

Napoleon and Art

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September 12th – December 13th 2015

The Gallery of Temporary Exhibitions

1815 – the year of the Battle of Waterloo and the Congress of Vienna – marked the end of the Napoleonic era. The exhibition organised in the 200th anniversary of those events is the first such an extensive presentation of the art of this period in Poland.

Napoleon's reign was the time of extraordinary flourishing of the art, its spectacular rebirth after post-revolutionary damages. Art was actively employed to glorify Napoleon, to create his myth, build the luxurious scenery around the court. For propaganda reasons official residences had to have their decoration changed, new interior decoration programmes had to be developed, numerous paintings commissioned, as well as pieces of furniture, silverware and decorative fabrics. Apart from official portraits and large-scale historical paintings exhibited at Salons, decorative arts blossomed. Artists working for Napoleon discovered creative areas unknown before, developed brand new forms and standards, at the same time drawing from the heritage of bygone ages.

The exhibition, consisting of over 120 objects, reveals various faces of the art from this period – from grandiose neo-classical works stemming from the antique culture and inspired by archaeological discoveries, to the fascination with the Orient, to the Egyptomania emerging after Napoleon's campaign in Egypt. There is also the Troubadour Style, full of nostalgia for the Gothic past and the world of knights, as well as the melancholic Pre-Romanticism. Modern, pioneering forms astound, most noticeably in new furniture, which was the answer to the search for comfort and functionality.

Works of art illustrative to the Polish theme also supplement the exhibition – scenes from the history of the Duchy of Warsaw and sophisticated portraits as well as luxurious everyday objects commissioned by Polish noble families in France.

Amongst the authors of works of art presented at the exhibition are: Jacques Louis David (*Distribution of the Eagle Standards*), François Gérard (*Napoleon in Coronation Robes*), Charles Percier and Pierre-François-Léonard Fontaine (*Recueil de décorations intérieures...*), Martin-Guillaume Biennais (Napoleon and Marie Louise's tea set), François-Honoré-Georges Jacob-Desmalter (maker of Napoleon's mechanical desk).

The exhibition was organised in co-operation with Palais de Compiègne and Réunion des musées nationaux – Grand Palais. It was first presented in Compiègne (23 April – 9 August 2015).

The exhibition is open during The Royal Castle's opening hours

Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays: **10.00 am – 4.00 pm**

Wednesdays: **12.00 pm – 8.00 pm** (in November: **10.00 am – 8 pm**)

Sundays: **11.00 am – 4.00 pm** (entrance paid; in November: entrance free)

Mondays: **closed**

Attention! We kindly inform that on **December 13**, 2015 (last day of the exhibition) the *Napoleon and Art* exhibition will be available until **7 pm** (last entry at **6 pm**, ticket office is open until **6 pm**).

Ticket prices: normal – **12 PLN**, reduced-fare: **6 PLN**, family ticket: **5 PLN** per person

Last entry for an hour before closing

Until **December 13** the fee for owners of the ticket to Prince Józef's Apartment at the Tin-Roofed Palace: **1 PLN**