SOS ARCHITECTURE ARCHIVE!!!

THE ARCHIVE OF ARCHITECTURE IS IN RUINS.
WE ALL SAW HOW IT WAS FLOODED BY 3,5 METERS OF WATER.
WE SAW HOW THE ARCHIVE'S WORKERS DESPERATELY TRIED TO SAVE IT.
WE SAW THEIR SOLITUDE. WE SAW VOLUNTEERS DO ALL THEY COULD.
WE KNEW THAT THE ARCHIVE WAS ALWAYS OF SECONDARY INTEREST TO THE INSTITUTIONS TO WHOSE ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION IT WAS ENTRUSTED.

Therefore we have set up a fund for the preservation and restoration of this internationally unique archive of 19th and 20th century architecture. We want to acknowledge its historical value. Let us think of the future of the documentation of Czech architecture. We are asking for financial contributions for the preservation of the plans of the National Theater in Prague, of the Hradec Králové Museum, of the Prague Municipal Building, of the Legiobank and the Trade Fair Building, both in Prague, and of the work of architects like Josef Zítek, Jan Kotěra, Josef Gočár, Kamil Roškot and Jaroslav Fráňner, among many others. ARCHITECTURE NEEDS OUR CARE AND HELP.

Signed in Prague on August 23th, 2002:
Emil Příkryl, professor at the School of Architecture, Academy of Fine Arts in Prague | Vladimír Šlapeta, professor at the Department of Architecture, Czech Technical University | Jiří Horský, editor of the "Architekt" magazine | Karel Ksandr, State Institute of Historical Preservation | Soňa Ryndová, assistant at the School of Architecture, Academy of Fine Arts in Prague | Vladislava Valchářová, curator at the National Technical Museum in Prague | Dita Dvořáková, curator at the National Technical Museum in Prague | Kateřina Bečková, "The Club for Old Prague" | Richard Biegel, "The Club for Old Prague" | Marcela Steinbachová, "Kruh" civic association | Martin Rusina, "Kruh" civic association

SOS ARCHITECTURE ARCHIVE!!!
account no.:
CEKO CZ PP 179310745/0300
SOS ARCHITECTURE ARCHIVE!!

The architecture archive was founded within the National Technical Museum in Prague in 1910, following a call by professors at the Czech Technical University. The work of major Czech architects was gradually amassed here, beginning with the period of Historicism through Art Nouveau and Functionalism to present-day architecture. As one of the most important collections of European significance, the architecture archive is a member of ICAM (International Confederation of Architectural Museums).

The archive contains drawings, plans, photographs, documents and models, totaling approximately half a million exhibits. During the 1990s the archive contributed to a series of expositions – mainly wandering, monographic and thematic expositions – such as "Czech Functionalism 1918–38", "Czech Cubism", "Jožo Plečnik", "Shaping the Great City" and "Jan Kotěra".

In 1940 the archive was forced to move from Schwarzenberg Palace in the Hradčany quarter of Prague to the ground floor of the Barock building of Invalidovna. This building was flooded by 3.45 meters of water in August 2002. Ninety percent of the architecture archive was flooded. Thanks to an overwhelming effort by individual volunteers, most of the archive documents were removed from the building and frozen in order to allow for possible future restoration.

Now the rest of the archive documents that were not damaged must be removed from the building and a restoration workplace and depository must be secured in order to preserve at least part of this irreplaceable part of European cultural heritage.

In the best case scenario, restoration of the frozen archive documents will take long years and require enormous material expenses that are completely out of the realm of possibilities of all concerned institutions.

Therefore we are appealing to all Czech and foreign scholarly institutions, schools, restoration experts, architects and the European cultural public to provide urgent aid – financial, material, professional or other.

For the raised funds, an account "SOS ARCHITECTURE ARCHIVE!!" has been set up. It is under the auspices of the Prague Academy of Fine Arts, the "Club for Old Prague", the "Architekt" magazine and the "Kruh" civic association.

The account no. is: CEKO CZ PP 179310745/0300.

Written in Prague on August 23rd, 2002

The following people were entrusted with the administration of the account:
Emil Příkrýl, professor at the School of Architecture, Academy of Fine Arts in Prague
Vladimír Šlapeta, professor at the Department of Architecture, Czech Technical University
Milan Pavlík, professor at the Department of Architecture, Czech Technical University
Jiří Horský, editor of the "Architekt" magazine
Rostislav Svácha, Institute of Art History at the Czech Academy of Sciences in Prague
Karel Ksandr, State Institute of Historical Preservation
Soňa Ryndová, assistant at the School of Architecture, Academy of Fine Arts in Prague
Vladislava Valchařová, curator at the National Technical Museum in Prague
Marcela Steinbachová, "Kruh" civic association
Kateřina Bečková, "The Club for Old Prague"