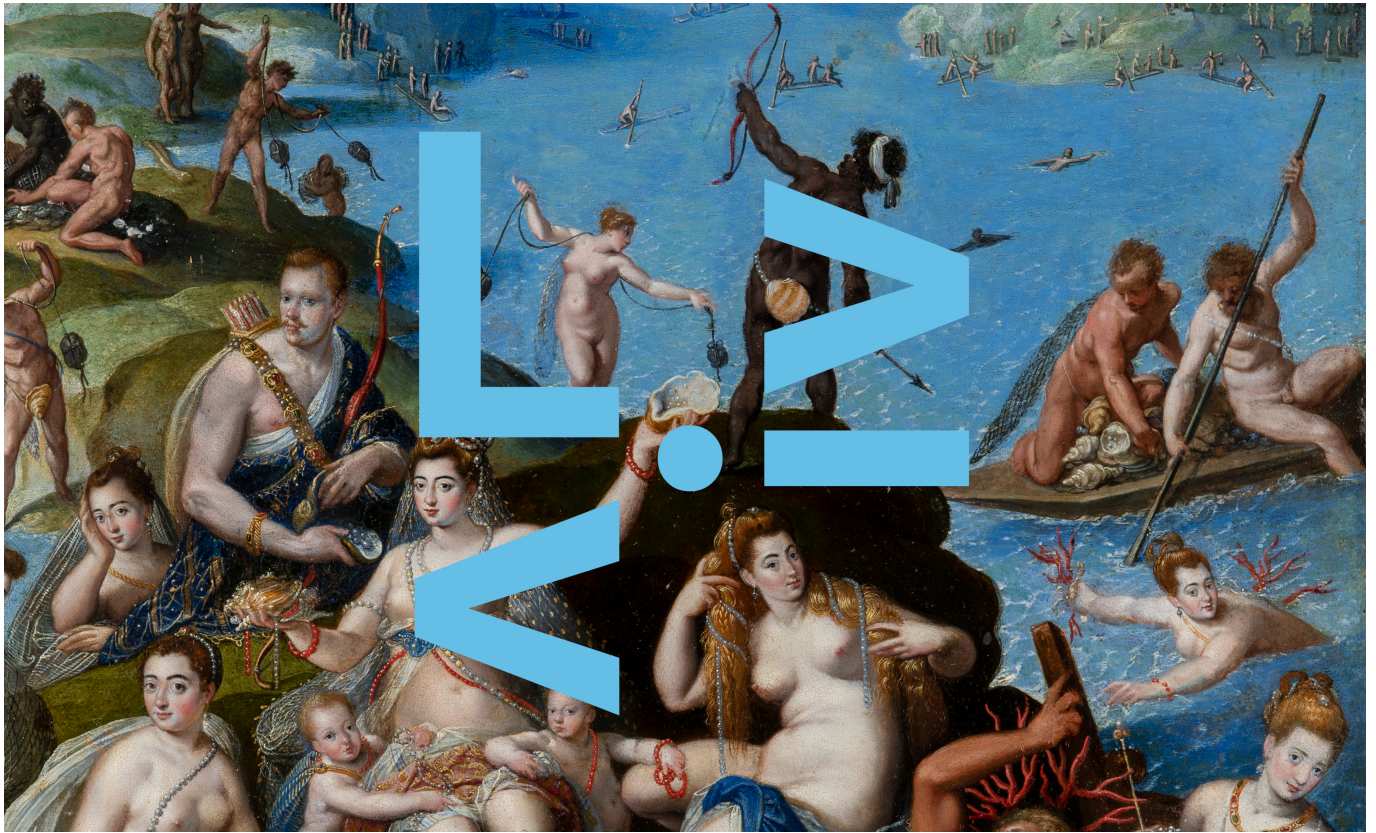


The Genius of Lviv. Lviv as an Art Centre and its Art Collections



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The Genius of Lviv

Lviv as an Art Centre and its Art Collections

October 6, 2023 – February 21, 2024

The Royal Library

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There's no point in talking, say whatever you want. There's nothing like Lviv! – said the pre-war hit song. Instead of talking, the exhibition *The Genius of Lviv* depicts testimonies of the legendary uniqueness of this city. We invite you on a fascinating journey through the world of artistic treasures of the Galician capital,

covering painting and sculpture from the 17th century to the 20th century, including works by masters such as Grottger, Malczewski, Matejko or Siemiradzki, as well as lesser-known pearls of Western European art.

The uniqueness of Lviv as a centre of artistic and cultural life over the centuries was determined by the fact that it was located on one of the main trade routes connecting Europe with the East. The city was therefore a cultural melting pot, where the influences of different nations and religions mingled. It was inhabited by Poles, Ruthenians/Ukrainians, Jews, Armenians, Tatars, Germans, Czechs and others. It was at the meeting point of many traditions that the unique syncretism of forms and means of expression characterising the art created in the sphere of Lviv's influence, especially in the era of Mannerism and Rococo, could develop.

Making of:

A particularly vivid representation of this specificity are Rococo sculptures - bursting with expression, manifested in bold deformation, thanks to which the figural representations gained a dramatic feature not found in contemporary European sculpture.

The genius of Lviv was also manifested in an atmosphere conducive to the creation of outstanding collections. Some of them were created by art enthusiasts coming from aristocratic families residing in the sphere of cultural influence of Lviv: the Rzewuski, Ossoliński, Lubomirski, Mniszch or Lanckoroński families. Their collections included custom-made portraits as well as outstanding specimens of European painting, such as *The Adoration of the Magi* by Peter Coecke van Aelst or *Pearl and Coral Fishers* by Jacopo Zucchi, both present at the exhibition.

No less impressive are the collections gathered before 1939 by Lviv public institutions, most notably the Lviv City Gallery, which in time became known as the National Gallery of the City of Lviv. It is the largest permanent collection of 19th- and 20th-century Polish paintings outside of Poland, and includes works by such major figures as Grottger, Malczewski, Matejko, Sielska-Reich and Siemiradzki, which can also be seen at the exhibition.

The objects on display are from two of the city's most important museums - the Borys Voznytskyi Lviv National Art Gallery and the Lviv Historical Museum.

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People involved in preparing the exhibition:

Curator
Przemysław Mrozowski

Exhibition coordinator

Paweł Martosz

Exhibition design
Wojciech Cichecki

Graphic design
Agencja Kreatywna ULUMIO creatives / Magdalena Czechowska

Exhibition Department
Robert Gruszka, Piotr Kubiak, Anieli Mikuła, Rafał Mroczek, Kamil Nowiński, Krzysztof Nowiński,
Elżbieta Pachała-Czechowska, Anna Rosochacz, Grzegorz Siatkowski, Dariusz Zgiet

Conservation Department
Tomasz Buźniak, Marcin Borowski-Kurak, Dorota Iwaniuk, Bogumiła Krajewska, Magdalena Rogowska,
Maria Szczypek

Inventory Department
Dominik Bogucki, Tomasz Tomaszewski

Education Department
Dominika Jackowiak
Wojciech Siwek
Michał Sobieraj
Marta Tarnawska-Banaszek

Research and Museum Projects
Department
Ewa Włoch

Promotions and Communications Department
Anna Buczyńska
Daniel Mituła
Aleksandra Sajdak
Paulina Szwed-Piesterzeniewicz

Head of Protocol and Events Department

Aleksandra Buszta-Bąk, Paweł Gutt, Lesław Krzewski, Regina Lubelska, Marta Smolińska

Electrical Department
Andrzej Baraniak, Dominik Bojar, Janusz Duczman, Marcin Grodkowski, Robert Jasiński, Ryszard
Węgrzyn, Robert Wojtysiak

Translations
Igor Chomyn, Grażyna Waluga

Exhibition publication

Scientific editor
Przemysław Mrozowski

Authors
Przemysław Mrozowski, Igor Chomyn, Borys Shenhera

Commissioning editor
Anna Włażnik

Editing and proofreading
Monika Baranowska, Anna Włażnik, Lucyna Wydra

Coordinator
Tatiana Hardej

Photoedition
Anna Bukowska

Publication design
Sławomir Krajewski / bookidea

Cover design
Magdalena Czechowska / ULUMIO creatives

Set builder
Rafał Krauze Perfect Events, Łukasz Puścian z zespołem



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