

The Palau de la Generalitat



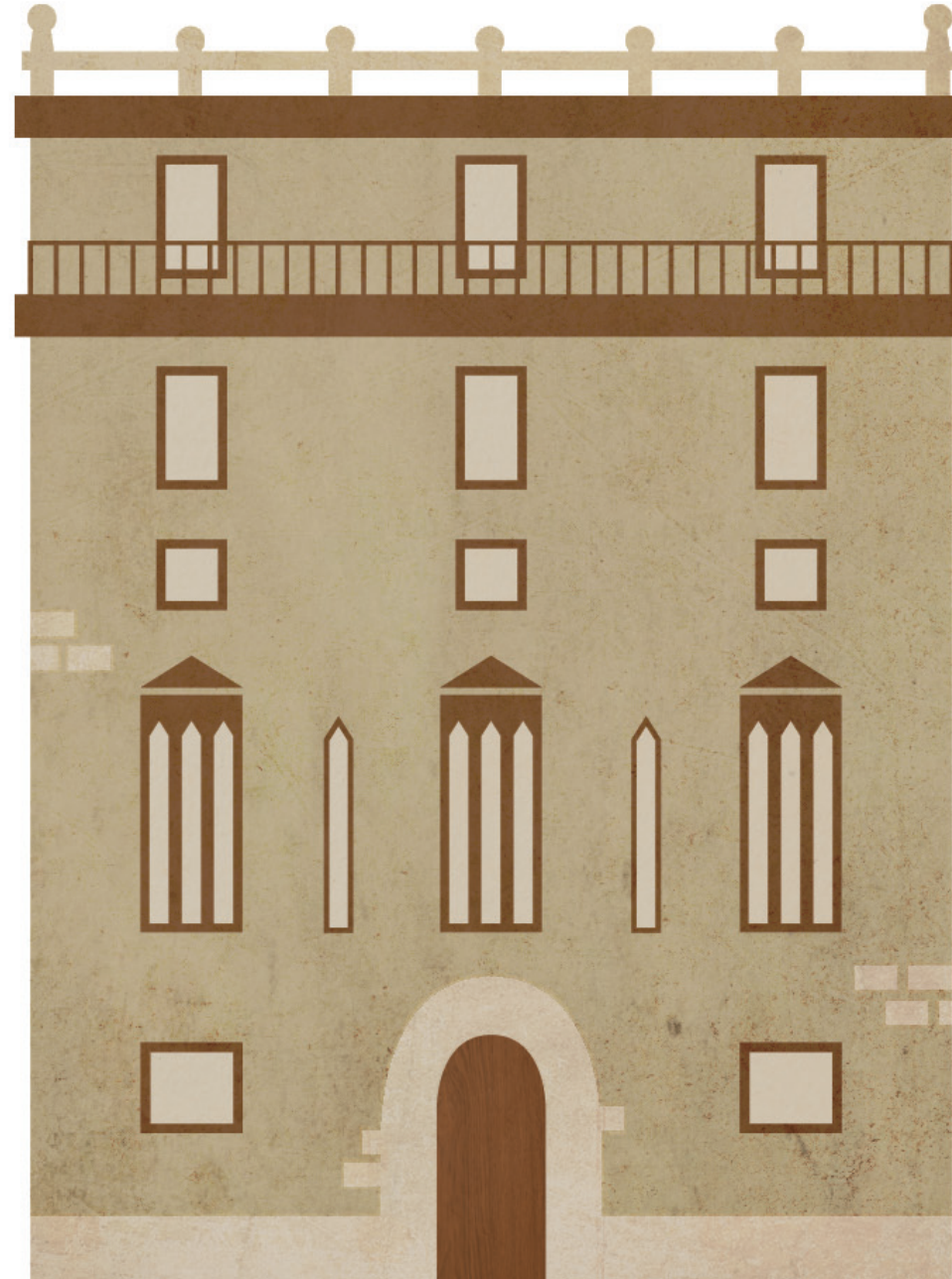
ENGLISH



Welcome to the Palau de la Generalitat

The Palau de la Generalitat is the most important institutional building of the Valencia Region.

The President of the Generalitat works here, and this is the seat of the Valencian Government. The most important festivity of Valencia is celebrated in this Palace, on October 9, and here is where the President of the Generalitat receives the highest national and international leaders.

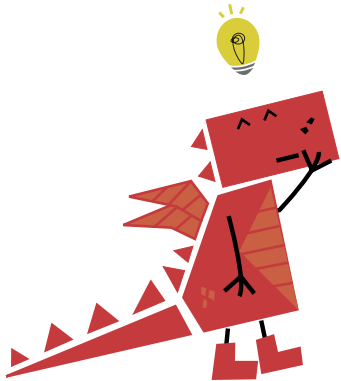


It is located in the historic centre of Valencia, next to the emblematic and great buildings such as the Cathedral, les Corts (the Regional Parliament) and the great palaces of noble knights that give name to the street.

From the street, we can see that the Palace has two towers, one is the oldest and therefore called Torre Vella (Old Tower), its facade faces the Plaza de la Virgen, while the Torre Nova (New Tower) overlooks the Plaza de Manises. La Torre Vella has a balcony that was built so that the authorities could have a good view of the festivals that are celebrated in the city.

History

In this palace, which was begun in the fifteenth century, no king ever lived. The palace was built gradually. The story is that King Pedro III of Aragon, in the Cortes of Monzón, created a new tax to be paid by all citizens of the Kingdom of Valencia to the monarchy. To manage the new tax, an administrative body called the Permanent Commission of the Council of the Kingdom of Valencia was created, whose leading representatives were a group of six members of the Valencian Parliament, elected by the Parliament itself.

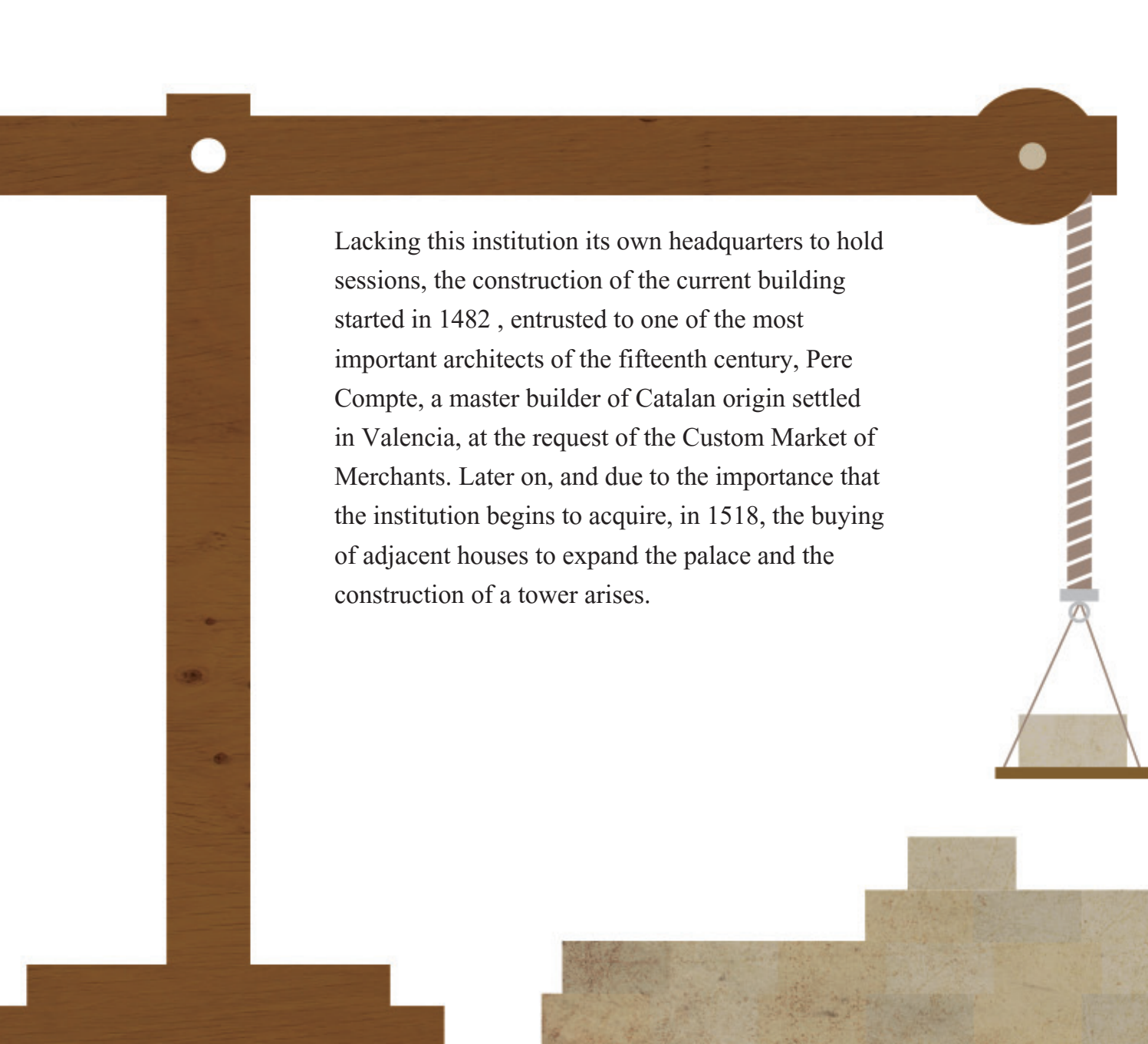


Did you know that...

The Palau de la Generalitat is named after the taxes created by King Pedro III of Aragon who were known as "generalitats".

In 1418, King Alfonso the Magnanimous decided to increase the administrative body formed by the Regional Government, which was the institution responsible for collecting the real tributes, to the rank of Permanent Autonomous Council of the Kingdom of Valencia. This body was composed of two members from each of the branches of the Parliament (the ecclesiastical arm, the military or nobleman arm and the civil or actual arm) three judges, administrators and six counters, as well as other employees, the purpose of which, apart from purely administrative, consisted in holding political representation when the Parliament was not working.

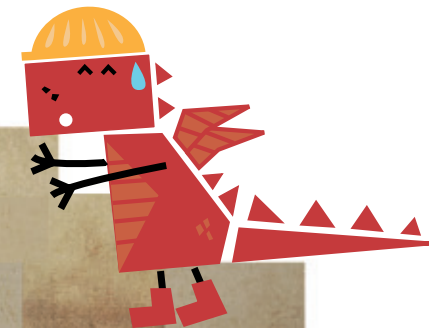
This new institution used a coat of arms representing the three branches of power: the Guardian Angel (popular arm), the Virgin enthroned with the child (ecclesiastical arm), and St. George (noble or military arm).



Lacking this institution its own headquarters to hold sessions, the construction of the current building started in 1482 , entrusted to one of the most important architects of the fifteenth century, Pere Compte, a master builder of Catalan origin settled in Valencia, at the request of the Custom Market of Merchants. Later on, and due to the importance that the institution begins to acquire, in 1518, the buying of adjacent houses to expand the palace and the construction of a tower arises.

At the time of Ferdinand II of Aragon, the policy of the monarch begins to cause a decline in the institution, which ends with the extinction thereof in 1707 after the arrival of the House of Bourbon and the abolition of the privileges held by the Kingdom of Valencia. Subsequently, the Palau de la Generalitat was the headquarters of the Provincial Council of Valencia.

In 1931, it was declared a national monument, and between 1945 and 1951, the architect Lluís Albert proceeds with its expansion, extending its central body around a new courtyard, called Pati Nou today, and the building of a symmetrical tower on the opposite side.

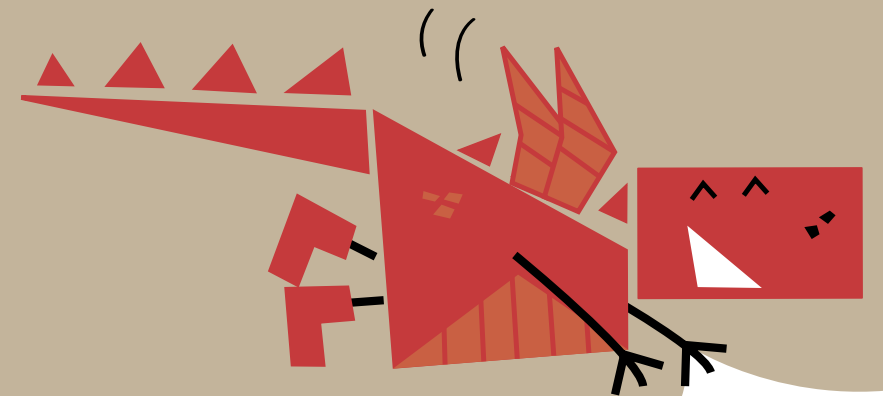


In 1978, the pre-autonomic regime of the Valencia Region was approved. With the enactment of the Statute of Autonomy in 1982, the Provincial Council gave the Palau de la Generalitat to be the headquarters of the Presidency.

Did you know that...

In 1932, it was declared a National Historic-Artistic Monument and in 1975 the group of buildings which stand around are declared a Historic-Artistic Regional Monument to prevent the degradation thereof.

Turn the page...
and begin the visit!



Gothic Courtyard

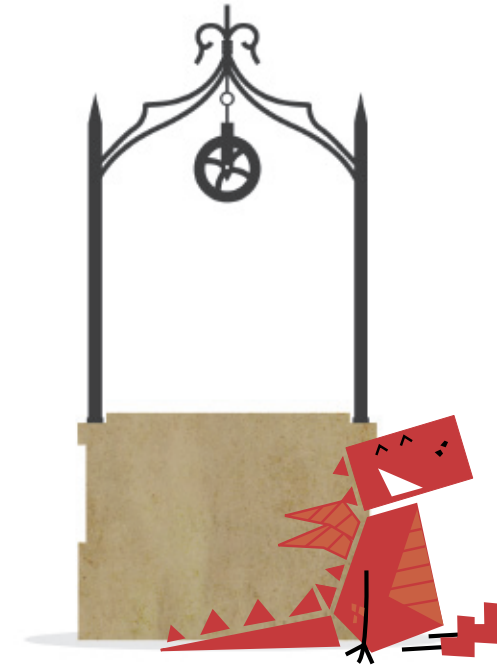
From the street Caballeros, we walk through the front door to the Gothic Courtyard or Old Courtyard. It consists of three parts, two of which are covered, and a central open one. From the courtyard, we can see the spiral staircase that connects the main floor with the Old Tower.

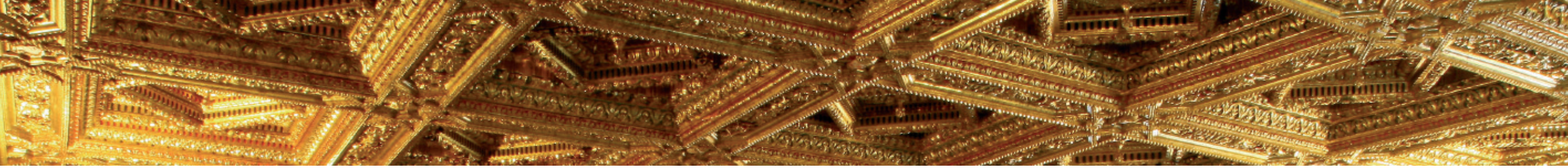


In this courtyard, we see a bronze sculpture called *Dante's Inferno* (1899) by sculptor Mariano Benlliure inspired by the *Divine Comedy*.

There is also a well, which has never been used as such but it was built to remember that all the noble houses had one in their yards around that time.

From the Gothic Courtyard we see access to three rooms: the Large Golden Hall, the Small Golden Hall and the Scribe's Office.





↪ The most characteristic feature of the two halls is

the gilded coffered ceiling, hence the name thereof.

Large Golden Hall

It had its function as a place of extraordinary meeting, but at some point it was also used as a prison for noble men. Currently, it is where the President of the Government receives most important hearings and meetings. In this room, above the fireplace, there is a painting representing the banner of Carlos III.

Small Golden Hall

It served as a board room, because it stands better the winter cold. Today it is a meeting room used by the President of the Generalitat or any member of the Consell for meetings or hearings.



The painting “Water Court” by painter Bernardo Ferrandiz in 1863 is located in this room. The work represents a session of the Water Court, an administrative and justice body for the irrigators of the Valencia farmlands. This Court is more than 2000 years old and still meets on Thursdays at noon in front of the Gothic facade of the cathedral to settle disputes between irrigators.

Scribe's Office (Escribanía)

From the Gothic Courtyard, we access the Scribe's Office, that remains intact from the fifteenth century, and where the three windows from where the authorities followed the religious processions passing through the street Caballeros were built.



Council Hall (Sala del Consell)

Going up the main staircase, formerly called “grand staircase” and built in 1482 by Pere Compte, we find the Old Chamber or Council Chamber, which has witnessed the most important meetings of the Government. Today, the plenary sessions of the Council of the Valencia Regional Government, which consists of the President and the Counsellors, are held here.



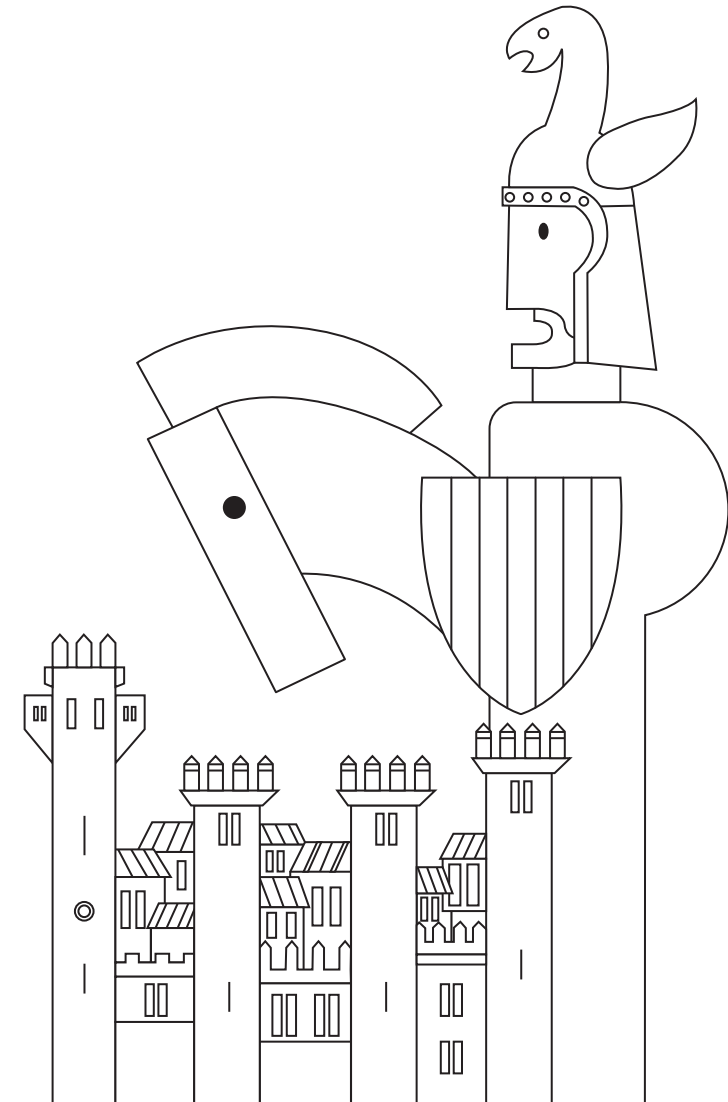
King's Hall (Salón de Reyes)

In this hall, we find a series of portraits, partly imaginary, of the kings who ruled Valencia. Originally, the hall was decorated with rich panelling that was destroyed in the nineteenth century and replaced by the current replica of the original. Today, receptions are held in this room.

In the Chapel, there is an important sixteenth century altarpiece by Juan Sariñena. There is also the front of the chapel made of silk of various colours, gold and silver, inspired in a design by painter Juan de Juanes. It represents the three symbols of the branches of the Government.



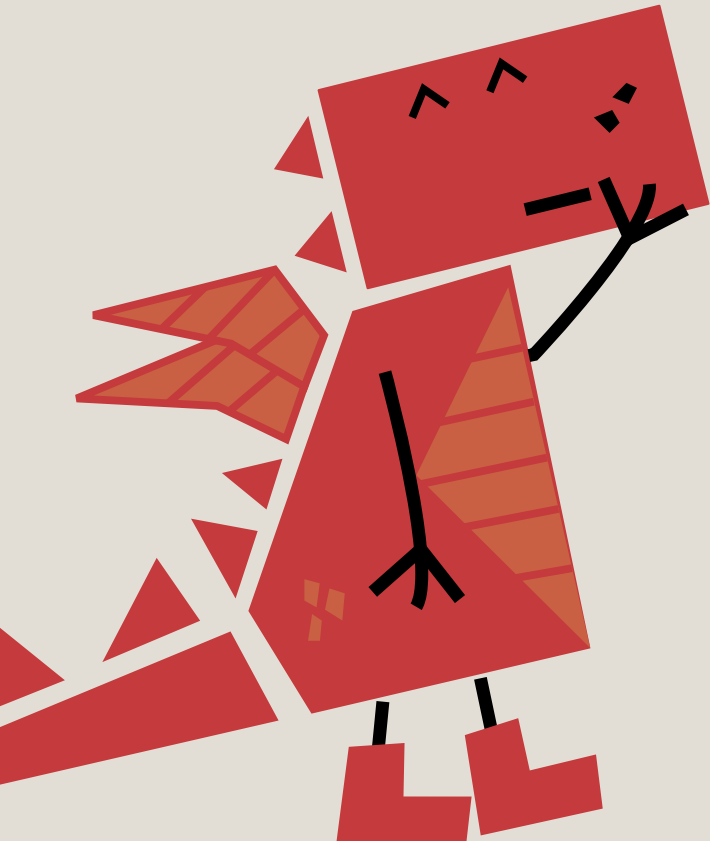
Feel an artist and
paint like a king.



Did you know that...



In the Hall of Parliament, the most important acts of Valencia take place, as the festivities of October, 9.



Parliament Hall (Salón de Cortes)

The walls of this room are covered with murals. One of them represents one court session of the elected deputies of the Generalitat of the kingdom, painted by Juan de Sariñena. Another painting represents the ecclesiastical arm executed by Vicente Requena and the nobility or military power, by the Italian artist Francesco Pozzo.

On the other side of the room, the four juries of the city of Valencia, are represented in a work by Sariñena. And in the back spaces of the hall, the representatives of towns and villages, painted by Vicent Mestre and Lluís Mata appear.



An allegory of Justice, which should guide the politicians, is found at the back of the Hall of Parliament. The work was performed by Pozzo. This was the first time it was painted with her eyes open.

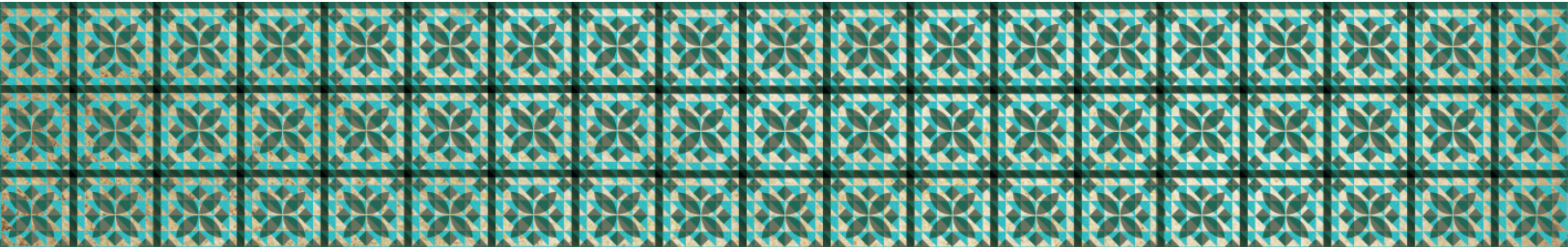
The coffered ceiling of the Hall of Parliament dates from the sixteenth century and it features a gallery or projecting balcony carved in non-polychromed wood with mythological, biblical and legendary characters.

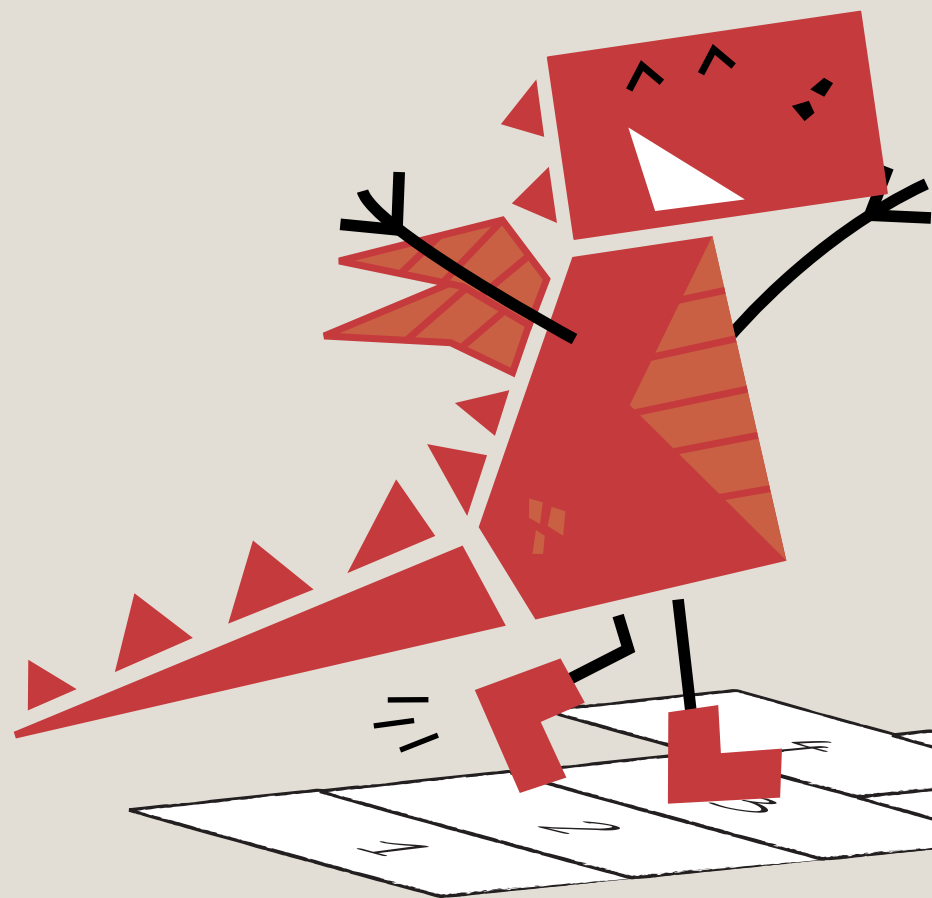
The lower part of the walls is covered with local ceramic tiles from Manises.

Second and third floor

The second floor, built over the main floor rooms, is intended only to offices of the Generalitat.

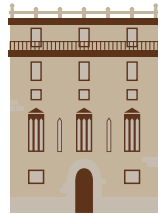
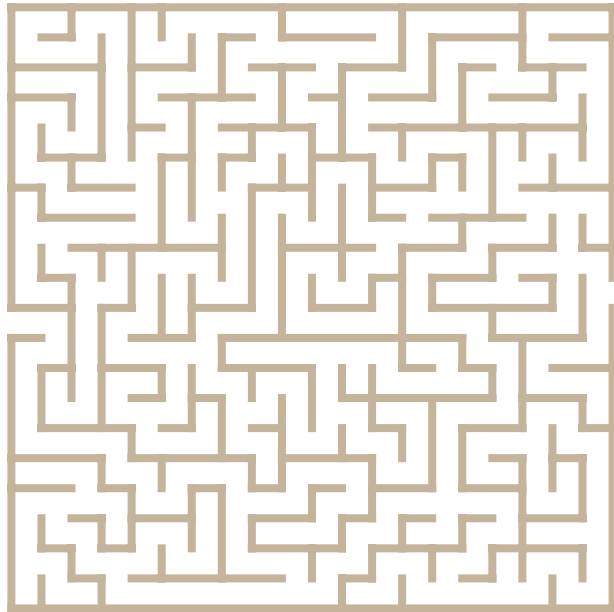
On the third floor, which we access through a spiral staircase located in the Old Tower, you find the Library.





Activities

Help Drac Alot get to the Palace

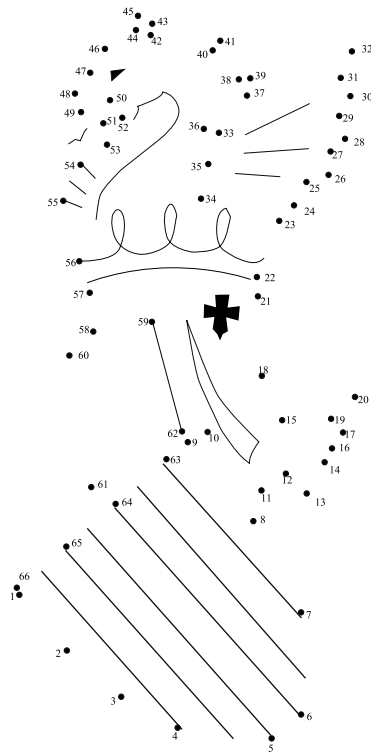


Find the names of
the chambers in the Palace



CHAPEL
PARLIAMENT
GOLDEN
GOTHIC
SCRIBE'S
KINGS
COUNCIL

Connect the dots and
discover what is hidden



Complete the name of the cities and
towns that appear in the Hall of Parliament

X _ T _ _ A _ _ _ _ _ NT

O _ _ _ LA M _ R _ _ _ _

A _ Z _ _ _ C _ _ _ _ _ X _ _ _

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Write down what you thought was
the most interesting part of the visit.

