

GEORGIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM. SHALVA AMIRANASHVILI MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

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Zubalashvili hotel, Erevanki square, the end of XIX's century



The new hotel next to S. Amiranashvili Georgian national museum of fine arts



Freedom square (main square of Tbilisi) 2021



S. Amiranashvili state museum of fine arts, view from N. Baratashvili square, 2021



Artists Group Bouillon Performance -Condition
Museum of fine Arts
23.09.2021

DESERVES TO SURVIVE?

Two centuries of pride in the center of Tbilisi:

The building where now the museum is located was built in 1835 on behalf of the wealthy merchant Iakob Zubalashvili. The building was built in the classicistic style by the Swiss architect Giuseppe Bernardazzi. The first purpose of the building was a hotel. In 1840 the building was bought by the exarchate and the Theological Seminary was housed in the building. The seminary remained in this building until 1905. In the advertisement of the hotel, dated 1923, reads: "This is the largest hotel in the city, with the best restaurant in European and Asian cuisine, its own hairdresser, bathrooms and a large decorative garden." The Georgian National Museum of Art has been housed in the building since 1950.

LOCATION:

The building of the National Museum is located at in the center of Tbilisi. It was dominant in this location for many years and was standing in front of the main square of Tbilisi. However, within the framework of the Tbilisi panorama project, which started in March 2014, a massive 7-star hotel

was planned to be built next to the museum building at Pushkin Street 7, the main works of building is already completed. The new hotel completely overshadows the size and scale of the National Museum building, making the National Museum building almost impossible to perceive.

PROBLEM:

On July 4, 2021, minister of Culture, Sports and Youth of Georgia, Tea Tsulukiani issued a special statement informing the public that Shalva Amiranashvili state Museum of Arts has entered special type of administration.

The reason is the collapse of the building and the uncertainty of the exhibits.

Due to geological engineering studies, there are dangerous geological processes on the territory of the museum

building, and high groundwater levels are unfavorable factors. The widths of the building walls and the distance between the load bearing transverse walls do not meet the requirements of the design standards. The building has no earthquake-proof belts either on the mezzanine or on the roof levels. As a result the buildings blueprint does not meet the requirements of the design standards for the 9-point earthquake site.

HOPE:

The conclusion of the examination also contains some recommendations:

For the normal operation and functioning of the building, it is necessary to change the foundation scheme of the building. The entire area of the building shall be based on monolithic reinforced concrete gable foundation slabs that will be connected to existing strip foundations, walls, and reinforced concrete slabs to provide durable grounding;

Damaged floor tiles should be replaced. Anti-seismic deformation belts should be installed in the walls of the building at the level of the mezzanine roofs and roofs;

It is necessary to arrange drainage systems around the building to prevent water logging of the base soils.

It should be noted that the expert report does not recommend the dismantling of the building and generally does not mention the need for this size. In the conclusion we read that "as a result of the above measures, it is quite possible to strengthen the central part of the building, to ensure its safe operation."

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PROTEST:

The uncertain fate of the museum building has caused great protest among the academic sector and citizens. The two-century-old building, which was the beauty of the central part of Tbilisi and has witnessed many important stages in the history of Tbilisi, is certainly an emotional issue for the citizens. They protested the uncertain condition of the museum building with various rallies and performances. They have set up several groups in social

media, where they post updates about the information surrounding the museum. The students who did an internship at the museum refused to receive certificates. The museum protectors made manifest with thousands of signatures. They wrote several letter to Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth of Georgia, for its part ministry also issued various promises, but what lies ahead for the museum building is not yet clear.