

CIETA CONGRESS – KRAKÓW 2023

PROGRAMME OF EXCURSIONS, THURSDAY 5 OCTOBER

Excursion 1: The Textile Collections of Wawel Royal Castle and Wawel Royal Cathedral

10:00 a.m. Meet at the entrance of the Wawel Royal Castle Visitors Centre

Wawel Royal Castle and the Wawel Hill constitute the most important historical and cultural site in Poland. For centuries the residence of kings and the symbol of Polish statehood, the castle is now one of the country's premier art museums. Its collections are presented in several permanent exhibitions that evoke the historic appearance of the royal residence in the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries, and textile objects feature prominently in every one of them.

The Crown Treasury holds the crown jewels and royal insignia, among them the coronation sword of the Polish kings, from the 14th to the 18th century, but also standards and banners (the oldest ones dating back to the 16th century). A magnificent court mantle of the Order of the Holy Spirit, with a lavish gold embroidery created in Paris, was given to King Jan III Sobieski by King Louis XIV of France.

Throughout its history, the Polish-Lithuanian union had contact with the lands of Islam, and their splendid arts and crafts were greatly appreciated. Through trade contacts and military conflicts magnificent carpets, silks and wall hangings, arms and armour, parade saddles, and other goods from Turkey, the Crimea, the Caucasus, and Iran were acquired, becoming prized treasures in the homes of the nobility as well as at the royal court. Of particular historical importance is a group of trophies taken during the Battle of Vienna in 1683, when the coalition of European rulers led by King Jan III Sobieski of Poland defeated the Ottoman army – arms and armour as well as precious banners and standards. Large tents, lavishly embroidered, create gardens in interior spaces.

The State Rooms and the Royal Private Apartments are richly furnished with sculpted ceilings, gilt leather wall coverings and the tapestries acquired for Wawel Castle by King Sigismund II Augustus. His commission of tapestries in different forms and sizes, depicting exotic landscapes with animals and, time and again, the coats of arms of Poland and Lithuania, constituted the largest assignment ever entrusted to the weavers of Brussels.

Kraków Cathedral, also situated on the Wawel hill, is richly furnished with tapestries. The cathedral museum presents, among other objects, liturgical vestments of the archbishops, many of them fashioned from the most precious Italian silks.

Curator of the textile collections Magdalena Ozga, host of our congress, will accompany the group and introduce participants to the textile treasures of Wawel Royal Castle. She will also take them to the museum's textile conservation workshop.

A light lunch will be provided for the participants.

Number of participants: 25 max.

Contribution: 25.- €

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Excursion 2: The Czartoryski Museum, the Museum of the Jagiellonian University, and the Dominican Museum

10:00 a.m. Meet at the entrance of the Czartoryski Museum

The Czartoryski was one of the most influential aristocratic families of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth; its members played a dominant role in the state, from the 16th to the end of the 18th centuries in particular, and were also avid collectors of art. The core of the Czartoryski Museum was established in 1801 as a collection of national treasures by Princess Izabela Czartoryska. In the course of the 19th and 20th centuries it underwent dramatic interventions; the current museum was eventually reopened in 2019 and is still a treasure house of Polish history. Its best-known work undoubtedly is Leonardo da Vinci's *Lady with ermine*, but for textile specialists, its tapestries, embroideries, Persian carpets (including a beautiful *Polonaise*), Ottoman banners, and kontusz sashes are equally worthy of admiration. Ceremonial uniforms, fashionable clothes and accessories reflect the self-representation of the noble family.

Founded in 1364, the Jagiellonian University is one of the oldest universities in Europe. Fully established by the end of the 14th century, its scholars excelled in the fields of law, mathematics and astronomy. The famous astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus enrolled as a student in 1491. The Jagiellonian University Museum, established in the institution's Collegium maius, reflects this great history, both in its interiors (library, common room and aula being the most important) and in its collections: The latter include scientific instruments, maps, globes and other objects relating to the research and education pursued in the university, portraits depicting its distinguished members, and also works of art donated or bequeathed to the institution by wealthy benefactors. Among these last are textile objects ranging from tapestries and large-scale embroideries to oriental carpets (including a *Polonaise*), woven silks and accessories.

Kraków's Dominican Monastery was founded in 1222; to mark its 800th anniversary, the monastery has opened a museum showcasing treasures that include late medieval embroideries and church vestments made from precious silk fabrics, woven in Italy and France, but also in Persia and the Ottoman empire. Participants will be introduced to the museum by Katarzyna Moskal, curator of the Applied Arts Collection in the Department of Early Modern History and Art of the Museum of Kraków.

A light lunch will be provided for the participants.

Number of participants: 25 max.

Contribution: 25.- €

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Excursion 3: The Exhibition “The Image of the Golden Age. Images in the times of the last Jagiellons”

10:30 a.m. Meet at the entrance of the Wawel Royal Castle Visitors Centre

A temporary exhibition (14 September – 14 December 2023) presents a wide range of artworks from the period of the Polish-Lithuanian monarchy, under the reign of Alexander I Jagiellon, Sigismund I the Old and Sigismund II Augustus, spanning the years from 1501 to 1572. It is on display in the Renaissance building of the royal castle, original architectural details providing the framework for this period of Polish history and culture.

“Images” here refer to artworks made in various techniques (paintings on panel and canvas, miniatures, wooden and stone sculptures, goldsmiths’ work, cast bronzes, embroideries and woven textiles). Particular emphasis is given to printing as a revolutionary technique, used to propagate new ideas and patterns. Themes presented in the exhibition reflect the interests of the nobility and society in the late Jagiellonian period. Next to religious images, created for the churches of different confessions (Roman Catholic, Orthodox Catholic and Protestant), images that originated from mythology, ancient history and legends had an equally important place. During that period, the national imaginary began to be created, alongside representations of key events from Polish-Lithuanian history. The “new world” just discovered by travellers and explorers was represented in cartographic publications and geographical studies. The development of astrology and astronomy (in which Kraków was a leading research centre) required the design of special diagrams illustrating new content. Prognostics and calendars were also created, often adorned with allegories and personifications of zodiacs, planets or months. A separate space is reserved for drawings that document nature – plants and animals both real and fantastical. These had been collected and systematically published in the form of herbariums and related documentation. A collection of books by Conrad Gessner from the private library of King Sigismund Augustus and tapestries ordered in the Netherlands can be read as expressions of such interests. Apart from classical and national languages, the elite of humanists used an international language of images: emblems, hieroglyphs etc. Presenting this unique language, the exhibition emphasizes the connections between Polish and European scholars, the most renowned among them being Erasmus of Rotterdam. Antiquity and archaization are another important theme: in Wawel Royal Castle a frieze in the Envoys’ Room represents the stages of human life; it is thought to be a reconstruction of a painting from the walls of the temple of Saturn in Thebes. A description of the original painting by Cebes of Thebes was read by European elites, translated into Greek, Latin and several national languages, among them Polish.

The exhibition focuses on the connections among the ruling dynasties (Jagiellon, Habsburg, Wettin and the Zápolya family) as well as the powerful noble families (Thurzo, Boner and Betman). Artists’ journeys and imported artworks from the main artistic centres of Europe (southern Germany, the Netherlands, Italy) inspired the creators of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. A special place is reserved for the artworks created in Nuremberg and for those inspired by them in Kraków. For the first time the artworks created by Hans Dürer, brother of the famous Albrecht, are presented all together in one place.

Rafał Ochęduszko, one of the curators of the exhibition, will welcome the group and accompany participants on the tour.

Number of participants: 25 max.
Contribution: 10.- €

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Excursion 4: Textiles and Fashion at the National Museum of Kraków

10:00 a.m. Meet at the entrance of the National Museum of Kraków

This is a rather flexible programme, ideally suited for those who will have to catch a train or flight later on the same day.

The National Museum in Kraków is the largest museum in Poland, and the main part of Poland's National Museum, which has several independent branches with permanent collections around the country. Established in 1879, the Museum consists of 21 departments and holds c. 780,000 objects, from classical archaeology to modern art.

The participants will be welcomed by Joanna Regina Kowalska, curator of the Textiles and Fashion collection, who will introduce them to a selection of textiles and fashion objects from the collection. Particular emphasis will be given to Polish fashion of the 20th century.

The Decorative Arts and Crafts Gallery presents artefacts from the 12th to the early 20th century: metalwork, furniture, musical instruments, clocks, ceramics and glass, notably stained glass from the churches of Kraków, are exhibited. Of course, textiles also have their place here and range from medieval embroideries and imported silks to Polish and oriental carpets, and items of clothing.

For those who have some more time and an interest in modern art, a visit to the newly renovated Gallery of Twentieth Century Polish Art, one of the largest galleries of painting and sculpture from the late 19th century onwards in Poland, is highly recommended: It displays, among many other objects, artworks by Jacek Malczewski, Leon Wyczółkowski, Włodzimierz Tetmajer and an extensive collection of works by Stanisław Wyspiański. Paintings and sculptures by artists of the interwar and postwar periods (the Polish cubists, expressionists, colorists, the avant-garde of the 1930s, and representatives of New Directions from the 1960s) are also on show. Explanatory texts (in Polish and English) convey the historical and art historical contexts, with a view to making connections with parallel developments on an international level.

Number of participants: 20 max.

Contribution: 10.- €

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Excursion 5: Warsaw, with its National Museum

07:45 a.m. Meet at the Central station of Kraków

This is an excursion for those either with more time to discover Poland's art treasures or who arrive via Warsaw airport and will take their return flight from there (the train journey from Kraków to Warsaw takes c. 3 hours and costs c. 30 €). For those who register for this excursion, we will book the train tickets in advance.

The National Museum in Warsaw was originally founded in 1862 as the Museum of Fine Arts and is currently one of the oldest art museums in the country. After Poland regained its independence in 1918, the National Museum was ascribed a prominent role in the plans for the new state and its capital city of Warsaw, and the Modernist building in which it currently resides was erected between 1927 and 1938. Today, the National Museum in Warsaw holds a collection of around 830,000 works of art from Poland and abroad, from antiquity to the present day, including paintings, sculptures, drawings, prints, photographs, coins, as well as decorative arts and design.

In 2016, the museum reopened its former Gallery of Old Masters as the "Gallery of European and Old Polish Decorative Arts, Painting and Sculpture, 15th–18th Century". Bringing together diverse art forms, the curators intended to move away from the traditional discourse of art history where the "high" pictorial arts – painting, sculpture, drawing and graphic arts – were separated from the decorative arts understood exclusively in utilitarian terms. Considering that such a division did not exist in the past, they chose a different approach, with "social spaces" defining the contexts for which artworks were created and understood. These "social spaces" now identify the different parts of the gallery: 1. palace, villa, court; 2. church, chapel and domestic altar; 3. the city. In other words: 1. court culture; 2. religious culture; 3. civic culture. Precious textiles, in particular embroideries and tapestries, are exhibited in their respective spheres.

The participants will be welcomed by Ewa Mianowska-Orlińska, curator of the Decorative Arts Collection, who will introduce them to the textiles in the museum's galleries, especially those typical of the Polish lands, such as 18th century carpets and kontush' sashes.

Contribution depending on the cost of the train journey (c. 30 €).