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Okr?glak Business Center

Poland

Miel?y?skiego 14

Greater Poland Voivodship 61-725 Pozna?

Commission

1948

Completion

1954

Original name

Powszechny Dom Towarowy [Universal Department Store]

Other denominations

Okr?glak Development Sp. o.o.

Original use

Commercial/Shopping mall

Current use

Administrative purposes/Office space

Architects

Marek Leykam

Concrete by reinforcement

Reinforced concrete

Construction method

Cast-in-place concrete, in-situ concrete, Precast concrete, precast element

Architectural concrete

Architectural concrete

Structural types

One-dimensional/concrete frame

Description

Pozna? is the fifth largest city in Poland and one of the oldest cities in the country. It is considered the birthplace of the Polish nation and is believed to have been the capital at some time in the remote past. Its historic centre is a heritage site with significant symbolic value.

In this context, the building for the Powszechny Dom Towarowy department store was one of the first new constructions after the Second World War. Despite an unequivocally modern vocabulary, its elegant and respectful architecture earned the respect and esteem of the city's residents, overcoming the stigma that sometimes accompanies communist-era architecture in Eastern European countries.

It is a cylindrical building, with a central void that contains a spiral staircase. Located at a large intersection in the centre of the city, its shape helps to organise the flow of circulation around it and it expands the intersection to form a small square. The volumes of the faades that converge behind the new building are cut off and finished with a new building that covers the party walls and prepares the space for the free-standing cylindrical volume. Its faade serves as a transition between the classical language of the old town and the modern language of the new building. One of the keys to the building's successful urban integration is its elegant faade, constructed from prefabricated concrete elements that create a uniform rhythm through the repetition of a window module of a size that matches the neighbouring buildings. These prefabricated elements are remarkable for their delicate quality and slenderness. Along with the balustrade at the top, they give the building a detailed scale that is in harmony with the surrounding constructions, despite its larger size.

Links

