

Editor's Note

The present, seventh, volume of *Rozprawy Muzeum Narodowego w Krakowie* (*Papers of the National Museum in Krakow*) brings diverse material yielded by art research in the broad sense of the term. A majority of it relates to the rich collections of our Museum, which celebrated its 135th anniversary in 2014. Two of the other texts are devoted to objects from the Czartoryski collection, which was administered by the National Museum as one of its departments in 1950–1991.

The volume opens with *Three Greek Engraved Gold Finger Rings from the Konstanty Schmidt-Ciążyński Collection at the National Museum in Krakow (1818–1889)*. The author, Paweł Gołyźniak, takes another effort to analyse the indecisively dated and vaguely interpreted objects in one of the most valuable acquisitions in the history of our Museum.

Joined actively by the directors and curators of the National Museum, the heated discussion over conceptions for the revitalisation of the Wawel Hill before and after the site was left by the Austrian garrison in 1905 is the subject of an article by Kamila Podnieśńska, which focuses specifically on the *Procession to Wawel Hill*, a much-hyped sculptural rendition of Poland's history presented by Waław Szymanowski (1859–1930) in 1911 as a model which, however, was never executed full-scale. This is an opening article in a series on the art of the age of Symbolism, which also includes papers on the painters Włodzimierz Błocki (1885–1920) and Marian Wawrzeniecki (1863–1943). The former lived in Lvov, was educated at the Krakow Academy of Fine Arts, appreciated by critics, popular with audiences during his lifetime but completely forgotten after his premature death. Jolanta Bobala's text is the first this ambitious attempt to trace Błocki's artistic path based on his scant surviving output. Janusz Zagrodzki (*Art and Art Criticism in Poland, or Witch Tortures. Marian Wawrzeniecki (1863–1943)*) took on the task of challenging the widespread opinion on the art of Wawrzeniecki as merely obscene celebrations of sadism. The author finds in them a protest against totalitarian "thought control" and in defence of independence and freedom of art, in which nudity is understood as a symbol of innocence and a distinctive mark of a victim. The starting point for Joanna Regina Kowalska's and Jan Jakub Dreścik's reflections are clothes or clothing accessories. However, the method, research perspective and issues raised by the authors are much broader than those we habitually associate with fashion studies. The first of the two papers (*Laces Inspired by the Art of Podhale. The National School of Lacemaking in Zakopane and Its Impact on Fashion in the First Half Century of Its Existence*) looks at the mutual inspiration between *haute couture* and the ethnographically systematised folk tradition. In the other one, *On Several Court Memorabilia at the Princes Czartoryski Museum in Krakow*, a presentation of some military dresses from the Warsaw court of tsar Nicholas I (which are in the collection of the Princes Czartoryskis Museum and were used as props by Jan Matejko for the painting *Rejtan*) unfolds into an exciting study of transformation in the collective consciousness of the Polish aristocracy over the first thirty years of the 19th century.

The holdings of the National Museum in Krakow stand out, among other things, for their huge collection of nearly a quarter million works on paper. As a result, a team of art conservators is retained to ensure proper storage conditions for the holdings, a natural outcome of which is the team members' engagement in research. This activity is represented by Zofia Maniakowska-Jazownik's paper on Olga Boznańska's painting on cardboard from an art conservator's perspective. The article is also a pendant to the exhibition of this great painter's works at the National Museum in Krakow at the turn of 2014 and 2015.

Several decades after the National Museum received Schmidt-Ciążyński's collection, another gift of enormous value came in: the collection of Erazm Barącz (1859–1928). This generous benefactor, mining engineer, respected director of the Wieliczka salt mine and art buff and collector is the subject of the Janina Skorupska's column in the *In memoriam* section. The review section of the present volume of *Rozprawy* is rounded out by an overview of an exhibition of late medieval and early modern Italian painting from the Princes Czartoryski Collection, written by Monika Czapska. Entitled „Virtus et Splendor. Art in the Italian Life in the 14th–17th Centuries”, the exhibition was a great success at the National Museum in Gdańsk in early 2014.