

1. THE CHEST | Turgaus a. 21

By Professor Romualdas Inčirauskas.

Telšiai was once one of the most important centres of the Jewish diaspora in Samogitia. As far back as in 1873, a Jewish YESHIVA school of higher education was established in the city (the school later operated in Cleveland, USA), where the TORAH was taught according to the world-famous Telšiai method. In between the two World Wars, Telšiai was the home of Lithuania's chief rabbi, the first secondary school for Jewish girls in Lithuania, a populous and wealthy Jewish community and two Jewish banks. The artistic feature known as 'The Chest' is intended to remind passers-by of the importance of the Jewish diaspora that once thrived in Telšiai, successfully creating and developing businesses in the city as well as broader Samogitia and beyond.

2. THE BEAR'S PAW, a sculpture | Turgaus a.

By Professor Osvaldas Neniškis.

Place your hand in the hollow relief of a bear's paw and you're sure to become strong and sturdy as a bear. This is the paw print of the legendary Samogitian totem animal – the Samogitian bear – which marks the location of the capital of Samogitia, a historical and ethnocultural region of Lithuania and Europe.

3. JEWS, a series of medals | Turgaus a. 11, Turgaus a. 19, Iždinės g. 11, Aukštoji g. 3

By Professor Romualdas Inčirauskas.

This series of medals is a whimsical commemoration of the Jewish community that once lived in Telšiai. Miniature plaquettes have been placed at approximately eye level on the facades of buildings important to the Jewish community or where such buildings once stood. Iždinės g. 11. The Yeshiva of Telšiai was a school of higher learning for rabbis established in 1873 by Rabbi Gaon Leizer Gordon. Aukštoji g. 3 was where the Soldiers' Synagogue once stood. This is where the Jews of the upper classes prayed. It was built in the mid to late 19th century. Turgaus g. 19 marks the location of the first Jewish synagogue, which stood more or less where the five-storey buildings on Laisvės str. and the former Džiugas cinema theatre now stand. The synagogue itself has not survived. Turgaus g. 11 marks the location of the Old Town Café. Katedros a. 2 is where a medal inlay is placed in the door of the St. Anthony of Padua Cathedral.

4. THE EXPLOSION | Courtyard of the Žemaitė Gymnasium, Šviesos g. 15

Designed by Professor Gediminas Karalius. Moulded by the sculptor Žilvinas Paprinksis.

Unveiled in 2018, the sculpture 'The Explosion' commemorates the Samogitian poet, youngest figure of the dactical Lithuanian literary pantheon and pioneer of the new Lithuanian poetry, Vytautas Mačernis. The artistic language of the sculpture reflects the early beginnings of his mature literary path and his tragic death. The location of the memorial was no mere coincidence – it was at this modernist gymnasium that the poet studied, began his creative journey and experienced his first love.

5. THE LAST SUPPER, a sculpture | Šviesos g. 2

By the artist and sculptor Lina Kalinauskaitė and the sculptor and Associate Professor Marius Norkus.

In June of 2021, the sculpture 'The Last Supper' was unveiled and consecrated at the Church of the Ascension of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Telšiai. What makes the sculpture special is that the design is based on the composition of Leonardo da Vinci's fresco but made using the latest technology in stone processing.

6. GLOBE OF SAMOGITIA, a kinetic sculpture | Turgaus a. 17

By Artūras Valiūnas, a student of the Telšiai Faculty of the Vilnius Academy of Arts

(academic supervisor: Professor Romualdas Inčirauskas).

The only Samogitian globe in the world was unveiled in 2008. It is an intellectual and witty response to those who believe that Samogitians do not exist. The Samogitian locations depicted on the globe correspond to true geographical locations, and Telšiai, like Rome, stands atop seven hills. Samogitia begins at the sea and, beyond the Nevežis River – the historical boundary of Samogitia – ends bounded by the sea once again.

7. LITHUANIAN HOUND, a sculpture | Turgaus a.

By Professor Osvaldas Neniškis.

The Lithuanian Hound is known to have been around since the 14th century. At the beginning of the Soviet occupation, this unique breed of European hunting dog was almost entirely destroyed as a 'bourgeois element'. It was the great efforts of Telšiai local Zigmantas Goštautas in educating the public and those in government with the help of Viktoras Bergas, a lecturer at the Faculty of Natural Sciences of Vilnius University and a well-known cynologist, that saved the breed from absolute extinction. It is no accident that the dog's collar reads 'I was rescued by Zigmantas Goštautas' ('Moni ešgelbiejė Zigmantas Goštautas') in the Samogitian dialect.

8. THE TOWNHALL WELL | Turgaus a.

By the sculptor Professor Osvaldas Neniškis and Professor Romualdas Inčirauskas.

Here once stood a very deep well with incredibly clear water, known by the old locals of Telšiai as a 'dėdėleė skanė' or the town hall well. It is clearly visible in the iconography of the old city. Townspeople and the many horses that came to the market square on market day quenched their thirst with fresh water from the well. The older locals say that this was the only well in the old town in which the water level did not recede even during the harshest of droughts. During the Soviet era, the well was buried. In 2007, with the reconstruction of the market square, plans were made to recreate the town hall well, and in 2012, these plans successfully came to fruition. The well is built of brownish granite and was designed in keeping with the scale and silhouette of the old well. Four bears are stationed at the four corners of the well, and from their jaws spouts drinking water that visitors can quench their thirst with at any time of day or night. 'Drinking water' is written in all European languages on the well, following the Samogitian 'Tas vėndou ir gerams'.

9. MEMORIAL SIGN FOR THE RIGHTEOUS AMONG THE NATIONS | Iždinės g. 11

By Associate Professor Mindaugas Šimkevičius

A monument commemorating the Righteous Among the Nations has been unveiled on the facade of the Telšiai Yeshiva, dedicated to those who risked their lives to save others. These individuals shared their last piece of bread, hot soup, and most importantly, loved their fellow human beings. The coat with a torn six-pointed star – a bronze relief – depicts the left side of the coat with a lapel and a star-shaped void in the area of the heart. Around the edges of the void, remnants of the worn 'yellow star' still remain, but the star of condemnation itself is no longer there – it has been torn away... through the void, only the red bricks of the building are visible...

10. IN DAYS OF OLD WAS A COURTYARD FULL OF LIFE, a memorial | Turgaus a.

By lecturer Gintaras Gailius.

The creator of the commemorative stone not far from the city clock dedicated it to the houses that once stood here and where Jews, Orthodox believers, Lithuanians and Samogitians made their homes and lived together in friendship.

11. THE PLATFORM, a sculpture | Turgaus a.

By Mantas Petrauskis, a student of the Telšiai Faculty of the Vilnius Academy of Arts

(academic supervisor: Professor Osvaldas Neniškis).

An artwork that invites passers-by to be good citizens, not put up with the ills of society and government, and loudly and openly shine a light on them. However, the sculpture also urges a sense of responsibility. The sides of the platform proclaim: 'Don't be silent' and 'Speak what is on your mind', but 'Think before you speak' because 'Words can unite' and 'Words can divide', 'Words can hurt' and 'Words can heal'.

12. GET TO KNOW THE CAPITAL OF SAMOGITIA, a sculpture-game | Turgaus a.

By Valdas Janauskas, a student of the Telšiai Faculty of the Vilnius Academy of Arts

(academic supervisor: Associate Professor Vytautas Mockaitis).

On a raised and glass-covered plane stand models of the city's most prominent attractions: the Cathedral of St. Anthony of Padua, the Church of St. Nicholas, the Church of the Ascension of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Palace of Bishops, the Old City School, the Samogitian Village Museum, the Faculty of Telšiai of the Vilnius Academy of Arts, the Rainiai Chapel of Suffering and the market square. The sculpture is a playful way to get to know the City of the Seven Hills and, as locals like to joke, 'test the strength of your nerves'. As you move the plane of the sculpture, roll the metal ball down the path towards the City Clock. Take your time and you'll definitely find success. If at first you don't succeed, try again – after all, learning is not an easy process.

13. TULIP, a sculpture | Kęstučio g.

By Albertas Vaitelis, a student of the Telšiai Technical School for Applied Arts

(academic supervisor: lecturer Klaudijus Pūdymas).

This final project of a student of the Telšiai Technical School for Applied Arts (now the FT of the VAA) is a tulip just before bloom. This sculpture was installed in 1982, by the city's first large store, now the Tulpė shopping centre.

14. Commemorative plaque for KIPRAS PETRAUSKAS | Respublikos g. 4

By Professor Osvaldas Neniškis.

A restaurant that operated before the war, now a café, was a favourite haunt of the world-famous tenor Kipras Petrauskas and his friends. The art-deco style café is decorated with many of Petrauskas' pictures that hark back to the famous performer's stay in Telšiai, boasts a phonograph and authentic vinyl records from his time, and plays recordings of his most popular arias on request. Petrauskas was a professor, a famous Lithuanian singer (tenor) who created around 80 dramatic roles and was a member of the Lithuanian Society for Creators of Art. His name is linked to the establishment of the national opera.

15. TWO SWALLOWS, a mark of art | Kęstučio g. 3

By Stanislovas Adomaitis, a student of the Telšiai Faculty of the Vilnius Academy of Arts and Associate (academic supervisor: Professor Mindaugas Šimkevičius, architect – Professor Ramūnas Banys)

On March 20, 2024, the art sign 'Blezingas' was unveiled on the facade of the Telšiai Gallery building of the Vilnius Academy of Arts, intended to give meaning to the year of Samogitia writing. The work of art consists of three bronze objects: the word and two plastic reliefs of swallows (blezingu) that complement and illustrate it. The place for the work was not chosen by chance, because the VDA Telšiai Gallery building is one of the few buildings in the city of Telšiai, the facade of which is marked with the date of its construction. In addition, there used to be a passage here, so there is no doubt that swallows used to fly through its arch. The work of art acquired a significant meaning in the chosen place and will remind the uniqueness of the Samogitian language and the tales about the history of the city of Telšiai.

16. The Great Wall of Samogitia | Respublikos g., the retaining wall of Insula Hill

By Professor Petras Gintalas, Professor Romualdas Inčirauskas,

and Associate Professor Mindaugas Šimkevičius.

As Samogitians like to joke, there are two Great Walls known to the world: the Samogitian one – that declares loudly and convincingly the special respect Samogitians have for their language, customs and unique history – and the slightly longer one in China.

The first panel of the Great Wall of Samogitia was unveiled on 30 September 2010, and reminds onlookers of when Samogitia was first mentioned in historical sources (1219) (by Prof. Petras Gintalas).

The second panel reminds us of the Battle of Durbe, which was won by the united army of Samogitia (by Prof. Petras Gintalas). This most well-known victory of the Samogitian sword was not only the largest and most important battle of the 13th–14th century in Lithuanian history, it was also a significant historical turning point for the entire Eastern Baltic region.

The third panel is dedicated to a unique phenomenon in European history – the nearly 200-hundred-year (1236–1422) fight for survival of Samogitia against two German orders that sought to defeat Samogitia and join two of its territories into one whole, thus laying the groundwork for further expansion. The Samogitian fight is portrayed in the panel entitled 'Samogitia's Most Famous Battles' (by Professor Romualdas Inčirauskas).

One of the most well-known global historical events – the ecumenical Council of Constance, which took place in 1414–1418 – is commemorated in the fourth panel entitled 'Constance' (by Professor Romualdas Inčirauskas). In 1415, during the council, when the Samogitians read the historical 'Samogitian Complaint' in the cathedral of Constance, a broad discussion began about a nation's and individual's right to choose – the principal right of contemporary international law.

The fifth panel, 'The Baptism of Europe' (by Professor Romualdas Inčirauskas) commemorates the process that completed the Christianisation of the last historical European region and the formation of modern Europe (313–1413). The panel dedicated to the 600th anniversary of the Samogitian baptism was unveiled in 2013 by the president of Lithuania, Dalia Grybauskaitė.

The sixth panel is entitled 'The Duchy of Samogitia' (by Professor Romualdas Inčirauskas). It depicts a historical map of Samogitia, marked with the dates of recognised treaties that shaped the boundaries of Samogitia.

The seventh panel celebrates the privileges granted to Samogitia by various rulers (by Professor Romualdas Inčirauskas).

The 13 July 2022 saw the unveiling of the eighth panel, which commemorates the year of the Samogitian language (by Associate Professor Mindaugas Šimkevičius). It depicts the link between the Samogitian language and the Baltic language group, linguistic differences and many Samogitian words, along with the artist's words of thanks to the many benevolent protectors, fosterers and promoters of the Samogitian language.

17. LEGENDS OF SAMOGITIA, a sculpture | Respublikos g.

By sculptor Romualdas Kvintas.

Unveiled in 2008, this memorial serves to remind us of the Samogitian legends. Bear cubs and baby Samogitians sit atop a mother bear's back. The first is a dreamer, poet, artist and a scientist – the CREATOR. The second is a patriot and protector of his homeland – the GUARDIAN. The third, the one kissing the cub, is the one whose effort is critical to Samogitia's survival – the DIPLOMAT. This sculpture is one of the most beloved symbols of Samogitia. It is believed that rubbing the bear's nose with the palm of one's hand can make a good wish come true. Try it out for yourself.

18. Signs on the city pavement | Katedros a.

By Deimantė Šapnagytė, a graduate of the Telšiai Faculty of the Vilnius Academy of Arts

(academic supervisor: Professor Vytautas Mockaitis).

Among the paving stones of the cathedral square, a series of hollow reliefs use meaningful symbols and laconic artistic forms to portray existential human attitudes. 'MAN TO MAN' (help each other and reach out a helping hand), 'EARTH FULL OF HEAVEN' (we can do so much ourselves), 'DON'T LIE' (let us live in truth), 'DON'T STOP' (stagnant water spoils quickly). The hand is used as the main compositional element. The work of art uses laconic language to convincingly portray eternal existential truths.

19. A MODEL OF THE CITY FOR THE BLIND | Katedros a.

By Eglė Tamošiūnaitė, a graduate of the Telšiai Faculty of the Vilnius Academy of Arts

(academic supervisor: Professor Romualdas Inčirauskas).

This is the first tactile map in Lithuania and was unveiled in 2007. The bronze model depicts one of seven hills – Insula Hill, on which stands the impressive complex of the Telšiai Cathedral of St. Anthony of Padua, the Seminary, the Palace of Bishops, the Old City School, the cultural centre, the Žemaitė Drama Theatre and the library. The model is an artwork adapted for the needs of the visually impaired.

20. Sculpture-fountain in memory of Kazimieras Simonavičius | Katedros a.

By Romas Kvintas.

The sculpture is dedicated to the Samogitian-born Kazimieras Simonavičius, a prolific and globally renowned specialist of Renaissance warfare. Printed in 1650, in Amsterdam, his great work *The Great Art of Artillery. Part I.* was for two hundred years one of the most famous artillery textbooks in the world. Because no portrait of Simonavičius has survived, the architect decided to transfer the fountain on the titular page of his book to the square to immortalise the memory of Kazimieras Simonavičius and his famous work, while the sounds of flowing water add to the square's lively and cosy atmosphere.

21. THE SCHOOL, a sculpture | Katedros a. 3

By Benas Narbutas.

The facade-mounted sculpture 'The School' was unveiled in 1987 to commemorate the 200-year anniversary of the Telšiai School. Many Samogitian nobles and intellectuals studied in this building.

22. Sculptures at the Gates of Honour of the Cathedral of Telšiai | Katedros a. 2

By Professor Arūnas Sakalauskas.

The sculptures in the niches of the Gates of Honour were unveiled in 2005 to commemorate the 555th anniversary of the city of Telšiai. They depict St. Anthony of Padua, the patron saint of the Telšiai cathedral and St. Stanislaus, the patron saint of Telšiai.

23. Doors of the Telšiai Cathedral of St. Anthony of Padua | Katedros a. 2

Designed by Professor Romualdas Inčirauskas. Crafted by Rimantas Mickevičius.

Woodwork by Valdas Giedra.

The grand doors of the Telšiai Cathedral of St. Anthony of Padua were installed on the occasion of the 600th anniversary of the Samogitian baptism. The four segments of the doors contain relief compositions that depict the most important historical stages of the Samogitian baptism and Samogitian Bishopric: Samogitia before baptism, the Samogitian baptism, the history of the Samogitian Bishopric and the history of the Telšiai Bishopric. In 2015, the door was nominated as an exceptional Lithuanian work of art for the Lithuanian National Culture and Art Prize.

24. The Carillon of Samogitia | Respublikos g. 18

The first carillon in the present-day territory of Samogitia was a small 23-bell Samogitian Carillon cast in the ROYAL ELJUSBOUTS Dutch bell factory of European and global fame on the occasion of the year of the 600th anniversary of the Samogitian baptism (2013–2017).

25. SEVEN HILLS OF THE CITY, a sculpture | crossing at Žaliosios g. and Aukštojos g.

By Karolis Bikinas, a graduate of the Telšiai Faculty of the Vilnius Academy of Arts

(academic supervisor: Professor Romualdas Inčirauskas).

The sculpture reflects the toponomy and topography of the area, naming the city's hills, touching on the hills' historical symbols, legends and the expansion of the city, i.e., in what century each hill was incorporated in the city. A glance at the water bubble in the lake reveals a reference to the legendary treasures looted by Swedish soldiers sitting at the bottom of Lake Mastis.

26. Plaquette commemorating the Samogitian language | The banks of Lake Mastis

By Dominyka Gulbinaitė, a student of the Telšiai Faculty of the Vilnius Academy of Arts.

In December of 2022, two plaquettes entitled 'The Hedgehog' (by fountain No. 26.1) and 'Coins' (by the lakeside, next to the amphitheatre, No. 26.2) were unveiled by Lake Mastis to commemorate the Samogitian language. The words on the first plaquette – 'Veiziekės ē puo kuojūm, na tēk ē tuolomas' (Eng. – Watch what you have beneath your feet instead of only gazing at the distance) come from Žemaitinė (Samogitian Lands), a book by Viktorija Daujotė, a native of the Pavandėnė area of the Telšiai District. The words on the second plaquette – 'Ešėjė kap ežis mėliūn, "ka elgā naparėin'" (Eng. – 'Left like a hedgehog looking for yeast, "when they don't come back for a while") – references a well-known local saying and, at the same time, introduces visitors to the local dialect.

27. DŽIUGAS CHEESE, a sculpture | Respublikos g.

Designed by Professor Romualdas Inčirauskas.

The sculpture is dedicated to the legendary and unique-tasting Džiugas cheese, spreading the word about Samogitia and its capital, Telšiai, around the world. Only an exceptional cheese can become the home of an all-knowing 'golden mouse'. Rub his nose carefully with your pinkie finger and you can expect a real mirade.

28. Sculpture commemorating the BATTLE OF DURBE | Respublikos g. (by the amphitheatre)

By the sculptor Algirdas Bosas, the blacksmith Virginijus Mikuckis,

Professor Romualdas Inčirauskas, and the craftsman Rimantas Mickevičius.

The memorial is dedicated to the most important event in Samogitia and 13th–14th century Lithuania as well as the entire Eastern Baltic region – the Battle of Durbe, which took place on 13 July 1260, and during which a joint army of Samogitian tribes defeated the very powerful combined forces of Livonia, Prussia, Denmark and Sweden's Prince Charles. This Samogitian victory determined the historical development of all the Eastern Baltic countries, made a crucial impact on the Herkus Mantas-led uprising of the Prussian tribes and the liberation of the Semigallians and Curonians.

29. The AKADEMIJA sculpture park | Muziejus g. 29A (on the banks of Lake Mastis)

By the students and graduates of the Telšiai Technical School for the Applied Arts,

the Telšiai Higher School of Applied Arts and the Telšiai Faculty of the Vilnius Academy of Arts.

The sculpture park was established on 21 October 2011, on the banks of the Lake Mastis and by the territory of the Telšiai Faculty of the Vilnius Academy of Arts, the Telšiai Art Incubator and the Samogitian Alka Museum. The minds behind the park and the VAA Telšiai Faculty seek to make it a bridge into the art world for as wide an audience as possible, which is why the park's collection is always growing to include new sculptural objects by young artists, and the exposition illustrates changing traditions in the discipline of sculpture: older sculptures use a traditional material such as granite, while later additions incorporate metal and other types of materials. With their forms and means of expression, the artworks portray the conceptual ideas of young artists, demonstrate their artistic ability and mastery of their chosen materials.

30. LIUDVIKAS STULPINAS, THE SEA CAPTAIN, a sculpture | Zaksas Hill

By the sculptor Saulius Juchnevičius.

The sculpture park is dedicated to the memory of a Lithuanian seaman and captain, the first chief of the Lithuanian Marine Harbour in Klaipėda. He was an active promoter of marine activity. Captained by Stulpinas, a ship by the name of Birma participated in the rescue operation of the sinking Titanic.

31. LITTLE BEARS, a series of sculptures | On the banks of Lake Mastis (on the footbridges)

By Simonas Grigutis, a graduate of the Telšiai Faculty of the Vilnius Academy of Arts

(academic supervisor: Professor Romualdas Inčirauskas).

Playful cubs can be found on the six footbridges on Lake Mastis, echoing the artwork in the Old Town and conveying the city's relationship to water.

31.1. The embarrassed cub – on the bridge across the Bevardis Stream;

31.2. The cub lying on its back and dreaming – on the bridge across the Durbinis Stream;

31.3. The slouching cub (who has earned its rest) – on the bridge across the Telšė Stream;

31.4. The playing cub – on the bridge over the Telšė Stream (by the children's playground);

31.5. The climbing cub – on the island bridge;

31.6. The hiding cub – on the island bridge.

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THE LITTLE TREASURES OF TELŠIAI

As you take in the views of Telšiai, being one of seven nationally protected old towns in Lithuania, you will discover the city's most wonderful treasures of street architecture.



SYMBOLS AND THEIR MEANINGS

SAMOGITIAN TOURISM INFORMATION CENTRE	GUEST HOUSE
PARKING SPACE	CAFÉ / FOOD OUTLET
OBSERVATION AREA	CHURCH
PLAYGROUND	LITTLE MARKET

Discover gourmet DŽIUGAS cheese tastings, where we reveal the secrets of flavor and the most delicious pairings.

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