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Minimum Documentation Fiche 2003

composed by **national/regional** working party of:
Architects' Chamber of Romania (OAR)

0.1 Picture of building/site



depicted item: Pavilion of the Exhibition of the Achievements of the National Economy

source: Photo Archives of The Union of Architects of Romania

date: -

1. Identity of building/group of buildings/urban scheme/landscape/garden

1.1 current name of building

Central Pavilion of the Romexpo Exhibition Centre

1.2 variant or former name

Pavilion of the Exhibition of the Achievements of the National Economy (EREN)

1.3 number & name of street

Romexpo Pavilion
no. 67, Mărăști Blvd.

1.4 town

Bucharest

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1.5 province/state
1.6 zip code
1.7 country
1.8 national grid reference
1.9 classification/typology
1.10 protection status & date

Bucharest, Sector 1
011466
Romania

REC – exhibition pavilion
proposed for listing in A class of protection,
at national level, 2008

2 History of building

2.1 original brief/purpose

The pavilion was built to mark the anniversary of 20 years from “the victory against fascism”, in 1964. On this occasion, the exhibition of “The Achievements of the National Economy” was organized there. In 1959, on the same site, an exhibition pavilion was designed, which had to be finalized until 1962, when the end of the collectivization process was celebrated. The construction was subject to an accident, its dome yielded under the weight of the snow and it was necessary to redesign the pavilion integrally. The political decision prevented the architects from redesigning the pavilion, imposing the inspiration from an already existing construction. The redesigned pavilion was strongly inspired from an existing pavilion in Brno, however, it surpasses its model through the technical and aesthetic achievement.

2.2 dates: commission/completion

commission 1959

completion 1964

2.3 architectural and other designers

prof. arch. Ascanio Damian, coauthor:

Mircea Enescu

architects: V. Ursache, Adrian Stănescu, R. Popescu, S. Miculescu, Vera Hariton, with the collaboration of architects N. Nedelescu and V. Cantunari

Acoustics: A. Neçulea team of engineers

consulting engineer(s):

General Coordinator: eng. Adrian Stănescu

Structure: engineers Em. Băiculescu, M. Săvescu, Liana Popovici, A. Nefian, with the collaboration of engineers D.D. Niculescu, M. Soare și N. Poțîrniche.

Installations: engineers M. Procopiescu, A. Stănescu, Gh. Ionescu, A. Costescu, I.

Palade, with the collaboration of engineers D. Manasian and D. Cenda

Building site organization: engineers M.

Anastasescu, I. Baisan, I. Georgescu, V.

Grecu, with the collaboration of eng. T.

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- 2.4 others associated with building
- 2.5 significant alterations with dates

- 2.6 current use
- 2.7 current condition

3 Description

- 3.1 general description

- 3.2 construction

Dinescu

Exterior works: engineers C. Brînzeu, M. Iordan, D. Gheorghiu

building contractor(s):

Construction Trust I Bucharest

The construction of two tower blocks in the Free Press Square, on both sides of the axis to which the pavilion belongs. (2008)

Interior compartments, modification of the interior lighting, the change of carpentry – which took place along the time, have a reversible character.

Exhibition pavilion

Good

The necessity to build it appeared when the communist regime wanted to legitimate its power once again, by celebrating some events at the national level – in 1962, the anniversary dedicated to the end of the collectivization process and in 1964, the anniversary of 20 years since “the victory against fascism”. Additionally, the relative isolation from Moscow influence, marked the return to the architectural modernism, what made possible this exceptional achievement. The decision on the architectural conception did not belong entirely to the design team, because the political power imposed, as a model of structure and image, the “Z” pavilion within the exhibition Complex in Brno, built after a design of professor Ferdinand Lederer, in 1958.

The pavilion was located on the ground of approx. 100 hectares, which remained available after the demolition of the Hippodrome – that space was going to be occupied by the ensemble of the exhibition fairs and green spaces.

The technical data of the pavilion are equally impressive: the diameter of the dome is 93 meters, the diameter of the construction is 125 meters, the total height is 42 meters, the built surface is of approximately 10,000 square meters, the gross building area is approx. 19,000 square meters.

We speak about a real modernist achievement – due, on the one hand, to the use of the new technologies and materials at

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that time, and on the other hand, to the theoretic approach which preceded the design.

The structure was so conceived as to support the proposed plastic expression, but, at the same time, to be easily fit for precasting, in order to be raised in a short time, of 9 months.

The dome closing dictated the composition of the pavilion, the resulted construction being a central, centripetal space, with a vertical axis supported by the ribs of the structure and by different finishing details.

The dynamism of the interior spaces is supported by the disposition of the three galleries located at different bench-marks and also, of the stairs unifying them, so that the plan symmetry is not obvious, being only an instrument of space orientation. The access of the public from the esplanade is assured by two ramps which achieve a spatial continuity between the exterior and the gallery situated at +3.20 meters. The large space opening invites to exploration, either of the central area, situated at the ± 0.00 mark or of the other galleries, situated at +4.50 meters, respectively, 7.70 meters. Remaining faithful to the idea of structural sincerity, the designers preserved the simplest finishing, relying on the aspect of apparent structure.

The façade composition assures the iconic image of the pavilion through the two superposed elements, the perimetral construction and the dome. Maybe the most interesting detail – the one which amplifies the powerful identity of the pavilion (apart the dome) is the ample glazed surface which reflects the level of the main gallery into the façade. The windows, 11 meters high, are so placed as to form an obtuse angle, by two. A vibrant surface results from this zigzagged structure which confers dynamism to the volume while the difference of diameter of the consoles (the superior one is ampler) has as a result a sloped big window – a real dynamic image.

The interior lighting was not spectacular, but such an extraordinary intervention would have been misplaced, because the accent fell on the exhibits, not on the building itself.

The use of neon tubes for the lighting of the ceiling intrados, had to underline the radial effect given by the precast components and the dome was enlightened by spotlights placed on the walking board of the basic ring. What has been achieved by the exterior lighting was the emphasis on the special form of the glazed zigzag area, which imposes once more the iconic image of the pavilion, at the level of the square. All the mentioned elements outline the image of a complex building achieved in keeping with the style and the technology of the epoch. This is especially remarkable as we are at only a few years from the return to modernism, after the period of "socialist realism". The interwar modernism was not a school easy to forget and EREN Pavilion was a good opportunity to demonstrate the capacity to achieve modern architecture and to implement new technologies of the architects.

3.3 context

4 Evaluation

4.1 technical

The greatest achievement of the design is the structure of the dome, all the more as it was achieved as a consequence of the collapse of a previous structure. The dome is based on a structure of steel pipe made up of a basic ring and a superior one, linked between them by meridian pipes. Between the extreme rings, other horizontal ones complete the structure. The dome was mounted to the ground and for its construction hydraulic presses were used, having as lifting towers, the interior pillars of reinforced concrete of the perimetral construction. The perimetral construction, with a reinforced concrete structure and metallic pillars was built simultaneously with the construction of the dome, using an increased number of precast components for the floors. The metallic structure was finally incorporated in concrete, forming a so called structure of concrete with a rigid reinforcement.

One of the main equipments of the pavilion, unfortunately missing today, was a railway who was set up to reach the platform on 0.00 mark. There was also a compressor

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station, situated at the technical level, for putting some exhibits in motion. Among the interesting details of the construction were the precast concrete stairs with numerous string-boards and without stair-risers and also the use of the pre compressed concrete with Freyssinet cables for the construction of the main access ramp.

4.2 social

4.3 cultural & aesthetic

The project was a part of a "promotion" of achievements from the beginning of the sixties which represented the return to modernism and its powerful presence, with an iconic character, became prominent at the level of the town image.

Due to the fact that we have in view a design inspired after an already existing model, namely Brno pavilion of architect Lederer, we can discuss the differences from the model, as it represents a work which is even more valuable. The volumetric difference between the two constructions can be considered as being minimum, but the zigzagged shop window of the Romanian pavilion produces a dynamic and very interesting volume which integrates into the site very naturally.

4.4 historical

In spite of not being so old, the pavilion marks, together with some other achievements of the sixties, the moment of return of the Romanian architecture to the modernism, after the period of socialist realism. Therefore it belongs to a trend meant to resynchronize with the European modernism.

4.5 general assessment

At national level, it is a unique object and its architectural value is recognized both in the professional environment and in the public one. Its architectural expression represents a perfect equilibrium between the modernist approach of the program of exhibition pavilion and its technical achievement based on innovative methods, for that moment. The special image within the Romanian architectural context until that moment, durable in the collective memory, supported by a manufacturing process which used the latest technologies of that time, imposes EREN Pavilion as a remarkable achievement of Romanian modernism.

5 Documentation

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5.1 principal references

- Damian, A., Enescu, M. – „Pavilionul expoziției economiei naționale a R.P.R”, „Arhitectura R.P.R.” Review, no. 4/1962, pages. 2-10.
- Pavlu, Gh., Sebestyen, V. – „Proiectarea ansamblului expoziției realizărilor economiei naționale”, „Arhitectura R.P.R.” Review, no. 5/1964, pages 2-21.
- Baiculescu, E., Enescu, M. – „Proiectarea pavilionului Expoziției economiei naționale a R.P.R.”, Revista Construcțiilor și a Materialelor de Construcții, vol. 14, no. 3/1962, pages 114-123.
- Soare, M., Potîrniche, N. – „Cupola metalică reticulară de la pavilionul Expoziției economiei naționale”, Revista Construcțiilor și a Materialelor de Construcții, vol. 14, nr. 3/1962, pages 124-135.
- Dinescu, T., Anastasescu, M. – „Proiectarea montării cupolei pavilionului Expoziției economiei naționale R.P.R.”, Revista Construcțiilor și a Materialelor de Construcții, vol. 14, no. 3/1962, pages 136-145.
- Ionescu, G., Derer, P., Theodorescu, D. – *Arhitectura în România, perioada anilor 1944-1969*, Publishing House of the Academy of of Socialist Republic of Romania , Bucharest 1969.
- Curinschi Vorona, Gh. – *Istoria arhitecturii în România*, Technical Publishing House, Bucharest, 1981.
- Images from the Archives of Photographs of „Arhitectura” Review, at the Union of Architects of Romania.
- Drawings from the personal archives of arch. Ascanio Damian
- Lay-out plan, overview
- Drawings, period photographs from „Arhitectura R.P.R.” Review
- Drawings by arch. Ascanio Damian

5.2 visual material attached

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Recent photographs (2008) by Aurelian
Stroe

Miruna Stroe, 2012

5.3 rapporteur/date

6 Fiche report examination by ISC/R

name of examining ISC member:

date of examination:

approval:

working party/ref. n°:

NAI ref. n°:

comments:

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