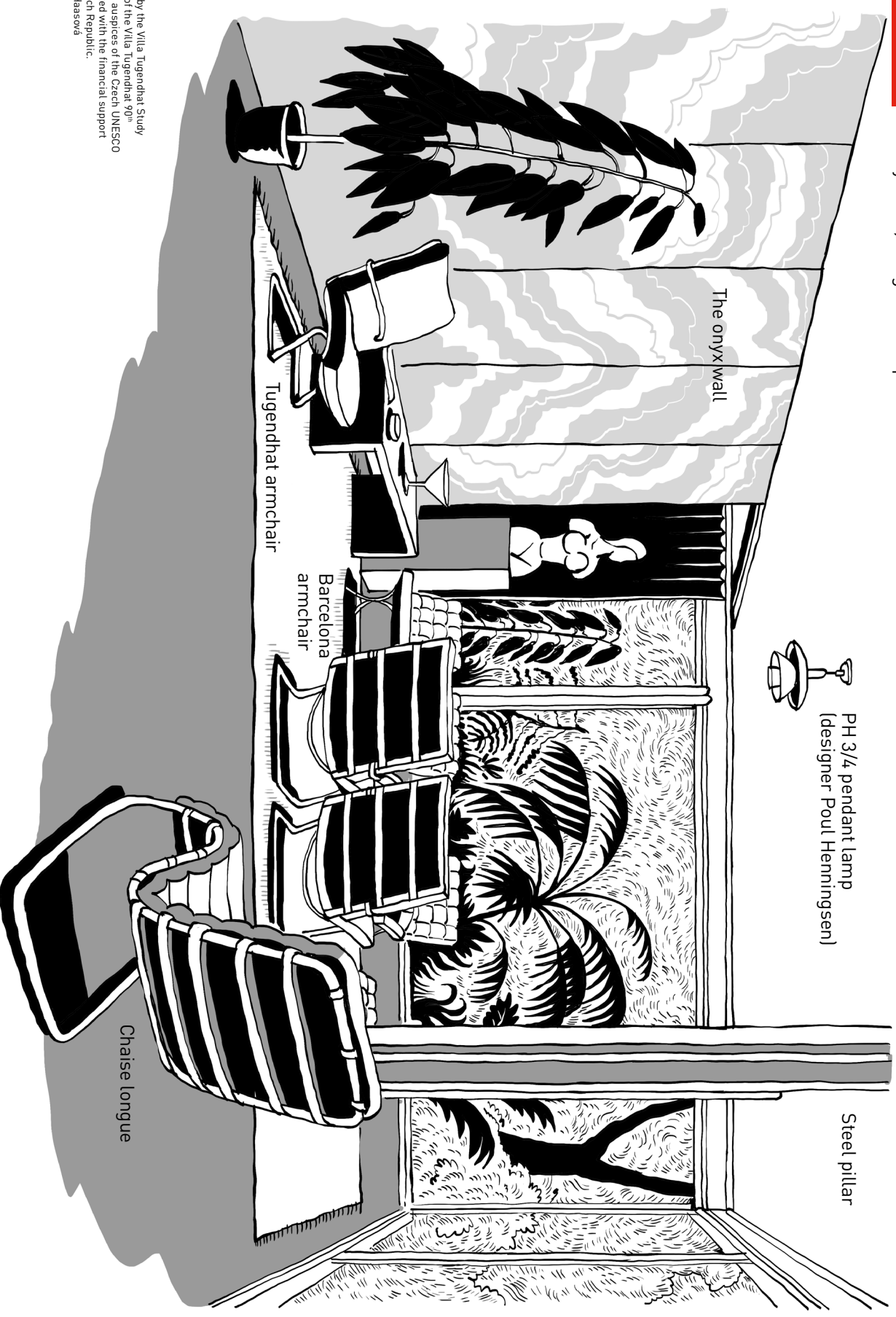
MY VISIT

I visited the villa on:

and I was most interested in / intrigued by:

BECOME A DESIGNER OF VILLA TUGENDHAT

You can try to create new colour designs of armchairs, curtains and carpets like Berlin textile designer Lily Reich, using coloured pencils.



This education sheet was prepared by the Villa Tugendhat Study and Documentation Centre as part of the Villa Tugendhat 90th anniversary celebrations, under the auspices of the Czech UNESCO Commission which were implemented with the financial support of the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic.
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