

## Masterpieces from The Khanenko Museum in Kiev



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Elisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun, Portrait of Stanisław August in the Costume of Henry IV, 1797

Bernardo Bellotto, Architectural Capriccio with Ruins of a Temple, 1762-1766

**June 1-July 30 2023**

**The Hall of the Crown's Horse Guards, The Canaletto Room**

The exhibition is available as part of a ticket to the Royal Route

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**As part of the cooperation between museum institutions, a collection of artworks from the Bohdan and Varvara Khanenko National Museum of Arts in Kyiv has been loaned to the Royal Castle in Warsaw. After conducting scientific research and conservation work on some of these objects, which have never been previously shown in Poland, they will be**

**presented as part of a temporary exhibition scheduled for 2024. The exhibition will showcase the shared cultural heritage of Poland and Ukraine, linking both countries to Western European culture. Already, two paintings from this collection can be admired on the Royal Route.**



Portrait of Stanisław August in the Costume of Henry IV, painted by Elisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun (1755–1842) in 1797, is one of the two last ad vivum portraits of Stanisław August. The king is depicted wearing a feathered hat, a dark blue doublet with a lace collar, and a black cloak. Around his neck, there is a golden chain with a medallion depicting the eye of providence. The historicizing attire refers to Henry IV of Bourbon (1533-1610), whose ability to maintain peace between Calvinists and Catholics in France, as well as his efforts to establish political and economic order, served as a reference point for Stanisław August in shaping his own image as an enlightened ruler. The medallion emphasizes the role of divine providence in decision-making and exercising power. Interestingly, Stanisław August was convinced of his physical and intellectual resemblance to Henry IV.



The Architectural Capriccio with Ruins of a Temple by Bernardo Bellotto (1722-1780) is a painting created between 1762 and 1766. The composition is dominated by the ruins of a late Baroque church with a dome, adorned with life-size sculptures of saints. One of the three statues visible on the balustrade, a woman holding a palm of martyrdom, is likely a depiction of St. Agnes of Rome. The fragment of a colonnade on the right side of the composition refers to the Temple of Vespasian in the Roman Forum. The prominent equestrian statue, on the other hand, resembles the Venetian monument of Bartolomeo Colleoni. The rich scenery evokes Bellotto's early works. Eight original study drawings for this painting have survived to this day. The presentation of this artwork serves as a supplement to the monographic exhibition of Bellotto, which was held at the Royal Castle between 2022 and 2023, symbolically closing the celebrations of the artist's 300th birthday anniversary.

The exhibition is not the first presentation of art collections from Ukraine, but so far, the castle walls have hosted objects brought from Lviv. This time, we have the opportunity to see exceptional artworks from Kyiv.

Kyiv, The Bohdan and Varvara Khanenko National Museum of Arts



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