



**The town of Jeseník announces an open two-phase landscape design competition for the restoration of the park Smetanovy sady.**

The city's intention is to improve the quality of the park premises so that they reach a comparable level with the best parks in the Czech Republic, both in terms of garden and landscape design and in terms of attractiveness and practical value

for residents and visitors. The aim is to integrate this most important city's green space into the life of the city so that it gets closer to the centre. The subject of the competition is not only the rehabilitation of the park, but also the question of connecting Smetana Gardens with the city center and at the same time reflecting on the relationship of the park to the Bělá River.







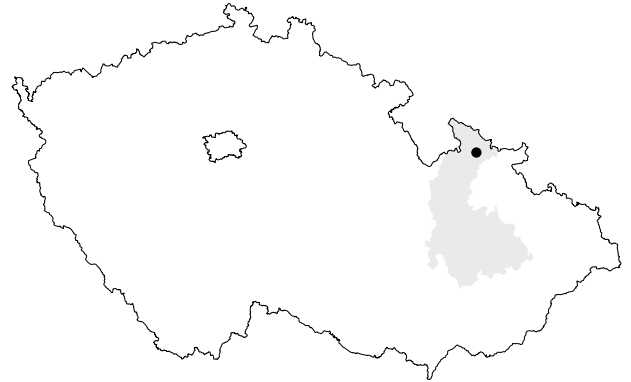
## THE TOWN OF JESENÍK

The town of Jeseník is located in the Olomouc Region at the confluence of the rivers Běla and Staříč in the northern tip of Silesia. It has about 11 000 inhabitants. The town is known mainly for its spas and its numerous healing springs. The landscape of the town is shaped by the mountain massive of the Hrubý Jeseník, Rychlebské hory and Zlatohorské vrchovina. The name Jeseník has been used since 1947, until then the town was called Frývaldov, or Freiwalddau in German. After the Second World War the name was changed to its present version according to its location near the Jeseníky Mountains.

### HISTORY

The first mention of Jeseník dates back to 1267, when it is quoted in a Latin source as Vriwald (later Frývaldov), i.e. a place devoid of forest. By the end of the 13th century it had become a town, thanks to its strategic location on the road from Moravia to Silesia and also thanks to the iron ore deposits in the area. The Frývaldov castle, which still stands today (Water Fortress), was also built in this period. At the beginning of the 16th century the town was granted mining privileges and its own coat of arms. However, mining slowly declined and crafts, especially textiles, began to develop.

In the middle of the 17th century, the Frývald regio became infamous for witch trials, which claimed 100 victims in Frývald alone. After a period of decline, the region began to develop again at the beginning of the 19th century, when A. Rayman founded a factory for fine linen, which travelled all over the world. The development of the town and the region was mainly due to the spa and the



world's first hydrotherapy institute founded by Vincenz Priessnitz in the early 1820s. The development was also underlined by the construction of the railway, the establishment of a hospital and a school.

Since 1918, the predominantly German-speaking Frývald region became part of the newly formed Czechoslovakia more or less against the will of its inhabitants, and at the beginning of 1919 the town was occupied by the Czechoslovakian army.

After the Munich Agreement, the Frývald region was annexed to Germany and the Czech inhabitants had to leave the area. After the war they were allowed to return again and most of the German-speaking population was displaced. In 1947 Frývaldov was renamed Jeseník. The significant loss of population was compensated by the migration of people from the midland, but the original landscape was gradually changed and the town lost many valuable historical buildings over the next forty years, which were replaced by prefabricated buildings. After 1989, most large employers and the region Jeseníky began to focus primarily on tourism development.



Postcard Freiwalddau, Schlesien, 1913



Monument Vincenz Priessnitz in Smetanovy sady



## SMETANOVY SADY

The Smetana Gardens, which stretch from the Bělá River to the slopes of Křížový vrch, are an important place for the town of Jeseník and a valuable example of park architecture of the last century. There are several springs here, a monumental memorial to Vincenz Priessnitz, and a summer theatre that has recently been renovated. Today's Smetana Sady is made up of two originally separate units. The lower part of the park, formerly known as Josef's Garden (Josefsgarten, Raymannspark), was founded at the beginning of the 19th century by Josef Raymann. Until the end of the 18th century, this part of the town was made up of rubble. As a result of the famine, in order to mitigate its effects, the then mayor and textile manufacturer Josef Raymann had the rubble removed, the ground levelled and the park planted on his land in 1827. This resulted in the planting of a beech avenue, the Avenue of Lamentations, which is still evident today, and a

number of other exotic trees. The park was followed by a footbridge with an embankment connected to the city centre to the Water Fortress. Although privately owned, Joseph's Garden was open to the public. In 1906 the park was transferred to the ownership of the city.

In 1893, a local association and the town councillors were responsible for the creation of a town park in the upper part of the present-day Smetanovy sady. An English-style park was thus established, which was used by spa guests for walks. The hillside between the park and hill Křížový vrch was gradually reforested and improved by landscaping and the establishment of springs. This created an urban forest which, among other things, formed a pleasant link between the garden and the chapel hill. This was followed by the construction of monuments, such as the Priessnitz monument by the sculptor Josef Obeth in 1909.



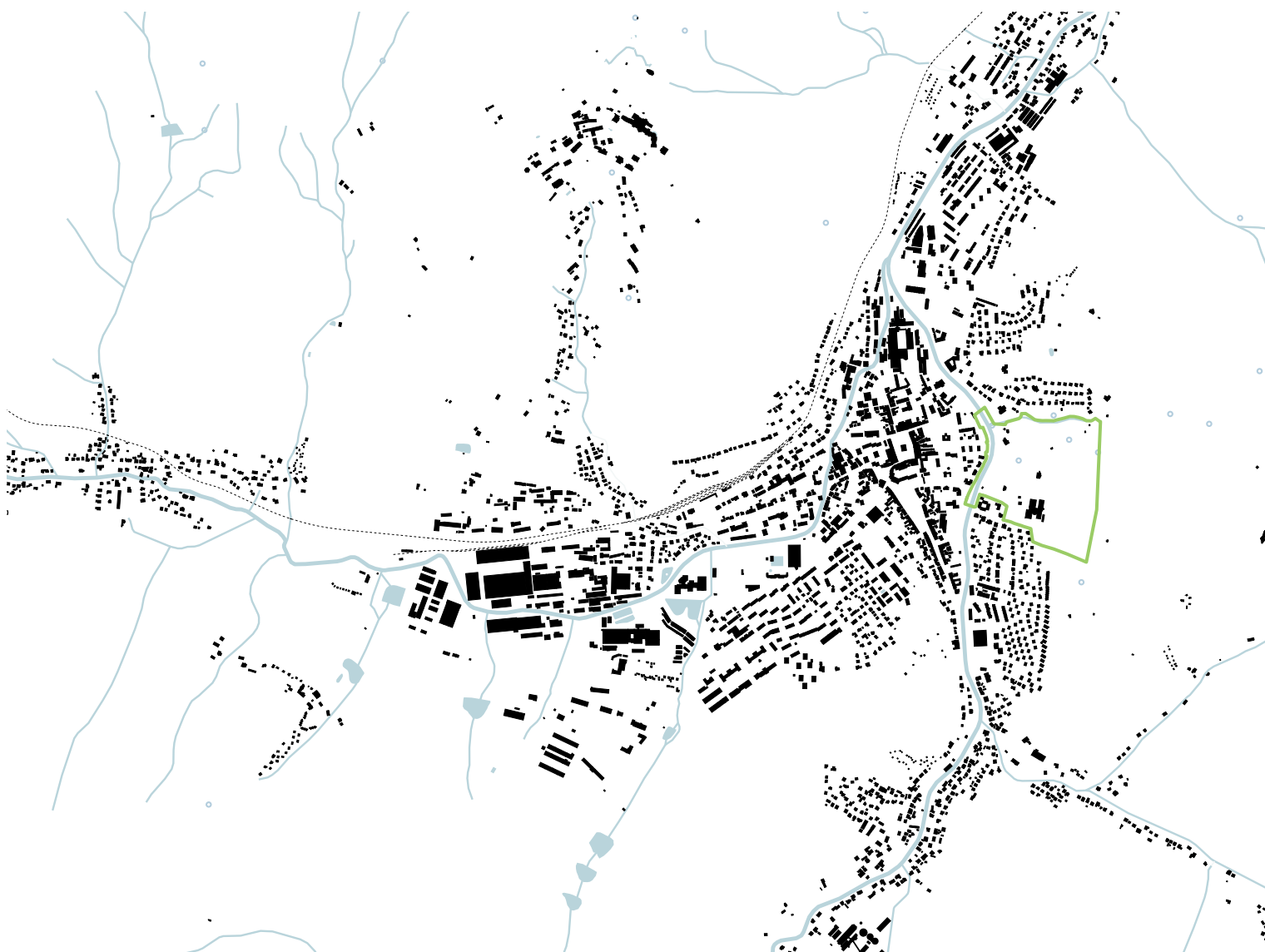
Tindalův pramen ve Smetanových sadech v roce 1928

## COMPETITION AREA

The area is located east of the centre of Jeseník, on the slopes of Křížový vrch. It is bordered on the west side by the Bělá River, which flows through the town from south to north, and by the main road, the Class I road I/44.

In the past, the large area was connected to the landscaping of villas around Josef Hora Street and was connected to the city centre via footbridges to the present bus station and the Water Fortress. The orchards served and still serve as a starting point for hiking trails around the springs and the cross path further to Křížový vrch with the Chapel of St. Anne and to the Zlatý Chlum lookout tower. It is also significant for sledgers, which continues the 60-year tradition of sledging in Jeseník

in the area between the park and the Křížový hill. Most of the original paths and colonnades are still preserved today. However, the park's operation is severely cut off by the I/44 road and the connection to the city is broken here, and decades of inadequate care have affected the condition of the entire park. Despite its inferior accessibility, it is a popular leisure destination for city residents. However, in terms of accessibility, permeability and connectivity with the surrounding area and the centre, the state of the greenery, the materials used for surfaces, safety in terms of technical infrastructure, public lighting or furniture, the current state of Smetana Gardens is not ideal.









## BRIEF

The aim is to bring Smetanovy Sady up to the level of the best parks in the Czech Republic in terms of architectural and landscape design as well as in terms of attractiveness and utility value for locals and visitors to the city, and in addition to address better connection between the park and the city centre. Thus, the subject of the assignment is not only the landscaping but also the question of what use the park will enable and support in the future. A key task is also to resolve the form and degree of connection to the city centre and to reflect on the relationship between the park and the Běla River, which forms the dividing line between the centre and Smetana Sady. Given that Smetanovy Sady were established and designed with quality and sensitivity to place, it is intended that this valuable quality is not only maintained but further developed within the design. It should also be taken into account that the site is located within the Jeseníky Protected Landscape Area.

### PASSABILITY AND CONNECTIVITY

The solution of the path network is an essential aspect, especially with regard to the vastness of area. The design should emphasise intuitive pedestrian connections, connecting paths and promenade walking circuits, which are currently lacking. At the same time, views both within the park and into the surrounding area should be restored and emphasised to support not only orientation but also the aesthetic value of the park.

### CONNECTION TO THE CITY

A major issue is the lack of a direct connection to the city centre, from which the park is separated not only by the river but also by a main road. The city's original intention was to build a footbridge across the river. However, this particular idea was later abandoned, with the understanding that a footbridge solution was not necessarily the only or most appropriate solution. The challenge for the competitors is therefore to reflect on this issue and find the most appropriate solution for a better connection to the city centre that would allow for a more active integration of the park into the city. Whether this will be a

footbridge or another form of connection is up to their discretion.

### GREENERY

An important aspect of the design will be the design of the greenery and especially the trees. The condition of the trees is in some places already poor and their renewal is necessary. At the same time, there is overgrowth of unsuitable trees and shrubs and poor grass cover. Greenery should therefore be addressed not only on a point-by-point basis but in a wider context, including biodiversity, sustainability and maintenance. The proposal should also include a scheme for phasing the restoration of trees in the park.

### RIVER

The Bělá River, although located on the edge of the area, is an inseparable part of the Smetana Gardens, and therefore it is necessary to reflect on the relationship of the river to the park. The retaining wall along the river is currently in poor technical condition. The question is what role Bělá should play within the park in the future.

### ACTIVITIES

There should also be a revival in terms of activities, both cultural, sporting and recreational. The competition proposal should provide a concept for the use of the overall area to be developed as well as focusing on specific solutions for individual sites. Any developments that will be proposed in relation to the concept of use and activities should aim to maintain a natural or nature-like character, always respecting the history and landscape.

### SURFACES

The question of materials and surfaces will also play a significant role. It should be designed to offer an appropriate balance between user-friendliness, aesthetic quality, and respect for the natural character of the park.

### LIGHTING AND SAFETY

Currently, the park lacks lighting on important paths, which affects the safety of the park. Therefore, the aim is that the new public lighting will significantly increase safety in the park, but at the same time be designed in a nature-sensitive way.

## JURY

### INDEPENDENT PART



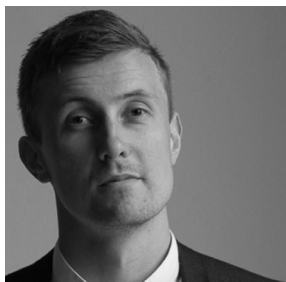
**Radmila Fingerová**

Landscape architect. Since 2008 she has been teaching landscape architecture at the Faculty of Architecture of the CTU, currently leading a landscape studio. Since 1992 she has been designing public spaces and gardens in cooperation with architects. Her recent projects include the rehabilitation of the Havlíčkovy sady park in Prague 2. Since 1996 he has worked for professional associations of architects, landscape architects and gardeners.



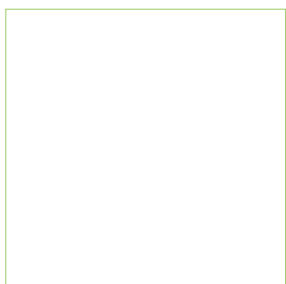
**Petr Mičola**

Petr Mičola is a landscape architect. Since 2017, he has been the founder of his landscape studio, Atelier Gerten, which deals mainly with open areas of towns and villages, but also with landscapes outside the built-up area.



**Martin Sládek**

Co-founder of the Brno studio CONSEQUENCE FORMA architects which aims for creating unique solutions. They successfully participate in domestic and international competitions. Most recently they realized the Park on Moravské náměstí in the historical centre of Brno, which deals with inclusivity and freedom of movement in public space and won the Park of the Year 2023 award and the Grand Prix Architects main prize in the category of landscape architecture.



**Petr Širina**

He is a landscape architect and teaches at VŠB-TU in Ostrava.



**Jitka Vágnerová**

Landscape architect who heads V 8, a studio specialising in the public sector. She studied landscape architecture at the Faculty of Horticulture of Mendel University in Brno. She is the editor of the magazine Zahrada-Park-Landscape. Her projects include the Castle Garden in Oslavany or the Garden of the Panovsky Villa in Ivančice.



**Jan Mlěčka**  
- alternate

Jan Mlěčka is an architect who graduated from the Brno University of Technology where he now works as head of the studio. He also worked abroad at Jourdan & Müller Steinhäuser Architekten in Frankfurt am Main. He is a co-founder of the Olomouc architectural studio M2AI, which he runs together with architect Jiří Marek.



## JURY

### DEPENDENT PART



**Zdeňka Blišťanová** mayor of Jeseník



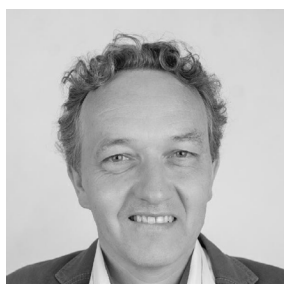
**Martina Seidlerová** high school teacher  
city councillor of Jeseník



**David Zatloukal** town architect of Jeseník



**Tomáš Vlazlo** vacant city councillor of Jeseník



**Václav Dvořák**  
- alternate  
Primary Art School teacher, head of a Guitar Orchestra  
city councillor of Jeseník