



BELGRADE SPIRITUS MOVENS

OBJEKT USA-CANADA and Objekt International celebrate the rise of the "White City on the Hill", the exciting capital of Serbia.

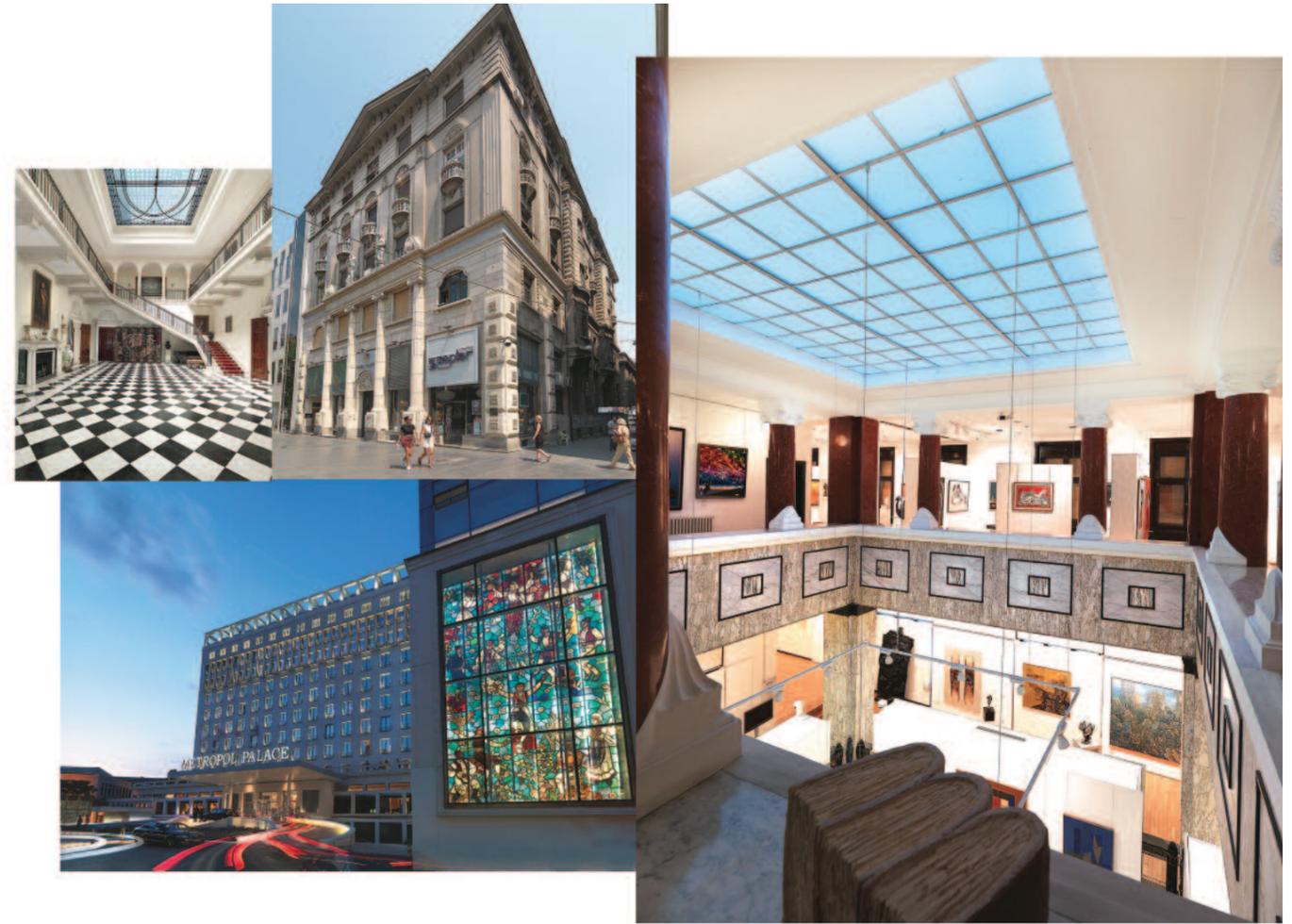
After centuries of alternating cycles of prosperity and destruction, Belgrade is once again standing tall above the confluence of the Savus and Danube Rivers.

The Belgrade-born creative principals at Studio Pyramid Inc. and OBJEKT shine a light on some of the city's most interesting history.

production:
OBJEKT USA-CANADA; Isabel Fonk
Studio Pyramid Inc. Toronto
Sasha Josipovicz + Milosh Pavlovicz
photos: Alaia + Hans Fonk
text: Isabel Vincent

Above: some of the great symbols of Belgrade: the Royal Palace, the Metropol Hotel and the Zepter Museum.

Also: Crown Prince Aleksandar II and Crown Princess Katherine with the OBJEKT team. From left to right: Milica Milanovic, head of public relations Rotal Palace, Sasha Josipovicz, Sara Jovetic, logistic manager OBJEKT, Royal Highness Crown Prince Aleksandar II and his wife Crown Princess Katherine, Hans Fonk, Alaia Fonk, Izabel Fonk and Milosh Pavlovicz.



Legend has it that Attila the Hun is buried under the fortress that was known by Celtic invaders as Singidunum, located on the rock that overlooks the "White City" of Belgrade.

Perhaps it's no accident that the most feared enemy of the Roman Empire would come to rest at one of the most plundered cities of antiquity, which lay strategically at the periphery of three major civilizations - the Byzantine, Roman and Slav-Avar empires. Its geographic position would prove both a blessing and a curse throughout a history marked by demise and greatness.

In addition to the leader of the Huns, others would try their hand at taking over "the White City on the Hill." The name "Belograd" first appeared in papal letters on April 18, 878.

The despot Stefan Dragutin boldly declared the city the capital of Syrnia, elevating it to a world capital. After the Ottoman Turks won the Battle of Kosovo Polje in 28 June, 1389, the displaced populations moved north to Belgrade. The refugees worked hard, and helped the city to flourish under Prince Stefan Lazarevic, known by his moniker "Stefan the Tall One."

Prince Stefan, one of Europe's most important 15th century knights and military rulers, rebuilt the Singidunum fort and created a bustling city of 50,000 inhabitants. But the turbulent history didn't end there. Many sieges followed with Belgrade falling into Ottoman hands in 1521. Later, the Hapsburg armies captured it and then lost it again to the Ottomans. On April 18, 1867, the city was finally gained its independence from the Ottomans.

But it's strategic military position during the First World War would ensure that it became a target once again, and much of the city was leveled after

German shelling. New cycle of peace and prosperity arrived on November 1, 1918, and the city flourished once again under the Karadjordjevic dynasty. It was during this post-war period that most of the city's important architecture was created.

Still, peace was elusive and by April, 1941 Belgrade suffered its worst destruction in history after the German air force bombed the city. Three years later, on the holiest day on the Orthodox calendar, Allied forces bomb-shelled the city on Easter Sunday 1944.

But while the residents of the city were bruised, they refused to be broken, even as the end of the war ushered in political persecution under the new Communist state, which also forced out the royal dynasty. At least 10,000 people were jailed and tortured. But at the same time that he cracked down on opposition, Communist leader Josip Broz Tito worked to promote the city as the industrial and cultural capital of his new Yugoslavia.

Later, with the break-up of the Yugoslav federation in the 1990s, Belgrade once again became a target for foreign aggression, this time by NATO countries as they bombed the metropolis and other parts of Serbia.

Still, Belgrade survived: its residents literally crawling out from under rubble to reconstruct an open gateway to the Balkans, a place that welcomed back the Kradjordjevic royal family, which had been in exile since the founding of Tito's Yugoslavia.

And today, Belgrade is undergoing a renaissance - back to its former glory as the shining White City on the Hill.