

The Last Palace: Europe's Turbulent Century in Five Lives and One Legendary House

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Summary:

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A masterfully told and immersive narrative about the last hundred years of European history, as seen through an extraordinary mansion and the lives of the people who called it home

When Norman Eisen moved into the US ambassador's residence in Prague, returning to the land his mother had fled after the Holocaust, he was startled to discover swastikas hidden beneath the furniture. These symbols of Nazi Germany were remnants of the residence's forgotten history, and evidence that we never live far from the past.

From that discovery unspooled the twisting, captivating tale of four of the remarkable people who had called this palace home. Their story is Europe's, and The Last Palace chronicles the upheavals that have transformed the continent over the past century. There was the optimistic Jewish financial baron Otto Petschek, who build the palace after World War I as a statement of his faith in democracy, only to have that faith shattered; Rudolf Toussaint, the cultured, compromised German general who occupied the palace during World War II, ultimately putting his life at risk to save the house and Prague itself from destruction; Laurence Steinhardt, the first postwar US ambassador, whose quixotic struggle to keep the palace out of Communist hands was paired with his pitched efforts to rescue the country from Soviet domination; and Shirley Temple Black, an eyewitness to the crushing of the 1968 Prague Spring by Soviet tanks, who determined to return to Prague and help end totalitarianism and did just that as US ambassador in 1989.

Weaving in the life of Eisen's own mother to demonstrate how those without power and privilege moved through history, The Last Palace tells the dramatic and surprisingly cyclical tale of the endurance of liberal democracy.

The Last Palace: Europe's Turbulent Century in Five Lives ... The Last Palace reads like a novel—a page-turner—beautifully intertwining the compelling stories of families and individuals to tell a stirring story of the twentieth century. The story is centered around a remarkable palace in Prague, but the story of the house is in fact the story of tragedy, cruelty, genocide, courage and its lack, from. The Last Palace by Norman Eisen - penguinrandomhouse.com THE LAST PALACE sweeps through the last one hundred years of European history using the lens of the Petschek house in Prague and the people who moved through it. What sparked your interest in the property?. The Last Palace by Norman Eisen - Review | BookPage In a sense, The Last Palace was conceived when Norman Eisen, U.S. ambassador to the Czech Republic under Barack Obama, was lying under a table. Eisen had just had a thought-provoking phone conversation with his mother, Frieda, a Jewish Czech-American and Holocaust survivor who was reluctant to visit him at his gorgeous ambassador's residence in Prague because of her harrowing memories of the Nazi and Communist years.

The Last Palace: Europe's Turbulent Century in Five Lives ... The Last Palace: Europe's Turbulent Century in Five Lives and One Legendary House is the history of Otto Petschek's palace. This is the history of how the palace was built, who lived in it, and what they did while living there. The Last Palace: Europe's Turbulent Century in Five Lives ... The Last Palace: Europe's Turbulent Century in Five Lives and One Legendary House - Kindle edition by Norman Eisen. Download it once and read it on your Kindle device, PC, phones or tablets. Use features like bookmarks, note taking and highlighting while reading The Last Palace: Europe's Turbulent Century in Five Lives and One Legendary House. The Last Palace | American Jewish University Those questions led him to write The Last Palace: Europe's Turbulent Century in Five Lives and One Legendary House, which traces Europe's modern trajectory and, through intimate character portraits of the people who lived in the house, draws out the recurring struggle of democracy against Communism and Fascism.

THE LAST PALACE by Norman Eisen | Kirkus Reviews The former ambassador to the Czech Republic tells the story of a historically significant palace in Prague. The palace, which began construction in 1924, was the project of Otto Petschek (1882-1934), a wealthy financier who left it behind when he went to study law. The Last Palace It was an atmospheric movie palace, meaning that the vast barrel-vault ceiling of the auditorium was designed to imitate the open sky, a deep blue which faded to night when the show started, tiny electric lights winking on to evoke the stars. The audience of thousands sat in the midst of a ruined Roman villa, its broken columns. Norman Eisen On Prague's 'Last Palace' : NPR Norman Eisen On Prague's 'Last Palace' NPR's Scott Simon talks with Norman Eisen about his new book, The Last Palace. Eisen lived in a palace in Prague during his tenure as former U.S. ambassador to the Czech Republic.

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Book review of *The Last Palace: Europe's Turbulent Century ...* The first American diplomat to live in Petschek Palace was Laurence Steinhardt, who took residence in 1945. His twin obsessions were to keep Czechoslovakia as an ally of the West after World War II and to keep the rented palace as the permanent home of the U.S. ambassador.

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