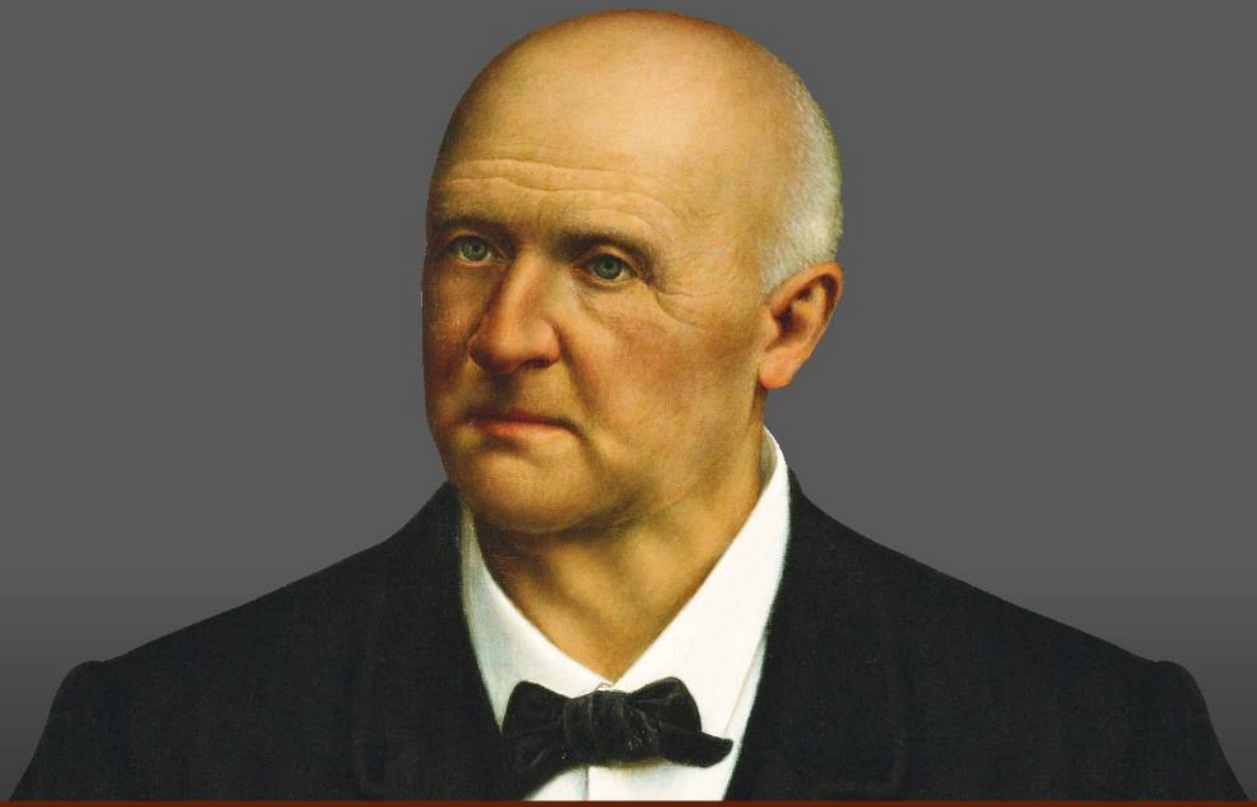


27

Schweizerhaus





the Prater " Schweizerhaus " (c. 1875)





probably Wednesday, 27 July 1892

Anton Bruckner and Wilhelm Zinne are visiting the International Exhibition for Music and Theatre. In the evening, they are attending a guest-performance of the Hamburg " Stadttheater " at the Exhibition Theatre. Then, they have the chance to meet two female dancers from the " corps de ballet ", which is under the artistic direction of impresario Bernhard Pollini. [Many foreign dancers are part of the company.] One of them is the injured " Fräulein " Huszárek, who personifies the title role of Isa, the Danube Mermaid. Bruckner invites Zinne, Huszárek, the ballet dancers and some close " compatriots " to rejoice at the " Schweizerhaus " (Swiss House) pub-restaurant located at n° 16 on the " Straße des Ersten Mai " around 10 o'clock. On the way back to the " Heßgasse " apartment, Bruckner talks to Zinne about his three symphonies in C minor (in the " gravissimo " tone) and the 25 % profit coming from the printed scores.





“ Schweizerhaus ” Prater n° 16 1913



" Restaurant Schweizerhaus " Prater n° 16 1920's



the " Schweizerhaus "

1716 The first recorded mention of the " Schweizer Hütte " (Swiss Lodge)

At that time, the Prater was not yet accessible to the common people. Only the highborn were allowed to enjoy the privilege of hunting in the area. And as we all know, hunting makes you hungry and thirsty. That's why Swiss beaters entertained the lords and ladies here.

1780 " Zur Tabakspfeife " opens its doors. This inn, which by the way means " tobacco pipe ", was the first place where guests could come for a drink and a nosh, but also to enjoy their pipes.

1800 The " Gasthaus zur Tabakspfeife " (The Tobacco Pipe Inn) is located on the site of the " Schweizer Hütte ". The establishment is considered as a meeting place for smokers, because tobacco smoking is banned by the high society.

1814 During the Congress of Vienna, the house is reputedly renamed " Zum russischen Kaiser " (At the Russian Tsar Inn)

Early 1840's The young architect Eduard van der Nüll, who would go on to erect the " Hofoper " with his partner August von Sicardsburg, built a new bar in the style of a " Schweizerhaus ". An architectural form that was incredibly popular at the time.

1868 The name " Schweizerhaus " derives from a " Schweizer Meierei " (Swiss dairy farm) , which opened at the Prater. Switzerland had been, for centuries, associated with opulence and sophisticated gastronomy.

1880 There is already a restaurant at the Prater (civic address : n° 16) - the actual site of the " Schweizerhaus ". It is owned by Boruslav Straßnicky, a representative of the Citizens' brewery of Plzeň (Pilsen) in Bohemia.

1883-1884 At the beginning, the restaurant is owned by Gustav Pach. Then, the brothers Gustav and Hermann Pach create their own company. So, during the summer season, they operate the " Schweizerhaus " and, during the winter season, they work at the conversion of Vienna's " Sofienbad " (a popular public bath house) into the " Sofiensaal " (a new dance hall) .

until 1918 In the ensuing decades, a slew of various different owners tried their hand at the " Schweizerhaus ". Some were successful in the venture, others failed completely. Of the bunch, Johann Bischoff deserves an honourable mention for offering fish and crayfish from local waters in 1876. So, too, do the Pach brothers, who took over " Schweizerhaus " in 1883, having previously founded the " Café Central " on " Herrengasse ".

1920 Karl Kolarik takes over. At only nineteen years old, he was declared an adult early on and was thus able to take over the business. The house was quite dilapidated at the time as it was coping with the fall out of the horrific post-war period marked by hunger and suffering. However, life and " joie de vivre " were soon to return to the Prater.

1926 Karl Kolarik visited an agricultural exhibition in Ceské Budejovice with his father. They liked the original " Budweiser Budvar " so much (a dark yellow, 12° lager) that they quickly decided : that's our beer ! They buy a whole truck load and bring it to Vienna, where it remains one of the " Schweizerhaus's " undisputed specialties.

1929 Karl Kolarik welcomed guests to the first open kitchen. It was not until many years later that others followed his innovative lead.

1945-1947 : In the waning days of the war, the " Schweizerhaus " was decimated. Together with his wife Else, Karl Kolarik began reconstruction. For the first bar, the pair repurposed an old Ferris wheel car. Spurred on by a healthy dose of invention and enthusiasm, the couple worked hard to bring back a sense of comfort to Prater park.



“ Schweizerhaus ” Prater n° 16

September 1934



“ Schweizerhaus ” Prater n° 16 8 April 1945