

The Venus of the Villa Kostecky

The sculpture of "Venus", depicted standing on the roof of the building, is the last testimony of the house on Hermann-Hesse-Straße 19, formerly Bismarckstraße 41, built in 1905.

Wolfgang Joseph Kostecky was born on July 31, 1888 in Kozielsko, in the district of Wongrowitz, and was the owner of the estate and the villa on it from 1923 to 1949. As a successful merchant, he comfortably furnished both the garden and the villa.

When the National Socialists came to power in 1933, Kostecky was persecuted for his homosexuality. Not even his brief sponsoring membership of the SS (FM-SS) protected him from this.

In 1937, he was convicted under Section 175 of the Criminal Code.

After more than two years of imprisonment, including in the Berlin-Moabit detention center, Kostecky was placed into internment in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp in September 1940. He was then sent from there to the Natzweiler-Struthof concentration camp in 1941 and to the Markirch satellite concentration camp in 1944.

After his liberation via transport at the end of March 1945, he lived in the Böblingen Displaced Persons Camp near Stuttgart. His application for rehabilitation was rejected by the Württemberg-Baden Ministry of Justice Department of Reparations on September 10, 1948.

Wolfgang Joseph Kostecky died on August 31, 1949 in Böblingen as a result of his internment. He did not see Berlin again.

Over the following decades, the villa fell into disrepair and was deemed uninhabitable in 1997. The garden was removed from Berlin's list of protected gardens in 2001. Even the villa with its Art Nouveau features was not previously granted monument status. Although students of the Institute of Landscape Architecture at the TU Berlin drafted a plan for its potential use in 2000, the villa was demolished in 2004/2005. The "Venus" survived and has remained on the property ever since.

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