



Rolf Reiner Maria Borchard/Manfred Sack

Riga

144 pp with 123 ill. in duotone, 297 x 275 mm, hard-cover, German/English
ISBN 3-930698-61-7
Euro 52.00 (DM 101.70), sfr 89.00, £ 39.00, US \$ 62.00,
\$A 98.00

Who is aware that the capital of the Republic of Latvia is one of Europe's great old metropolises? That history put its mark on the city lavishly and strikingly, and that it preserved its imposing architectural heritage even through the period of Soviet rule? Now that the frontiers are open again there is nothing to prevent a personal visit to this unique city – almost eight hundred years after its first mention in documents.

In 1186 Christianity came to the country from Bremen. The name Riga first appeared in 1201. In 1282 the most important Baltic harbour town after St. Petersburg joined the Hanseatic League. Just three hundred years later, after the fall of the Teutonic Order, history swept the Poles, the Swedes and the Russians to Riga one after the other; it finally became the capital of the Republic of Latvia in 1918 – until both the city and the country embarked upon a new future after occupation by the Germans (1941–44) and rule by the Soviet Union.

The medieval cityscape has survived astonishing well. After the fortifications had been removed, an imposing tract of green emerged east of the old town in the late 18th century, and prestigious buildings like the Opera House, the Academy of Art, the Museum and the Russian Orthodox church gradually appeared. The new town was built in the next century on the other side of the Pilsētas Canal, with whole streets of houses for the well-to-do, in the famous Riga Art Nouveau style.

It is a pleasure to study the history of style in Riga, especially as it is so rich in extravagant specimens of architecture and urban design. One day, say rejoicing visitors, the newly revived Hanseatic city of Riga will become a more beautiful Bremen, as unique in character as Lübeck and Stralsund, as Amsterdam, Ghent and Le Havre or Edinburgh.

Photographer Rolf Reiner Maria Borchard explored other artistic and technical media soon after studying architecture, and started to work as a teacher. He is Professor of artistic foundation studies at the Muthesius-Hochschule in Kiel, and has been Principal there since 1996. Manfred Sack, a doctor of musicology, is a journalist. He was architecture critic for the weekly newspaper *Die Zeit* in Hamburg for almost four decades. The two have worked together on an illustrated book before – *Die Hamburger Elbchaussee*. »The most beautiful street in the world«.

Distributors

Brockhaus Commission
Kreidlerstraße 9
D-70806 Kornwestheim
Germany
tel. +49-7154-1327-33
fax +49-7154-1327-13
menges@brocom.de

Buchzentrum AG
Industriestraße Ost 10
CH-4614 Hägendorf
tel. +41-062 209 26 26
fax +41-062 209 26 27
kundendienst@buchzentrum.ch

Gazelle Book Services
White Cross Mills
Hightown
Lancaster LA1 4XS
United Kingdom
tel. +44-1524-68765
fax +44-1524-63232
sales@gazellebooks.co.uk

National Book Network
15200 NBN Way
Blue Ridge Summit, PA 17214
USA
tel. +1-800-4626420
fax +1-800-3384550
custserv@nbnbooks.com