

XI BALTIC MEDAL
TRIENNIAL

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XI BALTIC MEDAL TRIENNIAL

Medal Art in Lithuania and Poland – 500 Years

MMXXI

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500 years for the medal art in Lithuania and Poland. 2020
Artist: Sebastian Mikołajczak. Poland
See p. 38

Back cover:
500 years for the medal art in Lithuania and Poland. 2021
Artist: Asta Vasiliauskaitė. Lithuania
See p.p. 12-13

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Introduction

In 1520, when the heir to the Polish and Lithuanian throne Sigismund Augustus was born, his father, Sigismund the Old, commissioned a medal to honour this joyful occasion. This new tradition was brought by the queen Bona Sforza from Italy. Since then, during 500 years of history and evolution, a number of prominent artists created these small-scale monuments, enriching our people’s cultural layers. The longevity of these metallic objects brings knowledge to us to understand the processes, the turning points in history and also the power of propaganda through these pieces of art. In our times medal art is made more and more for the art’s sake. Nevertheless, there are still many subjects chosen to commemorate important occasions and people that are relevant to us, modern humans.

Baltic Medal Triennial is the biggest medallic project in the Baltic countries. Since 1986, it has been organized together with Lithuanian Artists Association and different local and foreign partners.

This time, to mark the historical anniversary of medallic art in our countries, we collaborate with museums to show not only contemporary works of art, but also historical background – first medals created in Lithuania and Poland. Thus, connecting the past and the present.

In addition – lectures, workshops and excursions are included to enrich the exhibition program. The exhibitions and above mentioned events will be held in three locations: The District Museum in Toruń MOT, The Museum of John Paul II Coins and Medals in Częstochowa, The National Museum of Lithuania in Vilnius.

My sincerest gratitude to the key project partners: The National Museum of Lithuania, The M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art, The District Museum in Toruń MOT and The Museum of John Paul II Coins

and Medals (JP2 Museum). The collaboration between medal artists and museums is of a great significance because both – medals and museums bear history within – thus having a special bond. The messages encoded in the medallic works of art remain for the safekeeping in museums for the future spectators to admire and to contemplate.

Also, I am delighted that the commerce enterprises Samlerhuset group “Monetų Namai” and Lithuanian Mint not only commission and produce medals, but also join the celebration together with artists and museums. The co-working and good relationships add value to the prosperity of the medallic world.

My deepest respect and admiration for the connoisseurs of the scientific department – renown professors, lectors and numismatic custodians have much added to the educational part of the triennial, enriching our knowledge about the first medal artists working in the region in 16th century, as well as some of the greatest medal collectors and the aspects of collecting medals. Summaries of their lectures are included in this catalogue.

With love I say Thank You, dear Colleagues – 70 medal artists, who work hard and honestly creating these small scale monuments and showing them to the world! And a very special gratitude to the Delegates – Jānis Strupulis, Kerstin Östberg and specially Sebastian Mikołajczak together with Stanisław Kościński, who took responsibility to organize the events of this triennial in Poland, gathering a strong team of partners and sponsors!

Dear reader, enjoy this medallic festivity and remember that you can also become a collector and possess these little treasures, adding value not only to yourself, but also to your family, friends and culture in a wide perspective.

Lina Kalinauskaitė
Project manager, medal artist

The Toruń Prelude

The collective exhibitions of the medallic art are organized in Poland very rarely. This summer we have the opportunity to take part in such an event for the first time in many years. The tour of the exhibits presented as part of the 11th Baltic Medal Triennial began in the basement of the Old Town Hall in Toruń, which is used for the exhibition purposes by the District Museum. This is a beautiful Gothic hall with genuine granite columns, very different from modern exhibition spaces. Medallic art, best appreciated in a private, even intimate way, especially the traditional one in which medals used to be smaller than nowadays, fits into such an exhibition area perfectly. The location of the exhibition pays homage to the classical medallic art, the principles of which were formulated in the epoch that followed the Middle Ages – the Renaissance. The exhibits are arranged along the U-shaped route. Medals created in Lithuania, Latvia, Sweden and Poland are presented in succession. The last exhibit on the visitor's route is a display case with historical objects from the collection of the District Museum in Toruń. These are Renaissance medals, or precisely, in the majority of cases, their casts produced in the next centuries. The organisers took care of very good lighting, which is especially important in the case of works using deep relief. Information boards have been prepared in the Polish and English languages.

The theme of this year's triennial is the 500th anniversary of the medallic art in Lithuania and Poland. Some artists decided to refer directly to the jubilee, for example Piotr Tołoczko from Poland who created a chain-shaped medal – a symbol of unbreakable historical ties between Poland and Lithuania, or Romualdas Inčirauskas whose triptych entitled *Lithuanian Medal – 1520–2020* contains several portrait of the king Sigismund II Augustus. Other artists showed their works created during the recent years. Many of those are the works that have reached the highest level in the achievements of particular artists.

The exhibition features medals created with the use of traditional style, form and materials – a circular works, square or rectangular plaques, made of bronze

as the most popular alloy in this art, presenting beautiful portraits of people of merit. In the Lithuanian medallic art, Lina Kalinauskaitė remains faithful to the classical iconography. She creates gorgeous, realistic, softly modelled portraits. The lettering of inscriptions is impressive. In the remarkable portraits precisely carved by Benas Narbutas certain fragments are embedded more deeply in the structure of the work, which gives the image a three-dimensional character. As far as the Polish medals are concerned, Ewa Olszewska-Borys and Tadeusz Tchórzewski have carved classical portraits. Realism is also characteristic of the works created by Robert Kotowicz. In the Latvian medallic art, the portraits by Andris Bērziņš, Edgars Grīnfelds and Jānis Strupulis are classical. On the other hand, the figures on the surface of Petras Baronas' work are full of lyricism, modelled softly and concisely (limited to smooth surfaces, without unnecessary details). The expression of the works is indeed touching. The spirit of impressionism can be felt in the Polish medals created by Anna Paskal, Iwona Langowska and Ewa Janus. An expressively rendered figure, who is raring to emerge out of the structure of Magdalena Dobrucka's work, is tremendously impressive. On the other hand, colour is one of the most important formal elements in the Polish medals by Stanisław Cukier, Jacek Dworski and in the Latvian ones by Jānis Anmanis and Māra Mickēviča. We can admire an egg-shaped medal authored by Antanas Olbutas from Lithuania or a medal in the shape of folded ribbons by Majid Jammoul from Poland. The form of the work by Svetlana Saveljeva from Latvia, presenting a face that swallows a giant coronavirus cell, is deeply moving. A Polish medal created by Andrzej Borcz has a minimalist design: the artist limited the means of expression to several lines made of steel rods which occasionally form schematic figures. On the other hand, Aleksander Paskal's work is just a brass disc with a hole. The exhibition features also three-dimensional works, some of which can be set upright, created by Rytas Jonas Belevičius, Aušra Jasiukevičiūtė and Daumantas Kučas from Lithuania, Maciej Wierzbicki, Krzysztof Mazur, Joanna Bebarska, Anna Wątróbska-Wdowiarska,

Bartłomiej Schmidt and Urszula Walerzak from Poland, as well as Gustav Hedengren Wirsén from Sweden. There are also medals made of the materials which were not used in the classical medallic art. We can mention here the Lithuanian works made of granite by Asta Vasiliauskaitė or the works created of sandstone, silver and amber by Beata Zdramytė, Polish designs made of steel and wood by Sebastian Mikołajczak, of wood by Stanisław Kościński, of glass and copper by Sławomir Biernat, of aluminium and epoxy resin by Alicja Majewska, Swedish works made of copper, bark, sweet water pearls, leather (first one) and ceramics (second one) by Kerstin Östberg, of iron and stainless steel by Thomas Qvarsebo, as well as Latvian medals created by Ģirts Burvis of glass and stone, or of acrylic and vinyl by Nikifs. Monika Molenda is famous for creating medals that incorporate the elements typical of other arts, such as music and movement. This time, her work presented at the exhibition shines with the light coming from the internal mechanism.

Owing to a wide selection of stylistically diverse medals, designed with the use of various techniques and materials, a review of the medallic production in the Baltic states seems comprehensive. The collection reflects the trends and fashions in the contemporary

European and global medallic art. These are primarily: the syncretism between the medallic art and other branches of fine arts, interesting and often surprising approach to the subject, new iconographic signs and symbols, innovative spatial solutions in the small relief art, etc.

The triennial was accompanied by a symposium with lectures on the Jagiellonian medallic art by Tomasz Bylicki, on innovation in iconography and style in the contemporary Polish medallic art by Dominik Maiński, PhD, and on the Polish medallic circles and initiatives for promotion of small relief art by prof. Sebastian Mikołajczak. Excellent cooperation between the Polish and Lithuanian organizers of the triennial raises hopes for further, even more effective collaboration in the future. The presentation of the medallic achievements of the Baltic states in Toruń, the home of many eminent medallic artists and the International Medallic Project involving students and foreign academic institutions, gives an impression that this place has become the leading centre of medallic art in Poland, similarly as Telšiai in Lithuania.

dr. Dominik Maiński, PhD

Lecturer, researcher,
John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin

LITHUANIA



Since the anniversary X Baltic Medal Triennial, Lithuania celebrated some important commemorative dates. The year 2018 was very special for Lithuania. Along with other neighbouring countries it was celebrating the centenary of the restoration of the statehood. To honour this date, the National Museum of Lithuania in February organized an exhibition “Medals commemorating the centenary of the restoration of the Lithuanian state”. Most of the exhibited medals were specially created for this jubilee. National museum of Lithuania has the biggest collection of medals in Lithuania and it has augmented it with some of those new works of medallic art.

Our annual medallic symposiums in Telšiai continue its activity. Since 2018 the organizers wheel now holds Associate Professor Marius Norkus from the Vilnius Academy of Fine Arts, Telšiai faculty and Ingrida Vaitiekienė from the Samogitian Museum “Alka”. More students are invited to take part at these symposiums. The program of symposium is extended, including conferences, workshops with children, and most important – metal casting. Already for some years, in this symposium among medals, the genre of small sculpture and its casting, using ceramic shell technique has secured its place.

In 2018, honouring the commemoration the centenary of the statehood, the theme of XXXIV International Medal Art Symposium in Telšiai was “Lithuania’s way – 100 years”. As usual, most of the participants contributed creating medals for the theme.

In 2019 our medallic community was celebrating two anniversaries – the XXXV symposium and 800 years commemoration of the first mention of the Samogitians in historical sources, (Samogitians are the people of the west-north region of Lithuania where Telšiai is the regional center). Samogitia / Žemaitija played a significant historical role in the country’s development and also the formation of the neighbouring countries. Samogitians are proud of being distinct from the rest of the country for their unique dialect, customs and traditions. This symposium with the dedication of theme to “Samogitia, Lithuania and the world” grasped the

attention of television. Educative shows were shown on several national channels.

In 2020 medal artists started the celebration of the 500 years of medal art in Lithuania and Poland. And the XXXVI symposium was a smithery of this celebration. Again, the educational part – lectures – gave lots of exciting input and the attention of television gave more colours to the participants of the symposium.

During these several past years some great retrospective exhibitions of prominent Lithuanian sculptors and medal artists were also on show: Algirdas Bosas at the National Museum of Lithuania in Vilnius; Juozas Kalinauskas anniversary exhibition together with Lina Kalinauskaitė on tour in Vilnius, Telšiai and Plungė; Romualdas Inčirauskas exhibition in Vilnius and Anykščiai. Petras Repšys had several grand exhibitions of his artworks of different media in Vilnius and other cities. Danius Drulys had his anniversary exhibition in his hometown Klaipėda.

This year (2021) we commemorate 30 years since the 1991 January 13th events when Soviet army killed peaceful civilians at the TV tower. Several medals are dedicated to these people who were defending the freedom of Lithuania, unarmed, with songs and anthems.

Another important commemoration is of the most glorious military leader throughout the history of Lithuania – Jan Karol Chodkiewicz. The commemoration of 400 years since his last battle won (and his life perished there) in the Khotyn battle with Turks. The newly formed foundation of Jan Karol Chodkiewicz commissioned a medal (included in this catalogue) and is going to erect a monument in Vilnius to honour this glorious commander. The achievements of this great man will be revealed to the people in a form of multiple events, books and TV programs.

Knowledge, respect and commemoration of important historical events provide a strong ground to the citizens and give meaning to love and nurture the development of their country in a prosperous and meaningful way.

Lina Kalinauskaitė
Project manager, medal artist

ASTA VASILIAUSKAITĖ



500 years for the medal art in Lithuania and Poland. 2021
Granite, Ø 150 mm



JOLANTA BALKEVIČIENĖ



500 years to the first medal in Lithuania. 2020
Copper, electrotype, Ø ~180 mm

RYTAS JONAS BELEVIČIUS



Sacrament. Dedicated to the 500 years commemoration jubilee
of Evangelical Reformed Church. 2018–2019
Bronze, cast, 205 × 320 mm

AUŠRA JASIUKEVIČIŪTĖ



Vilnius – Krakow. 2021

Bronze, silver-plated, semi-precious stones, cast, mounted, 150 × 150 mm

GEDIMINAS ŽUKLYS



Birth of the King. 2020

Copper, electrotpe, 100 × 220 mm

DAUMANTAS KUČAS



Barbara and Sigismund. 2021
Bronze, cast, 110 × 110 × 60 mm

ROMUALDAS INČIRAIŠKAS



Triptych: Lithuanian medal – 1520–2020. 2020
Bronze, aluminium, mixed technique,
180 × 70 × 50 mm; 220 × 110 × 60 mm; 180 × 110 × 60 mm

PETRAS BARONAS



To Sigismund II Augustus. 2020
Bronze, cast, Ø 98 mm



Zofia z Horwattów Tyszkiewicz. 2019
Brass, silver-plated, struck, Ø 60 mm



Józef Tyszkiewicz. Founder of the Palanga resort. 2020
Brass, silver-plated, struck, Ø 60 mm



LINA KALINAUSKAITĖ



800 Years Commemoration of the First Mention
of Samogitians in Historical Sources. 2019
Brass, struck, Ø 60 mm



Sculptor Juozas Kalinauskas. 2020
Bronze, cast, Ø 120 mm



Jan Karol Chodkiewicz. 2021
Silver, struck, Ø 60 mm

JUOZAS KALINAUSKAS



Vytautas the Great. 2020
Bronze, cast, Ø 100 mm

SKAISTĖ JŪRATĖ ŽILIENĖ



Battle of Durbe. 2015
Obverse, reverse. Copper, electrotype, Ø 180 mm



Stanisław and Gabriel Narutowicz. 2012
Copper, electrotype, silver-plated, Ø 105 mm



ALGIRDAS BOSAS



The return of the little brothers brotherhood from the underground 30 years commemoration. 2020
Tombak, struck, Ø 60 mm



COVID-19. 2020
Obverse, reverse. Bronze, cast, Ø 135 mm

BENAS NARBUTAS

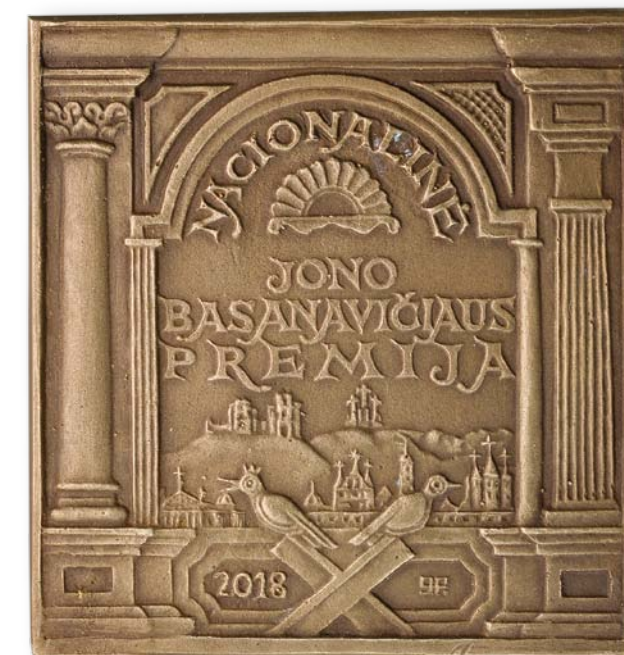


Signatory Donatas Malinauskas. 2020
Bronze, cast, Ø 150 mm



President Kazys Grinius. 2020
Bronze, cast, Ø 150 mm

PETRAS GINTALAS



National Jonas Basanavičius Award. 2018
Obverse, reverse. Bronze, cast, 105 × 100 mm

REMIGIJA VAITKUTĖ



Loreta Asanavičiūtė. 2021
Bronze, cast, Ø 90 mm

TAMARA JANOVA



For the rescuers of Jews in Lithuania. 2021
Bronze, cast, Ø 100 mm

LEONAS ŽUKLYS



Paulius Širvys. 2020
Copper, electrotype, 210 × 210 mm

ANTANAS OLBUTAS



Vision of Vilnius. 2018
Copper, electrotype, 100 × 140 mm



Restoration of Lithuanian statehood, 1918–2018. 2018
Obverse, reverse. Copper, electrotype, 90 × 120 mm

DANIUS DRULYS



Zina Sviderskienė. 2017
Obverse, reverse. Aluminium, cast, 122 × 104 mm



1863–1864 Uprising. 2017
Obverse, reverse. Copper, electrotype, 105 × 74 mm

GVIDAS LATAKAS



Commemoration of Samogitia 800, 1219–2019. 2019
Bronze, cast, 155 × 110 mm



Litas 1922–1941, 1993–2014. 2019
Bronze, cast, 150 × 95 mm

BEATA ZDRAMYTĖ



Cultural layers. 2019
Silver, amber, sandstone, 70 × 150 mm

POLAND



The eleventh edition of the Baltic Triennial of Medals and its momentous theme “500 years of medal art in Lithuania and Poland” inclines me to reflect upon two aspects of this event. The first concerns the common medal art heritage Poland and Lithuania share in relation to the present day. The second relates to the state of Polish medal art and the directions it may take.

Over the last decade, we have witnessed and participated in a “Polish-Lithuanian medal art union” which has been based on cyclical events held both in Lithuania – the Baltic Medal Art Triennial and the Medal Art Symposium in Telšiai – and in Poland, such as the International Medal Art Project organized in the city of Toruń. For years, the aforementioned celebrations have been a conduit for sharing experiences and discovering a common medal art heritage. Last year’s edition of the Medal Art Symposium in Telšiai as well as this year’s 11th Baltic Medal Art Triennial, together with their shared theme of “500 years of medal art in Lithuania and Poland” constitute a significant point on the timeline that describes and summarizes common experiences. This point serves, additionally, as an opportunity to set future goals for further undertakings.

Given such a momentous anniversary, it behooves us to examine the current situation in Polish medal art. As both a curator and artist actively participating in the life of the medal art community, I would like to share my reflections.

After a period of stagnation that could be observed in national medallic exhibitions, the last several years have produced a cyclical event entitled “Medal art conversations with John Paul II,” one which brings together the community of Polish medalists. Its initiator and founder was Bernard Adamowicz (dec. 2021). 2015 saw the establishment of the Polish Medal Art Association.

These two events have undoubtedly contributed to a rebirth of the Polish medal art scene. For years, the sole common initiative uniting the artists in this field was their participation in international congresses hosted by FIDEM. Before these events, individual medalists would concern themselves with solo projects.

Polish medalists beyond Poland’s borders, however, demonstrate a high degree of activity, attending the most important medal art events, such as the aforementioned FIDEM congresses, as well as taking part in international exhibitions and competitions. They have garnered numerous prestigious awards and distinctions.

What trends can be observed in Polish medal art? Unquestionably, it still maintains the high standards of classical medal art, which are founded upon cooperation with so-called patrons – the various institutions for which thematic medals are produced. For many years it has been apparent that a medal is also a pretext for an authorial statement, one that is not tied to the themes imposed by exhibitions or competitions. It is a space not only for reflecting upon individually chosen themes, but also for redefining the essence of the medal itself, something to be achieved through its form and by using various materials and technologies. Increasingly, one can observe a transformation of form towards the so-called “medallic object,” one situated on the border between medals and small-form sculptures. Currently, Polish medal art defies its classical definition. In this domain, one can find tendencies present in other fields of contemporary art. The question remains whether this path will encourage young artists to express themselves within the realms of this unique and interesting field.

dr. hab. Sebastian Mikołajczak

Artist, professor at the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń
Curator of the XI th Baltic Medal Triennial in Poland

SEBASTIAN MIKOŁAJCZAK



500 years for the medal art
in Lithuania and Poland. 2020
Brass, cast, Ø 140 mm



Gift. 2021
Steel, wood, cast, Ø 120 mm

ANNA PASKAL



Dyptych: The way and the truth and the life. 2021
Obverse, reverse. Brass, cast, 95 × 95 mm

GRZEGORZ MAŚLEWSKI



The Line. 2021
Brass, cast, 110 × 105 mm

PAWEŁ OTWINOWSKI



Full moon. 2021
Aluminium, cast, Ø 120 mm

PAWEŁ PIETRAS



At work. 2021
Tombac, silver-plated, struck, 70 mm

MACIEJ WIERZBICKI



Axis. 2021
Stone, steel, 160 x 165 mm

STANISŁAW KOŚMIŃSKI



Art Medal. 2021
Brass, cast, Ø 150 mm



Coronation. 2021
Wood, 150 × 150 mm

HANNA JELONEK



First day of spring. 2021
Bronze, stone, cast, 130 × 135 mm

KRZYSZTOF MAZUR



V. 2021
Polychrome plywood, 150 × 100 mm

PIOTR TOŁOCZKO



500 years for the medal art in Poland and Lithuania. 2021
Steel, 140 × 80 mm

MONIKA MOLEND



Strength in unity. 2018
Metal, glass, wood, mechanism, light, Ø 135 mm

IWONA LANGOWSKA



In memory of the tsunami. 2011
Aluminium, cast, 140 × 140 mm

JOANNA BEBARSKA



"4, 9, 3..." 2021
Steel, 150 × 150 mm

SŁAWOMIR BIERNAT



Distance I. 2021
Glass, copper, 150 × 150 mm

MATEUSZ DWORSKI



Myrtle. 2021
Bronze, cast, 160 × 80 mm

TADEUSZ TCHÓRZEWSKI



COVID 2020. Memory Bernard Adamowicz. 2020
Plaster, cast, 200 × 110 mm

MAJID JAMMOUL



Obsession of Eternity. 2019
Bronze, cast, Ø 156 mm



In Homage of Zaha Hadid. 2018
Bronze, cast, Ø 146 mm

EWA OLSZEWSKA-BORYS



Stephen Hawking. 2021
Obverse, reverse. Bronze, cast, 120 × 120 mm

EWA JANUS



Epitaph. 2018
Bronze, cast, Ø 150 mm

MAGDALENA DOBRUCKA



Fear. 2020
Bronze, cast, patinated, 160 × 160 mm

TOMASZ BIELECKI



Great silence. 2021
Obverse, reverse. Iron, bronze, brass, Ø 125 mm

STANISŁAW CUKIER



Saint Anne with Madonna and Child. 2020
Bronze, cast, patinated, 140 × 110 mm



Wanda. 2018
Bronze, cast, patinated, 115 × 97 mm

ANNA WĄTRÓBSKA-WDOWIARSKA



Eos. 2018
Bronze, cast, Ø 150 mm

ROBERT KOTOWICZ



60 years of the Castle Museum in Malbork. 2021
Tombac, silver-plated, struck, Ø 90 mm

URSZULA WALERZAK



The spirit does not go out. 2017
Bronze, cast, patinated, Ø 150 mm

JACEK DWORSKI



Egon Schiele. 2017
Bronze, cast, 150 × 95 mm

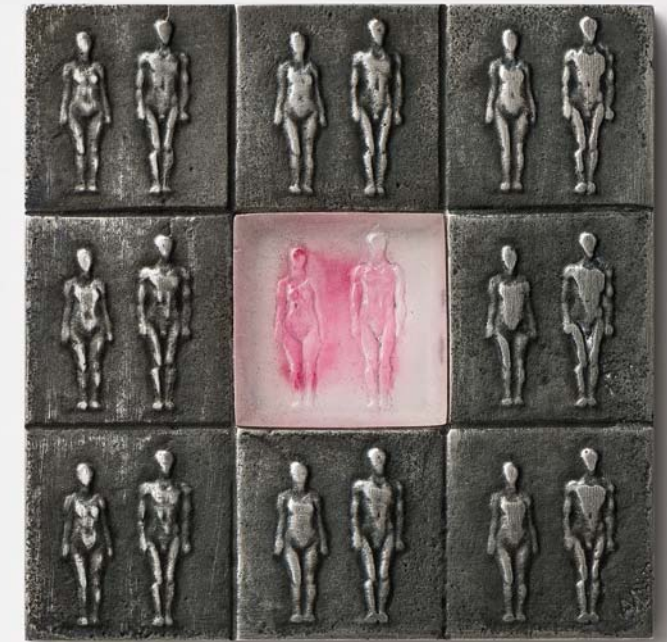
JAN SZCZYPKA



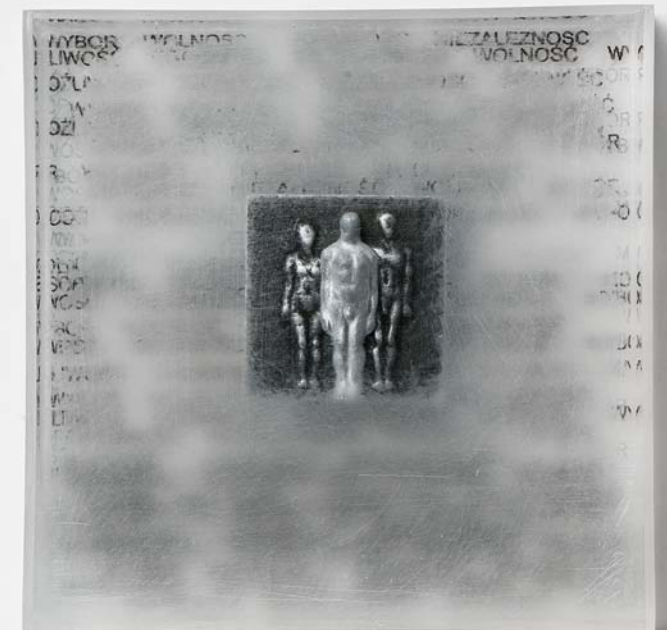
Triptych: Exploration. 2021
Basalt cast, 120 × 90 mm



ALICJA MAJEWSKA

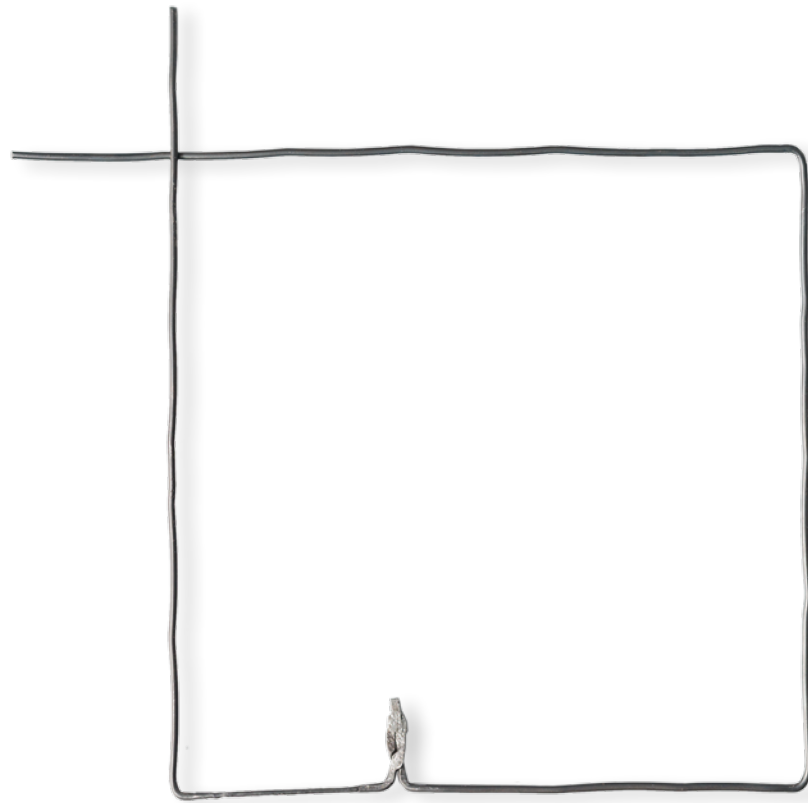


Selection 1. 2021
Aluminium, epoxy resin,
120 × 120 mm

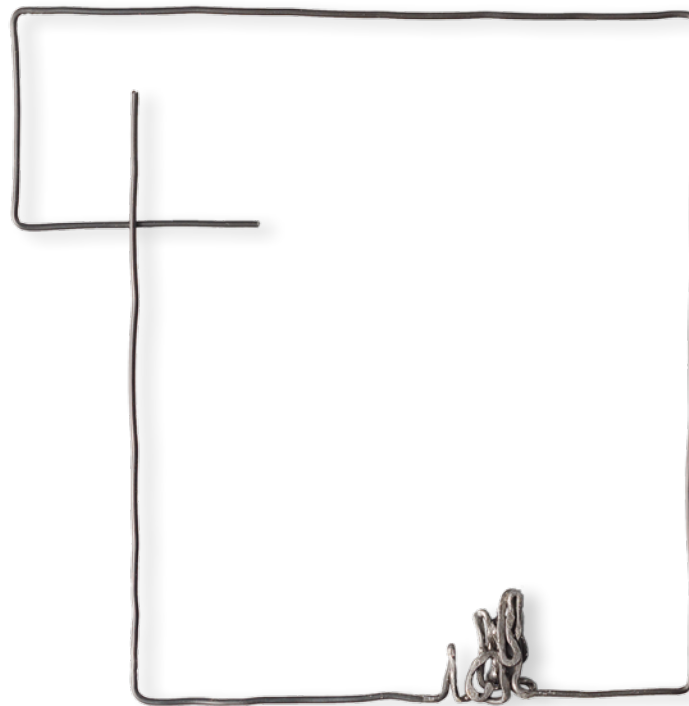


Selection 2. 2021
Aluminium, epoxy resin,
120 × 120 mm

ANDRZEJ BORCZ



Rand 2. 2021
Steel, 155 × 155 mm



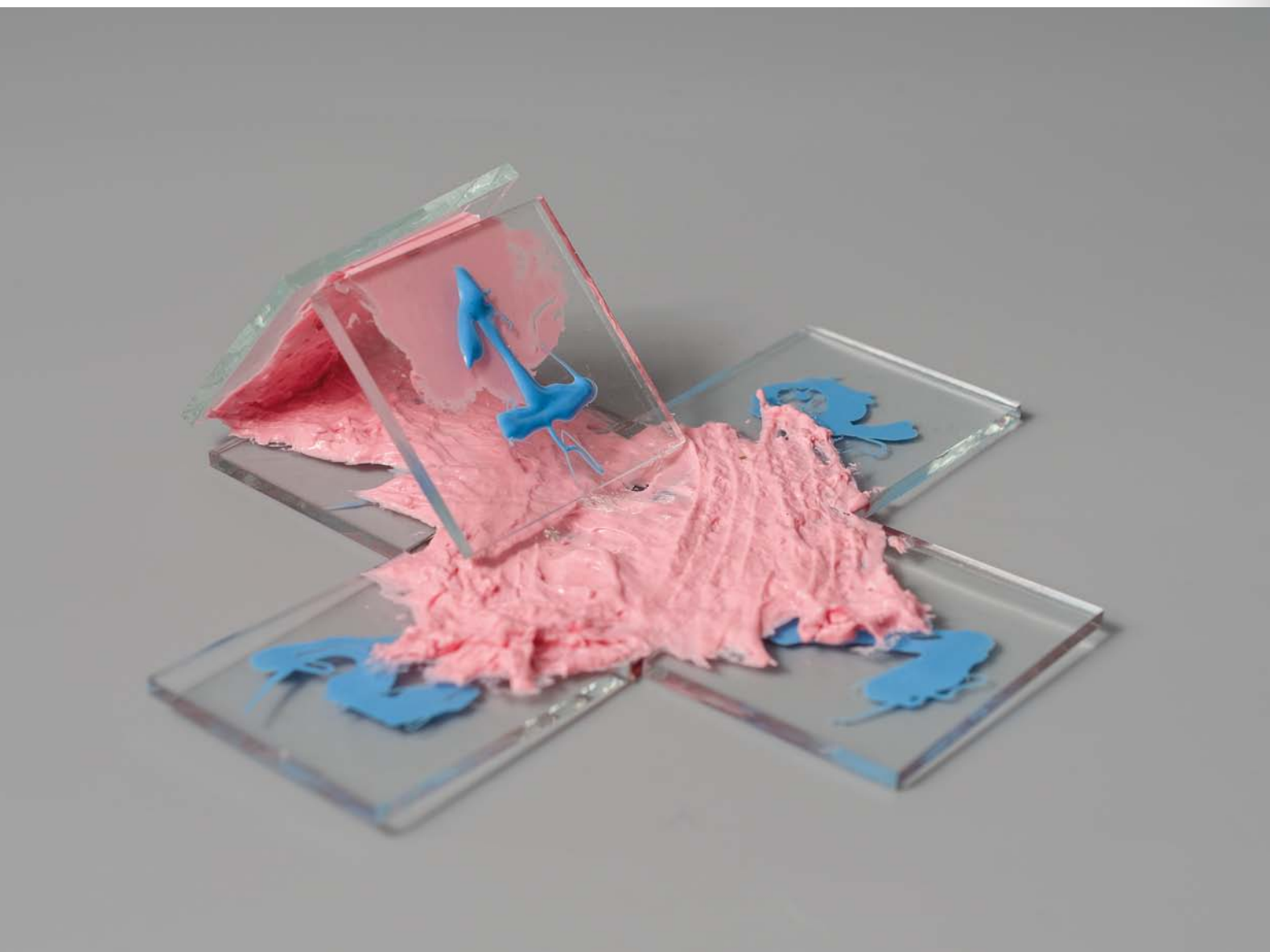
Rand 3. 2021
Steel, 145 × 145 mm

KATARZYNA ADASZEWSKA



What do we want to keep in memories? 2021
Aluminium, cast, 140 × 140 mm

BARTŁOMIEJ SCHMIDT



Cross. 2021
Glass, silicone, 150 × 150 mm

ALEKSANDER PASKAL



Duality. 2021
Obverse, reverse. Brass, cast, Ø 120 mm

SWEDEN



For the second time Sweden received a very generous invitation to participate as a guest at the XI Baltic Medal Triennial. The Swedish group of art medallists is grateful to join the Celebrations with you during this very special time at the Medal Art in Lithuania and Poland – 500 Years' Anniversary.

We are neighbouring countries so close to each other geographically, connected in history and tradition, with many interests in common. The previous year, 2020 left a significant mark on our lives. The feelings of separation and loss held us tight, yet the urge to strengthen our bonds grew more vivid and many of us found new ways to communicate and exchange ideas.

In the long history of medal making, these small artefacts had the power to reflect the time in which they were created. Their concentrated content is sealed; we collect and keep them with care. On the instant when we put them in a context, they can guide us and open up perspective. As capsules of guarded moments, they are treasures of future understanding and they mark important events. Last but not least, let us not forget their magical and obvious capacity to awaken pure joy and amazement.

The Swedish artists, who are represented here, have each one looked at the given theme of History from their different viewpoints.

Lena Lervik, who so often highlights motherhood and birth, this time has chosen to illustrate how death and life are closely linked. See the moving transition, when the past, with a certain resistance hands over the newly born in: *Death holds the future in its grip*.

On the other hand, to complete the circle: the *Annunciation*, where the artist shows us the overwhelming growing hope, which we as human beings need to remind ourselves of.

We can perceive another interpretation in Thomas Qvarsebo's work: *To tell a story*, as a dialogue between two parties. One made of iron and the other – of stainless steel, they bear a witness, as individual versions in a diptych. It is these small variations that are the driving force in how a narrative is spread and history develops.

To commemorate the congenial 500th Anniversary, which so aptly deals with the interrelated topic of offering medals, Kerstin Östberg made a personal portrait of *Katarzyna Jagiellonka*, as an honour to our alliances.

It is a small link in the long chain of the noble custom to mark out significant events. Catherine Jagiellon was born in Krakow, Poland 1526. She was one of the daughters of Sigismund I the Old and Bona Sforza d'Aragona. With this intermixture of influences at the time, culture grew and habits spread quickly. In Italy they already had a developed medal tradition and her mother put it in practise in her new family union. Catherine married the Swedish King Johan III, in Vilnius, Lithuania, and they later lived in Finland and Sweden. She was buried in Uppsala 1583. The quote engraved on the medal: *NEMO NISI MORS, No one but death, shall separate us*, is taken from her betrothal ring, which suggests that sometimes royal alliances can deepen to something beyond pure politics.

The other medal: *Under the same firmament*, depicts the human conditions under which we are living. We are embraced by the same circumstances of existence. We are alone as individuals, but together under the same sky. It is the firmament that also creates order and defines the duality of night and day.

While leaving our imprints, some conscious, others not, we are a part of a bigger connection in life. There are those who prepare for fight and some are preys of flight with vigilant eyes. We try to read the marks around us to make a pattern. Gustav Hedengren Wirsén has cast two medals in concrete to show the relation between the human and nature: *Cloven* and *Capsule*, the hoof and its footprint.

What is in our power as makers and artists to accomplish? We can be creators in our own sake, but in the end we are not working in a void but always in a kind of interrelated function. Can we protect what we do for good purposes so that it will not be used in a harmful way? Maybe we need contact with others to be alert, see the signs and not lose ourselves in the big labyrinth we have made as a refuge with our own hands. Christian Wirsén has cast his medal and named it *Phylax*, the protector of the maze.

Let us not break that fine red line which guides us. We have a legacy to take care of that keeps us together through past and present. Let us soon meet again!

Thank you for making this exhibition and union possible.

Kerstin Östberg, artist, engraver

CHRISTIAN WIRSÉN



Phylax. 2021
Obverse, reverse. Plaster, cast, 75 × 75 mm

KERSTIN ÖSTBERG



Katarzyna Jagiellonka. 2021
Copper, bark, sweet water pearls, leather, engraved, fabricated, 70 × 50 mm



Under the same firmament. 2020
Blue and white ceramic, copper, engraved, 70 × 70 mm

GUSTAV HEDENGREN WIRSÉN



Diptych: Capsule. 2021
Concrete, 120 × 120 mm



Cloven. 2021
Concrete, 85 × 30 mm

LENA LERVIK



The year Zero; Annunciation. 2017
Bronze, cast, 70 × 70 mm



The year 2020; Death holds the future in its grip. 2018–2020
Bronze, cast, 70 × 70 mm

THOMAS QVARSEBO



Diptych: To tell a story A. 2020
Iron, cast, 120 × 140 mm



To tell a story B. 2020
Stainless steel, cast, 130 × 130 mm

LATVIA



The global events of the past year have stirred up an incredibly wide array of emotions in us: fear, uncertainty, hope, as well as acceptance of the situation, maintaining closer bonds with our families or a monologue with oneself. Because of the virus the ruthless rhythm, rush and market greediness came to a halt. However, the freedom of thought and artists' work and the creation of artworks have not stopped. 15 authors represent Latvia in the 11th Baltic Medal Triennial, showcasing 32 pieces of art.

Nature is generous and an artist can perceive and find its gifts to later try and emulate them, as they are absolutely worth imitating, worth thinking about. That is how the work of Antra Urtāne who reproduces budding leaves in brass could be described. Ģirts Burvis, in turn, is one of the artists who brings landscape into medal making: "On the Mountain of Lambs" combines glass and stone, two diametrically opposed materials. It is a groundbreaking combination not only for the author, but also for the whole of Latvian medal making, as glass has not previously been used in reproducing landscape elements, moreover, not in unity with stone. Vija Dzintare has long been familiar with the corporeal nature of bronze and this material reflects her creative will in the images and texture of heavenly horses. Jānis Anmanis uses ceramofix as his material to reflect on mythical, fairytale creatures in order to not only understand his own emotional personality, but also to cognize the world.

The flight of Nikifs's fantasy cannot be stopped quite as easily as that of airplanes. The passion of the artist when he is excited by the sculptural creation process results in the reflections of unforgettable, associative images such as the beaked mask of a plague doctor or crows and a black sun. Edgars Grīnfelds, in his turn, often deals with difficult subjects. This time one can catch glimpses of expressions such as "give never the wolf the wether to keep" and "don't cut the bough you are standing on" in his medal "Corrupt".

The soulful wish for classical values is always present in the medals of Andris Bērziņš and this time he has portrayed the Latvian poet Rainis, as well as the Italian composer Giuseppe Verdi. The style of Nellija Skujeniece, in turn, creates space for a quiet elegy, an empathic rebirth of images from the paintings of Latvian painter Ģederts Eliass into the moulding of her medal. Noble content also often features in the work of Inese Nātriņa: it touches on the ever-topical subject of generations and shows unfading interest in other creative personalities. The beautiful "Bath-House" models are regular research objects for Zigurds Galuns as he creates new shapes.

It is not without a reason that Svetlana Saveljeva is called the most distinct figurative artist in Latvian medallic art: she easily creates both masterful portraits and nudes. She may just have skilfully captured the moment when the power of the microworld started gaining momentum which eventually stopped the rhythms of the macroworld. Similar associations are also echoed in the "Mutations" plaquettes by Ligita Franckeviča.

Diving deeper in the allegorical language of Bruno Strautiņš, full of possibilities for multi-layered formulations, one always notices glimpses of the author's ethical values shining upward from these depths. The works of Māra Mickēviča, even though they are laconic in form, are always well-considered and philosophical.

The medal "Liberation of Jelgava 21.11.1919" by Jānis Strupulis shows our national features and the touch of an actual historical situation is present in it; the plaque "Disconnection", in turn, can be characterized as the sensuality of creating shapes.

If every viewer were also familiar with the story behind the subject matter and the charm of the people portrayed, their gain would surely be double. *Ars gratia artis.*

Mg. art. Vineta Skalberga
curator of the exhibitions and expositions
of the Bauska Castle Museum

ANDRIS BĒRZIŅŠ



Giuseppe Verdi. 2019
Bronze, cast, Ø 105 mm



Poet Rainis. 2020
Bronze, cast, Ø 125 mm

NELLIJA SKUJENIECE



Gederts Eliass. Autumn. 2017
Bronze, cast, 57 × 82 mm



Gederts Eliass. Nude. 2017
Bronze, cast, 105 × 84 mm

GIRTS BURVIS



On the Mountain of Lambs. 2021
Glass, stone, 75 × 75 mm



The Story of Smaižu Church. 2021
Glass, stainless steel, 85 × 85 mm

VIJA DZINTARE



Poet Leons Briedis. 2021
Bronze, cast, 95 × 70 mm



Sky Horses. 2020
Bronze, cast, 68 × 90 mm

ZIGURDS GALUNS



Bath-House. 2017
Wood, 118 × 68 mm



Pygmalion. 2017
Wood, 118 × 68 mm

EDGARS GRĪNFELDS



Rihards Zarriņš 150. 2019
Brass, cast, Ø 100 mm



Corrupt. 2018
Bronze, cast, 130 × 90 mm

JĀNIS STRUPULIS



Liberation of Jelgava 21.11.1919. 2019
Brass, struck, Ø 40 mm



Disconnection. 2019
Bronze, cast, Ø 74 mm

INESE NĀTRIŅA



Daina Riņķe. 2019
Bronze, cast, Ø 52 mm



Mother and Daughter. 2017
Bronze, cast, Ø 95 mm

JĀNIS ANMANIS



Myth. 2018
Ceramofix, 79 × 77 mm



Fairy-tale. 2019
Ceramofix, 84 × 88 mm

NIKIFS



Masking. 2020
Acrylic, 55 × 100 mm



Boat of the Black Sun. 2020
Acrylic, vinyl, 90 × 100 mm

SVETLANA SAVEĻJEVA

Space Cleaner. 2020
Bronze, cast, 140 × 100 mm



Microworld is attacking. 2020
Bronze, cast, 115 × 90 mm

LIGITA FRANCKEVIČA



Mutations I. 2019
Iron, cast, 100 × 100 mm



Mutations IV. 2019
Iron, cast, 104 × 100 mm

MĀRA MICKĒVIČA



Power of Sun. 2021
Terracotta, 95 × 65 mm



Sitting at Home. 2021
Terracotta, 95 × 80 mm

BRUNO STRAUTIŅŠ



The Bullet never returns. 2020
Bronze, cast, 95 × 80 mm



The Word never returns. 2020
Bronze, cast, 95 × 80 mm

ANTRA URTĀNE



The Light of Fireflies. 2020
Bronze, cast, Ø 60 mm



Re-flexion I. 2020
Brass, cast, Ø 55 mm



Re-flexion II. 2020
Brass, cast, Ø 50 mm

LECTURES ACCOMPANYING THE EXHIBITION



Medal commemorating the birth of Sigmund II Augustus. 1520

Unknown polish artist. Silver, Ø 28 mm, 11.4 g.
Collection of the National Museum in Warsaw, inv. no. NPO 36496 MNW.
Photo credit: Piot Ligier/NMW

The beginning of medal art in the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in 16th century

The beginning of the art of the medal is related with the first-born Sigismund II Augustus (1548 – 1557) of the King of Poland and the Grand Duke of Lithuania Sigismund I the Old (1506–1548) and his second wife Bona Sforza (1518–1557), who brought a lot of innovations popular in Europe to the royal court. In 1520 when the heir was born, silver medal was made for the occasion. On the obverse of the medal Revelation to the Saint Virgin Mary is depicted. The Latin legend says that the medal was ordered by the King of Poland Sigismund I the Old. On the reverse there is a decorative Greek cross, date of birth of the Prince – the 1st August 1520 and an inscription expressing gratitude for the birth of the son. The manner of the iconography of the medal is more family-like than official. In general, medals dedicated for the birth of the ruler are quite rare. Its religious iconography is also exceptional. Apart from religious, there was also political message stating that the Queen gave birth to the male heir to whom the crown of Poland was guaranteed. Bona Sforza desired to see her son Sigismund II Augustus as the king of Poland and the Grand Duke of Lithuania and took care that he would be elected as a ruler of the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania by the noblemen. The researchers wonder about the circumstances of the designing of the medal, as at that time in Krakow there were no masters who could have made medals of such small size (Ø 27.5 mm). Four copies of this medal, made later, are known (Krakow, Czapski collection; Wrocław, Ossolineum; the National Museum in Poznań; the National Museum in Warsaw).

The King of Poland and the Duke of Lithuania became the main patron of medals, thus most of the first Lithuanian and Polish medals are dedicated to the ruler. In 1526 by the invitation of Chancellor Krzysztof Szydłowiecki the pioneer of the Renaissance medals German Hans Schwarz (1492–1530?) arrived in Poland. He designed a one-sided portrait medal of the chancellor and five medals of Sigismund I the Old. When the King was residing in Gdansk, the artist made several sketches of the ruler which were used for the models of medals. On the medals we can see the bust



The medal of Sigismund I the Old dedicated to commemorate the victory in the Battle of Orsha in 1514

The artist of the original unknown.
The copy of artist Józef Majnert of the 19th century.
Iron, black paint, Ø 50 mm. National Museum of Lithuania,
inv. no. M 693. Photographer Gediminas Trečiokas

of the King with the profile towards right; the ruler is depicted with a mantle, the chain of the Order of the Golden Fleece, the head is covered with a cap or wreath. According to Marian Gumowski, the famous researcher of medals, the author of the Latin texts could have been Polish writer and poet, Archbishop Andrzej Krzycki (1482–1537). It is likely that he had also stayed with the royal escort in Gdansk. One of the medals was made of gold, its copy was sent to the humanist of the Netherlands, philosopher Erasmus of Rotterdam (1469–1536), who kept in touch with Sigismund I the



The medal for the 60th anniversary of Sigismund I the Old. 1527

Artist Hans Schwarz. The copy of the 19th century. Bronze, Ø 72 mm.
National Museum of Lithuania, inv. no. M 742. Photographer Gediminas Trečiokas

Old, by the banker and the advisor of the monarch Seweryn Boner (1486–1549). Very few original medals made by H. Schwarz survived. Most of the medals of the artist, which are in museums, were made later (Poznań; the Royal Castle in Warsaw; National Museum in Warsaw; M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art; the National Museum of Lithuania).

Around 1532 the Italian sculptor and medallist Giovanni Maria Mosca (Padovano; about 1493–1574) arrived at the royal court of Poland. In 1532 he designed not only portrait medals of the king, but also other members of the royal family. In the series of four double-sided medals made of bronze, the artist depicted ornate busts of King Sigismund I the Old, Queen Bona Sforza, twelve-year-old son Sigismund II Augustus and fourteen-year-old daughter Isabella. All depicted in profile (parents to the right, children – left). These medals are of equal size (Ø 70 mm), dated and signed. Signature of the author is in a clear site: *Iohannes Maria Patavinus F(ecit)* (*John Maria Padovanus made it*). It is interesting that the author inscribed the age of the depicted, although not all of them are exact, he youthens Bona Sforza indicating 32 years old, whereas she was about 38 at that time (born 1494). In the medal the bust of the Queen modelled in high relief, her neck is decorated with luxurious necklace, neatly combed hair is covered with a hair band. On the reverse there is a image of the artichoke with roots, stems, leaves and fruit, entangled with a ribbon. Sigismund II Augustus is depicted with a mantle that has a wide collar and a cap, from the legend

of the obverse it can be seen that the prince is 13 years old. On the reverse a proud lion is depicted. It is likely that it is a hint to the symbolics of the Zodiac sign of the prince – Leo, which signifies power, courage and justice. The series of four double-sided original medals were gifted to the Cardinal of Milan Ippolito II D'Este (1509–1572), a famous art patron. The originals are stored in the Galleria Estense in Modena, Italy. There are also their copies in other museums. The later copies of silver and bronze medals of Bona Sforza are stored in Krakow and Berlin, the Lithuanian National Museum of Art has a copper medal, the National Museum of Lithuania – a tin medal. The silver medal of Sigismund II Augustus is stored in Poznań, and the tin version, at the top of which there is a hole for hanging – in the National Museum of Lithuania.

The Italian engraver, goldsmith Giovanni Giacomo Caraglio (about 1505–1565), by the invitation of Sigismund I the Old and Bona Sforza worked in Vilnius in 1538–1539. From 1539 he lived in Krakow. He created for Bona Sforza a medallion (1554), also golden jewellery, carvings and cameos. He designed cameos to Sigismund II Augustus and Barbara Radziwiłł; the latter is her only known realistic portrait designed from life (1550). Four medals created by him are to be mentioned: Sigismund I the Old (1538), the canon of Vilnius Alessandro Pessenti (1539), Bona Sforza (1546) and the medal of Sigismund II Augustus (without date indicated). On the latter portrait the characteristics are vivid. On this very decorative medal, bust of the



Bona Sforza. 1532

Artist Giovanni Maria Mosca (Padovano). The copy of the 19th – early 20th century (?). Tin, Ø 65.2 mm.
National Museum of Lithuania, inv. no. GRD 102732. Photographer Gediminas Trečiokas



Sigismund II Augustus. 1532

Artist Giovanni Maria Mosca (Padovano). The copy of the 19th century (?). Tin, Ø 69 mm.
National Museum of Lithuania, inv. no. M 743. Photographer Gediminas Trečiokas

sovereign is depicted with elaborate armour suit. The armour is decorated with shields of coat of arms: on the left – the Eagle of Poland, right – Knight of Lithuania. On the neck there is a chain of the Order of the Golden Fleece, on the head is sitting a crown. On the reverse is depicted a personified figure of Religion turning left with a cup in the left hand, the forefinger of the right hand is directed upwards. Two original golden medals of Sigismund I the Old are known (the

National Library of France; Wrocław, Ossolineum); silver (Hermitage). The later copies were made in iron (Poznań), as well as silver (Hermitage) and bronze (Poznań; M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art) the medals of Sigismund II Augustus.

In 1548 the medal of Sigismund II Augustus was designed by the Italian artist Dominicus Venetus (1500–1564), at that moment having worked in Krakow. On the obverse of the medal, portrait of the young monarch is

**Sigismund II Augustus. 1548**

Artist Dominicus Venetus. The copy of the 19th century (?). Copper alloy, gold-plated, engraving, Ø 52 mm.
National Museum of Lithuania, inv. no. GRD 102733. Photographer Gediminas Trečiokas

depicted with the profile to the right, to the left of it in the background the crown of the king is integrated; on the reverse there is the Eagle of Poland, the date in the legend – 1548 indicates the occasion for which the medal was dedicated. It is likely that the medal could have been ordered in occasion of the young monarch, having ascended the throne after the death of the father. Already in 1529 Sigismund II Augustus had been announced to be the grand Duke of Lithuania and elected to be the King of Poland, but he became a factual king only after the death of the father, i. e. in 1548. The original medals of bronze are very rare. Later the copies of gold were produced (Wrocław, Ossolineum), silver (Hermitage) and bronze (the Royal Castle in Warsaw; M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art, the latter is with a hole for hanging). In the National Museum of Lithuania one is stored – gold-plated copper alloy. Unfortunately, that is the only known medal of this author.

From 1561 in the court of Sigismund II Augustus, a famous Dutch engraver and medallist Steven Cornelisz van Herwijck (1530–1565/67) worked. He created an excellent cycle of one-sided medals with portraits of the royal family. Seven lead medals of Sigismund II Augustus and his third wife Catherine Habsburg, parents Sigismund I the Old and Bona Sforza, sisters Anne and Isabella and her son, the King of Hungary John Sigismund Zápolya are known, marked with the date of 1561 and signed *STE. H. F.* Faces and clothes modelled with very generalized plane are typical of these medals, as well as apt personal characteristics, the inscription in Latin is adjusted to the entire composition. The first medals were made of lead, soft material, suitable for subtle modelling. Later copies are made of bronze, silver. The lead medal of Queen Bona Sforza is in the British Museum, lead covered with copper is stored in the National Museum in Poznań, tin – in the

National Museum of Lithuania. In 1562 the medallist created medal with the bust of Sigismund II Augustus on the obverse and Rider on the reverse, but only its later copies are known (Hermitage; Poznań).

Royal families followed the example of the ruler, among whom the most influential were Radziwiłłs. The Voivode of Vilnius Mikolaj Radziwiłł the Black (1515–1565) was the first of the Lithuanian noblemen, commissioning medals. The start of his collection could have been gifted coins and medals ordered by the Prince himself. One of the first of such medals was dedicated to his five-year old son Mikolaj Krzysztof Radziwiłł the Orphan (1549–1616). That is a one-sided medal with the bust of Radziwiłł the Orphan, dated 1554. Three medals: boxwood, lead, silver – was in the numismatic collection of Radziwiłł in Berlin. The second medal of Mikolaj Krzysztof Radziwiłł the Orphan is also known (the National Museum in Krakow; the Medal Art Museum, Wrocław). On the obverse of it is the bust of the youth with the profile towards left, on the reverse there is the coat of arms of the family Radziwiłł – the Eagle. Medal of Mikolaj Radziwiłł the Black is also to be mentioned, on the obverse of which the nobleman with a long beard and an armour suit is depicted with the profile towards left. On the reverse is the coat of arms of Radziwiłł – the Eagle, below is a shield divided in four fields, above it there are three crowned helmets decorated with a lion, an eagle and a griffin (Hermitage). According to M. Gumowski, the latter two medals could have been created in 1563 while Radziwiłł the Black and his son were visiting foreign countries. The third medal is also known, dedicated to Radziwiłł the Orphan, ordered by himself, created after father's death (1565).

During the times of Sigismund II Augustus, the Vilnius Mint, apart from coins and tokens, started minting medals as well. A square medal for the commemoration

**Bona Sforza. 1561**

Artist Steven Cornelisz van Herwijck. The copy of the 19th (?) century. Tin, black paint, Ø 81 mm.
National Museum of Lithuania, inv. no. M 741. Photographer Gediminas Trečiokas

of Oswiecim and Zator annexation to Poland belongs to the engravers of the Vilnius Mint in 1563, as well as the medal of 1568 with the portrait of Sigismund II Augustus (Hermitage; the Medallion Art Museum, Wrocław).

In the first half of the 16th century medals were accessible only to nobility. The increase of the popularization of medals encouraged collecting. The first private collections started to appear. Customers and collectors were people from the court and hierarchs of the church. It is known from the inventory of the palace of Sigismund II Augustus of 1548 that the sovereign had a big medal collection which also contained the medal dedicated for Emperor Charles V, decorated with diamonds. It is a pity though that the collections in Lithuanian estates were dispersed throughout the entire world, thus we do not have a lot of medals from that period in present Lithuania.

The 11th Baltic Medal Triennial is dedicated to the beginning of medal art in the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (1520), therefore emerged an idea to also present the medals of the royal family and its court, where the history of Polish and Lithuanian medals started. In the exhibition medals made for the Polish and Lithuanian reigns Sigismund I the Old, Sigismund II Augustus and Queen Bona Sforza are exhibited. These are not original medals, but later copies from the collections of the National Museum of Lithuania.

One of them is the medal of Sigismund I the Old, dedicated for the commemoration of the victory at

the Battle of Orsha in 1514. The artist of the work is unknown, only the copy of the 19th century produced by artist Józef Majnert (1813–1879) is exhibited. On the reverse of the medal youthfully looking king Sigismund I the Old is shown with the profile towards right, dressed in fur mantle, cap and crown on the head. The inscription says that Sigismund I the Old is the King of Poland, the Grand Duke of Lithuania, Russia, Prussia, Masuria and Samogitia. On the reverse a scull on the book is shown and a burning oil lamp on it, around it there is an inscription in Polish and Latin indicating that the medal is dedicated to commemorate the victory at the Battle of Orsha in 1514 (the Royal Castle in Warsaw; M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art). In the National Museum of Lithuania the iron medal, painted black, is stored.

From the previously described medals, in the triennial the following medals are exhibited: the medal designed by artist Hans Schwarz for the 60th anniversary of Sigismund I the Old, the medals of Bona Sforza and Sigismund II Augustus from Giovanni Maria Mosca (Padovano) from the series of medals depicting the family, the medal created by Dominicus Venetus dedicated for the ascending of Sigismund II Augustus to the throne of Poland, as well as the medal for Bona Sforza by Steven Cornelisz van Herwijck.

Regina Ablėnienė

Senior museologist
at the National Museum of Lithuania



Sigismund I the Old. 1527, later recast
 Artist Hans Schenck.
 The District Museum in Toruń, accession number: MT/Md/1

Medal art in the court of the last Jagiellonians

The second marriage of the second-to-last Jagiellonian – Sigismund I the Old (born in 1467, King of Poland starting in 1518) – with Bona, an Italian princess 27 years his junior (born in 1494) from the House of Sforza, brought new and invigorating powers not only to the “old king” but also to the whole nation that had long awaited a royal descendant and heir to the kingdom, and at the same time initiated a blossoming of Polish culture and art, so great that the times of the last Jagiellonians are now called the Golden Age.

It was then that a period of dynamic development in medal art began in the Cracow court – a craft previously not cultivated in Poland – one whose beginning was marked by a small, modest coin commemorating the birth of the first and only rightful royal descendant, the last Jagiellonian, Sigismund II Augustus, on August 1st, 1520.

Several years later, in 1526, the Great Chancellor of the Crown, Krzysztof Szydłowiecki, most probably on account of the 60th anniversary of the king's birth, was looking for a medal maker who could make a portrait of the monarch. Albrecht Brandenburg, both a Polish liege and the Prince of Prussia, recommended to the Polish court the sculptor Hans Schenck “the Hideous” (Scheusslich), born around 1500 in Schneeberg, as an expert in making human likenesses in bronze, stone, and wood. In the first half of 1526, the king and chancellor resided in Malbork and Gdańsk, where they met with Prince Albert, whose entourage undoubtedly included Hans Schenck. It is believed that the artist made portrait sketches in drawings or woodcarvings of both King Sigismund and Chancellor Krzysztof Szydłowiecki, works which were later used to make gold, silver, and bronze cast medals. The medal with the



Sigismund I the Old. 1527, later recast
 Artist Hans Schwarz.
 The District Museum in Toruń, accession number: D/2024



Sigismund I the Old. 1527, later recast

Artist Giovanni Maria Mosca called Giovanni Padovano.
The District Museum in Toruń, accession number: MT/Md/2

portrait of Krzysztof Szydłowiecki bears the date of 1526 and is today known solely as a unique artefact in the St. Petersburg Hermitage. The medal with the portrait of King Sigismund I the Old bears the date 1527 and is known from the majority of the so-called later casts. Both medals are undoubtedly of the same authorship; both present portraits in-profile with a characteristic facial expression, decorated with diadems and framed identically – though in opposite directions – surrounded by a two-line inscription at the top. Both medals are one-sided.

From the year 1527 (as such a date is visible in the inscription), comes another, considerably bigger and more eye-catching two-sided medal with a portrait of King Sigismund I the Old at the age of 60 as *Father of the Fatherland and the most powerful king of both Sarmatias*. Such a titulature is inscribed on the medal, and the two Sarmatias are undoubtedly metaphorical terms for Poland and Lithuania. The inscription next to the royal portrait also says that it was made *ad vivum*; we can suppose that the king posed for the artist and himself approved of his likeness. On the reverse side there is a shield with the Polish Eagle featured in the center under the royal crown and is surrounded by four smaller shields of arms of the lands dynastically connected with Poland. This medal is unsigned, though for ages it has been attributed to Hans Schwarz (born 1492 in Augsburg – death in 1532), considered the first professional European medallist. And though today not everyone confirms that this is the work of

the Augsburg artist, it is certain that such a beautiful, representative royal medal, exquisitely finished with the closest attention to detail, could only be made by a very distinguished medallist. Among the known copies of this medal, cast in silver and chiseled, there are also old gilded specimens with the royal face only left in the color of silver.

1532 saw the arrival of the Italian artist Giovanni Maria Mosca – known as Padovano (born 1493 in Padua, died in 1574 in Cracow), who was invited to Poland by the Queen Bona. He completed a series of four portrait medals: Sigismund I the Old, Queen Bona Sforza, Prince Sigismund II Augustus and Princess Isabella, all with allegorical representations on the reverses, dated 1532 and signed JOHANNES MARIA PATAVINVS F[ecit]. These works, the only known medal works by this artist, are characterized by high relief and an outstandingly sculptural method of modelling. For several decades he was active in Poland as a sculptor and as an architect and builder. In 1541 he made a wax model of Cracow intended for the planned expansion of the city.

The royal court of Wawel Castle in Cracow was not the only place where medal art blossomed – the well-organized royal mints were also such places, where, during the reign of Sigismund I the Old, great changes took place. On the stamps of coins, raw Gothic images were replaced with Renaissance-style reliefs, composed with great attention to detail. Furthermore, for the first time, in 1528, a royal portrait was placed on a coin, and although the first images still had late-Gothic features,



Sigismund II Augustus. 1532, later recast

Artist Giovanni Maria Mosca called Giovanni Padovano.
The District Museum in Toruń, accession number: D/2023

they quickly took on a Renaissance-like lightness. It should also be noted that the composition of the reverse – with the coat-of-arms shields of the medal of 1527 described above – is repeated on the reverses of the crown's 6 groschen coins struck in Cracow in 1528 and 1529. It can be seen quite clearly that the coin stamps were engraved, if not by eminent medal artists, then by engravers educated well in the craft. Maciej Schilling is considered the first Polish medal artist (probably born in 1510, died in 1560), who was director of the Toruń mint starting in 1529, and later, of the Gdańsk mint. In 1533 in Toruń, he struck a medal thaler with portraits of the "old" and the young king. The issue was repeated in 1540, changing the portrait of Sigismund II August and additionally putting a new date on the sides of this portrait.

Several years later, in 1548, the accession of Sigismund II Augustus to the Polish throne was commemorated by a medal made by Dominicus Venetus – Dominic of Venice, an artist identified as the Venetian painter Domenico Campagnola (1500-1564), although the correctness of this identification does not seem certain to everyone, and the author of the medal is now considered a historically elusive figure. It is believed that the medal was produced at the behest of Queen Bona, although this fact, too, has not been confirmed by sources.

The most eminent artist-medallist of the court of the last Jagiellonians, one who was also a gem-cutter, goldsmith, and engraver, was Giovanni Giacompo Caraglio



of Verona or Parma (born in 1505, died in Cracow in 1565). Before arriving in Poland in 1538, he was active in Rome and Venice and achieved fame as an engraver who made copper engravings according to the paintings of Italian masters, such as Raphael and Titian. In Poland he worked as a medallist, gem-cutter, and goldsmith. In 1538 he created portrait medals of Sigismund I the Old and Queen Bona Sforza (the latter lost to this day), unsigned, cast in gold, likely to celebrate the engagement of Sigismund II Augustus to the Austrian Archduchess Elisabeth (16th of June 1538). According to tradition, these medals were to be given to royal guests at the time, and the gold ones were supposed to have come from Elisabeth's dowry – 30,000 ducats sent to Poland. Another medal of Queen Bona, also unsigned but undoubtedly attributed to Caraglio, bears the date 1546. Although it is known only in later casts, its craftsmanship is marked by "a great goldsmith-like treatment of the object... which inclines us to believe that it is in Caraglio and not in anyone else that we should seek the author of this work" (M. Gumowski). In 1552 the artist was granted citizenship of Cracow, and the Parliament in Piotrków conferred ennoblement upon him and added a gold-crowned lion on a red field to the old family's coat of arms. This was an opportunity for the artist to thank King Sigismund II Augustus with a beautiful gold (?) medal, having on its obverse the bust of the king wearing a crown and a decorative Renaissance plate armour, surrounded by a wreath and an inscription with the king's name, his royal title, and the



Sigismund II Augustus. 1548, later recast
Artist Giovanni Giacompo Caraglio.
The District Museum in Toruń, accession number: MT/Md/5

date 1552. On the reverse of the medal, under the crown, a shield with the Polish Eagle and four smaller shields of arms can be seen, surrounded by a wreath and the inscription: SI DEVS PRO NOBIS QVIS CONTRA NOS. This inscription may refer to the unfortunate gifting of the rifle during Sigismund II Augustus' visit to Prince Albrecht of Prussia in 1552, when the king luckily avoided an accident. It is possible that Prince Albrecht commissioned the artist to make the medal in order to defuse this incident diplomatically. Another work of Giovanni Giacompo Caraglio, unfortunately unsigned as well, is a medal with an eye-catching, Renaissance-style portrait of Sigismund II Augustus on the obverse and a personification of Faith on the reverse. The portrait of the king refers to the ancient image of Alexander the Great by the chisel of Lysippus, whose description we know thanks to Pliny. The king, with eyes turned upwards "to Olympus," is Hercules, whose strength is emphasized by the armlet in the shape of a lion's paw. The symbolism of the reverse remains a matter of conjecture. The medal has no date, but was probably created around 1554. All the artist's works are distinguished by their great craftsmanship and finesse. It bears repeating that the medals of this artist were created only occasionally and that his main activity for the royal courts related to glyptics, or the carving of cameos in precious stones and perhaps gemstones.

The Dutch sculptor, medallist and gem-cutter Steven van Herwijck (born in 1530 in Utrecht, died in 1567 in London; also formerly known as van Holland) briefly

visited the court of Sigismund II Augustus in 1561, presumably in Vilnius. He made a series of seven one-sided medals with portraits of the king and his family. These are the portraits of Sigismund I the Old, Sigismund II Augustus, his mother Bona Sforza, his wife Catherine Habsburg, his sisters Isabella and Anna Jagiellon, John Sigismund Zapolya, King of Hungary, and Isabella's spouse. The portraits of Sigismund II Augustus and Jan Zapolya were probably made by the artist from life sittings. The remaining five portraits were created because of miniatures painted by Lucas Cranach the Younger, or were made in his workshop around the year 1556. The portraits of Sigismund II Augustus and Catherine Habsburg were in later times combined into one two-sided medal.

Today, the medal works described above are not known to us in their original form. These works have been preserved mainly in so-called later recasts, not always close to their period of origin. As secondary casts not chiseled by the artist's hand, they do not convey the majesty of the originals. Nevertheless, they demonstrate the extremely high level of artistry that foreign artists bestowed upon the beginnings of medal art in Poland, artists who gladly visited Poland in the 16th century thanks to the patronage of the last Jagiellonians and Queen Bona Sforza.

Tomasz Bylicki

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Former custodian and manager of the Numismatic Collection of the State Mint

The Radziwiłł Princes in the Medals of Sebastian Dadler

The largest group of Lithuanian medals from the period of 16th–20th centuries contain medals of the family of Princes Radziwiłł. Most of the medals of the Radziwiłłs are extremely rare and are protected in the most famous museums of Poland, Russia and Lithuania. Four medals can be distinguished from the collection of the medals of the Radziwiłłs which were designed by one of the most famous Baroque medallist Sebastian Dadler (1586 in Strasbourg – 1657 in Hamburg). His creations are best known from the work *Sebastian Dadler, medalier gdański XVII wieku* (Gdańsk, 1962) of the Polish art researcher of medals Adam Więcek (1923–2002). Dadler created three medals which were commissioned by the prominent military and Evangelical Reformed church figures of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania – the princes of Biržai and Dubingiai, Krzysztof Radziwiłł (1585 in Biržai – 1640 in Svėdasai) and his son Janusz II Radziwiłł (1612 in Papilys – 1655 in Tykocin). (1). We can see Krzysztof Radziwiłł in one more medal commissioned by the court of King Władysław IV Vasa (1632–1648). These medals, celebrating victories were called *nummus triumphalis* (victory coin).

The political activity of Krzysztof Radziwiłł and Janusz Radziwiłł coincided with the period of the reign of the Kings Vasa, which distinguishes itself with a wide issuing of medals, – it was generalized by the Polish scientist Maria Stahr in the study *Medale Wazów w Polsce. 1587–1668* (Wrocław, Warszawa, Kraków, 1990) in which three medals of Radziwiłłs of our topic are described. The iconography of the two medals of Janusz Radziwiłł was also analyzed by the Polish historian Henryk Wisner in his monograph dedicated to the Prince (2). The investigations of the Lithuanian art historians are also used.

In this article the descriptions of medals are provided and the rich language of symbols of Sebastian Dadler helps to better understand the political programs of Krzysztof Radziwiłł and Janusz Radziwiłł. The author notes that the medals of Janusz Radziwiłł were carrying a message of the independent Grand Duchy of Lithuania what had not been highlighted before by his contemporaries. That is why these small art monuments distinguish themselves from the heritage of medals dedicated to the famous Radziwiłł family.



Medal of Krzysztof Radziwiłł commemorating the victory at Smolensk, 1634

At the bottom of the obverse is the signature: S – D. Silver, Ø 60 mm, weight – 90.55 g. M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art, inv. no. Nn 52582 (A9 8002). From the collection of Aleksandras Mykolas Račkus. Photographer Audrius Kapčius



Medal of the victory at Smolensk, peace treaty with Sweden and truce with Turkey, 1636

At the bottom of the obverse is the signature: S D. Silver, Ø 79 mm, weight – 147.13 g. National Museum of Lithuania, inv. no. GRD 102769. From the collection of Edmundas Armoška. Photographer Gediminas Trečiokas

Krzysztof Radziwiłł – 1615–1635 the Field Hetman of Lithuania, 1635–1640 the Grand Hetman of Lithuania, 1633–1640 the Voivode of Vilnius. He distinguished himself as a talented military commander in the battles with the Swedish in Livonia and in war with Moscow for Smolensk. All his life he especially supported Evangelical Reformed church. The medals dedicated for Krzysztof Radziwiłł are also known, created by other authors in 1603 and 1626.

Medal of Krzysztof Radziwiłł commemorating the victory at Smolensk, 1634

The occurrence of the medal is related to the war of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania with the Grand Duchy of Moscow for Smolensk. The ideological concept of the medal was prepared together with Krzysztof Radziwiłł participating, based on the celebration of merits of the King Wladislaw IV Vasa, at the same time revealing his own role. On the obverse Wladislaw IV Vasa is depicted as the victorious warrior and the emperor. At the feet of the King there is an inscription: *VINCERE ET SERVARE EOSDEM. HOC OPUS EST (Defeat and protect them. There is such a necessity)*. The battle field at Smolensk is depicted in allegoric form. Lightning, stone hail and eagles are attacking the escaping enemy horsemen. The biggest eagle with a crown symbolizes Wladislaw IV Vasa. The horseman separately riding after the chase is

with a raised sword; it is considered that the Hetman of Lithuania Krzysztof Radziwiłł is depicted here.

A laurel wreath encircles the eulogistic record: *To invincible Vladislav IV, the King of Poland and Sweden, the Grand Duke of Lithuania, reigning and successfully participating, Smolensk was freed from encirclement with the intelligence and active actions of the brave Prince Krzysztof Radziwiłł, the Duke of Holy Roman Empire, the Voivode of Vilnius. The encircling Muscovites and the army of strangers, encircled from the outside, gave up, the camp occupied and weaponry taken away. Only thanks to the special kindness of the winners it was allowed to remain alive and to freely come back to the family; Anno Domini 1634 (3).*

Medal of the victory at Smolensk, peace treaty with Sweden and truce with Turkey, 1636

After a couple of years passed, the royal court of the King Wladislaw IV Vasa ordered to design a triumphal medal by Sebastian Dadler on which the most important victories of Wladislaw IV Vasa would be commemorated which have been achieved in war with Russia, as well as peace treaty with Sweden and truce with Turkey.

The obverse is dedicated to the capitulation of the Moscow army at Smolensk. Near the mounted Wladislaw IV Vasa, the Field Hetman of Lithuania



Solemn welcome of Janusz Radziwiłł near the sobor of St. Sophia in Kyiv, 1651

Litograph. After the drawing of Abraham Westervelt. Paper, 168 × 258 (300 × 400) mm. National Museum of Lithuania, inv. no. IMik 1756

Krzysztof Radziwiłł is depicted. The humble commanders of the defeated army are giving honor to them. The inscription says: *With the help of the best supreme God, the army of Wladislaw IV, the King of Poland and Sweden, achieved victory and liberated Smolensk from encirclement. The Muscovites were captured, their dukes laid flags [to the winners]*.

On the other side of the medal, themes of the Swedish and Turkish are related. The inscription is also related with the eulogistic portrait of the horseman: *Respected both in war and peace*. Wladislaw IV Vasa is depicted as the winner and peacemaker. At the bottom is the date – 1636 (4).

Janusz Radziwiłł – 1646–1653 the chief of Samogitia, 1646–1654 the Field Hetman of Lithuania, 1653–1655 the Voivode of Vilnius, 1654–1655 the Grand Hetman of Lithuania. The commander of the Lithuanian army in the war of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and Russia. He led the army of Lithuania while suppressing the Ukrainian Cossack uprising led by Bohdan Khmelnytsky. Saving the statehood of Lithuania, he took part in signing the Treaty of Kėdainiai in 1655.

Medal of Janusz Radziwiłł, commemorating the recapture of Kyiv, 1651

Having achieved victory against the Cossacks in the Battle of Loyew, on the 6th of July in 1651 Janusz Radziwiłł turned to Ukraine. The aim was to take the centre of the uprising Kyiv, in this way also protecting Lithuania from the attacks of the Cossacks. On the 4th of August in 1651 Kyiv capitulated.

Abraham van Westervelt (1620/1621 in Rotterdam – 1692 the same) participated in the campaign of Janusz Radziwiłł during the battles with the uprisen Ukrainian Cossacks, where he drew the cycle of 100 drawings, including the recapture of Kyiv. Janusz Radziwiłł commemorated his victory by ordering a medal designed by Sebastian Dadler (it is one of the best works of his military topics). Russian historian Jakov Smirnov identified that the composition from a drawing of A. van Westervelt was used as a basis of the medal, dedicated for the recapture of Kyiv 1651 (5). It is likely that Janusz Radziwiłł together with A. van Westervelt also prepared the entire concept of the medal, which was implemented by Sebastian Dadler.



Medal of Janusz Radziwiłł, commemorating the recapture of Kyiv, 1651

At the bottom of the reverse is the signature: S – D. Gold, Ø 68 mm, weight – 109.87 g

National Museum in Krakow / Emeryk Hutten-Czapski Muzeum, inv. no. VII-Md-309 (Hutten-Czapski 5868) (7)



Medal of the inauguration of Janusz Radziwiłł as the Voivode of Vilnius, 1653

At the bottom of the reverse is the signature: S – D. Silver, Ø 68.5 mm, weight – 89.23 g.

National Museum in Krakow / Emeryk Hutten-Czapski Muzeum, inv. no. VII-MdP-925 (Hutten-Czapski 4082) (9)

In the medal the entire political program of Janusz Radziwiłł is laid out with plenty of symbolism. In the allegoric plot we can see the separate political sides of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth – the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Kingdom of Poland. The winner Janusz Radziwiłł is depicted in Roman clothes, holding the act of surrender of Kyiv in one hand and supporting a woman with a crown on the head in another hand (the personification of Kyiv). The woman is kneeling against King John II Casimir Vasa, who is sitting on the throne, dressed in Roman clothes. The inscription says: *The broken bows and quivers of the people of Kyiv are given to You Radziwiłł, King Casimir. / Kyiv recaptured in 1651.* The scene depicted on the medal is symbolic – solemn meeting did not occur – John II Casimir Vasa did not arrive to Kyiv with his army.

A long inscription on the reverse reveals the victories of Janusz Radziwiłł against the Cossacks and his merits while retaining the state: *While John II Casimir was reigning, rebels appeared due to the impertinence of the Cossacks. While suppressing rebellion, the most successful Lithuanian army, led by Janusz Radziwiłł, protecting the borders of the homeland, having crossed the (river) Dniester, having defeated and killed the leader of the rebellion Niebab, and having defeated and banished the second (leader), Anton, with power and craftiness, having covered the way with the bodies of enemies with the help of weapons, invaded Kyiv and recapturing the capital of this land in Anno Domini 1651.* At the bottom – the coat of arms of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (the Knight), at the bottom the coat of arms of Radziwiłł (the Eagle)(6).

Medal of the inauguration of Janusz Radziwiłł as the Voivode of Vilnius, 1653

King John II Casimir Vasa granted the official position of the Voivode of Vilnius to Janusz Radziwiłł for the big merits to the state on the 30th March 1653. This significant event was commemorated on the representative medal in 1653, where the political program of Janusz Radziwiłł was added with new features, known from the medal dedicated for the recapture of Kyiv. In a new medal Sebastian Dadler made a composition of the commander and winner from separate details.

On reverse the representative palace of Radziwiłł is depicted. In the background is a view of Vilnius city with churches, the Hill of three Crosses and the Upper Castle. At the bottom the Eagle of the family of Radziwiłł is shown with a sword, holding two coats of arms in the claws – on the first there are Three Crescent, the second – the Knight and cartouche with letters: S°P°Q°V° (*Senatus Populus Que Vlnensis*). The record says: *Until you are in this position, until you have the noble rights of Voivode, until you Voivode*

are glorified by Your Vilnius. / For the public praise, personal benefit.

The Grand Duchy of Lithuania was first occupied by the foreign states in 1655. When the army of Moscow occupied Vilnius, the palace of Janusz Radziwiłł was robbed and gradually declined. The palace depicted on the medal is the only remaining iconographic source of it (8).

During wars and crises not many original medals of the prominent Lithuanian personalities Krzysztof Radziwiłł and Janusz Radziwiłł remained. Popularizing the medals of the great family, Prince Maciej Radziwiłł commissioned their copies, among which there were medals of Krzysztof Radziwiłł and Janusz Radziwiłł. In 2013 the copies were made by the engraver Jerzy Panasiuk (Poland). The catalogue of the Radziwiłł's medals was releases on the basis of the gifted copies of the family of Maciej Radziwiłł by the National History and Culture Museum-Reserve "Niasvizh"(10).

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‘The Gods were moved to laughter’ or the Other Face of Sigismund Augustus’ II Medal

Renaissance medals, artistic and intellectual fruits that ripened and multiplied in humanist climate, were cast to promote recognition of the person portrayed on the obverse combined with event or symbolic composition that made particular reference to the sitter on the reverse. Hence, a medal historicized a person and personalized an occasion in multiple copies of durable material aiming at immortality through the image. Messages integrated within the two faces of a medal are in the focus of this inquiry examining the medal of Sigismund II Augustus (1520–1572) attributed to Giovanni Giacomo Caraglio (1500–1565) and its remake kept in the Ashmolean Museum of the University of Oxford¹ (Figs. 1, 3).

Beginning with the token struck in 1520 to announce the birth of royal male heir throughout Poland and Lithuania,² the life of Sigismund II Augustus has been punctuated with medals. Medals were designed and produced to acknowledge the growth and maturity of the monarch, to demonstrate his aptness for the throne, and to follow major turns of his reign. It must have been within this pattern of marking events that yet another medal of the king was cast; however, particular circumstances and intentions of its production remain obscure. The unsigned piece has been attributed to royal goldsmith Giovanni Giacomo Caraglio as it features distinctively in Caraglio's portrait painted by Paris Bordone (Fig. 2). As none of the two artistic pieces have been precisely dated, in this inquiry they serve as evidence to each other. Caraglio has commissioned his portrait in 1553, during his visit to Italy a year after he was knighted in Krakow on 29th April of 1552.³ The



2. Obverse of the medal of Sigismund II Augustus, detail of Paris Bordone, 'Portrait of Giovanni Giacomo Caraglio,' oil on canvas, Venice, ~1553. Wawel Royal Castle. Photo: Anna Stankiewicz.

obverse captured in the portrait coincides in every detail with the known cast pieces, but for the medal's oval shape. Arguably, in the painting Bordone followed not the medal, but rather its design drawn by Caraglio. Hence, the medal's idea materialized in Northern Italy in 1553 even if its casts were made later.

The medal's obverse shows the bust of the king looking left, he is dressed in richly decorated cuirass

Pasieczny and Piotr Paszkiewicz (Warsaw: ISPAN, 2001), p. 40; idem, 'Caraglio w Polsce', *Rocznik historii sztuki*, 25.4 (2000), p. 5–63.



1. Sigismund II Augustus. ~1553. Artist Giovanni Giacomo Caraglio (?). Silver, cast, Ø 56 mm. National Museum in Krakow, inv. no. VII-Md-289. Photo: Laboratory Stock National Museum in Krakow

adorned with heraldic arms of the Polish Eagle and the Lithuanian Knight and wearing the lion pendant on his neck; the legend reads: 'SIGISMVNDUS-AVGVS-TVS-D-G-REX-POLONIÆ-M-DVX-LITVANIÆ-RVSLIÆ-P-M-E-T'. The reverse features personification of Faith shown as a draped standing woman holding a chalice in her left hand and pointing upwards with her right, the legend 'DVM-SPIRITVS-HOS-REGET-ARTVS' (as long as spirit directs these limbs) quotes *Aeneid* (IV: 336).

Neither of the medal's faces is unique. According to Philip Attwood, the earliest example of the reverse with the figure of Faith and the quote from the *Aeneid* is found on the medal of Pietro Piantanida attributed to unknown master of Milan and dated to ca. 1550,⁴ the latest – the medal of Sigismund III Vasa by unknown artist dated to 1598/9.⁵ What is more, obverses of all of the three medals share similarities as to rendering the ornamented cuirasses with lionhead as a shoulder-piece worn by Piantanida, Sigismund II, and Sigismund III. Apparently, the compositions of the three medals are genetically related and stem from Northern Italy, yet exploration of their interconnections would go beyond the scope of the inquiry concerned with two faces of Sigismund II Augustus' medal.

The personification of Faith on the reverse prompted relating the medal of Sigismund II Augustus with religious disputes,⁶ yet this interpretation ignores the fact

that medals, justly called the currency of fame of the Renaissance,⁷ were cast to announce events, characterize personalities, rather than mark processes. To find the occasion that this particular medal was produced for one should reconsider compositions and interconnections of both faces.

In contrast to widespread practice of medallic portraits of statesmen, whose gaze is directed towards right, indicating the future, the profile of Sigismund II Augustus on the obverse is shown looking left, that is, towards the past.⁸ Moreover, such reference to tradition is combined with the figure of Faith and the statement of lifelong remembrance on the reverse. What does this junction declare? I guess that the key to unlock the message lies in the year 1553, in which the medal (or its design) has been captured in Caraglio's portrait and in which the third marriage Sigismund II Augustus to Catherine of Austria (1533–1572) was celebrated in Krakow on June 23rd. By marrying the Habsburg princess Sigismund II Augustus agreed to observe the duties of his royal office, the tradition of the Jagiellonian house, and the Catholic faith of his forefathers. Hence, I see the medal as celebration of the reconciliation of the monarch with the ancestral tradition and obligations to the throne and the realm.

Regardless of statements and expectations, the king's sterile marriage meant the end for the dynasty, while separation of the royal couple in 1562 nourished rumours about the king's intimate relations and

¹ Ashmolean Museum, Coins and Medals, tray no. 3/3, no. 257, provenance unknown; attributed to unknown Italian master; published in Philip Attwood, *Italian Medals c. 1530–1600 in British Public Collections* (London: The British Museum Press, 2003), vol. 2, no. 1169, 'Zygmunt II August of Poland' and Pl. 239, no. 1169a.

² For a thorough discussion on Renaissance medals and their function in Poland and Lithuania, see: Mieczysław Morka, 'The Beginnings of Medallic Art in Poland during the Times of Zygmunt I and Bona Sforza', *Artibus et Historiae*, 29.58 (2008), pp. 65–87 and Mateusz Grzęda, 'Portret w polityce – polityka portretu: uwagi o znaczeniu portretu w praktyce władzy Zygmunta I Starego', *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki*, 82.1 (2020), pp. 5–79.

³ For the broader discussion on Caraglio's knighting and trip to Italy, see: Jerzy Wojciechowski, 'Gian Giacomo Caraglio. Królewski artysta w świetle swojego portretu', in *Sztuka i władza*, ed. Dariusz Konstantynow, Robert

⁴ Attwood, vol. 2, no. 98, 'Pietro Piantanida', p. 126 and Pl. 24, no. 98a; also: Pietro Piantanida of Milan, Metropolitan Museum of Art, no. 31.33.164, www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/196777 [01/03/2019].

⁵ Attwood, vol. 2, no. 205, 'Zygmunt III of Poland', p. 162 and no. 205a, Pl. 53; also: British Museum, inv. Nr. 1930.0707.29, www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=3307098&partId=1&searchText=Zygmunt+III&page=1 [07/08/2019].

⁶ Vincas Ruzas, *Lietuva medaliuose, XVI a. – XX a. pradžia* (Vilnius: Vaga, 1998), figs. 104–105, p. 53; Ignas Narbutas, 'Senasis Europos medalių menas Nacionalinio M.K. Čiurlionio dailės muziejaus Aleksandro Mykolo Račkauskos kolekcijoje', in *Lietuvos muziejų rinkiniai / Collections of Lithuanian*

Museums, XVII konferencija, Lietuvos muziejai: kultūra, edukacija, mokslas / The 17th Conference, Lithuanian Museums: Culture, Education, Science, eds. Dalius Avižinis and Virginija Siukščenė (Vilnius: Lietuvos muziejų asociacija, 2014), p. 85.

⁷ I refer to the exhibition 'The Currency of Fame', National Gallery of Art Washington DC, www.nga.gov/exhibitions/1994/fame.html [15/06/2017].

⁸ I rely on extensive discussion in: Avigdor W.G. Posëq, 'On the Orientation of Heads in Renaissance Medals', *Source*, 24.3 (2005), pp. 21–27.



3. **Sigismund II Augustus.** Obverse – 2nd half of 16th century, copy. Reverse – 1st quarter of 16th century. Axle ratio 180. Bronze, cast, Ø 56 mm. Ashmolean Museum of the University of Oxford, Heberden Coin Room, tray no. 3/3, no. 257. Photo: Ashmolean Museum

mistresses, reviving opinions about lust and corporal pleasures that flourished during Sigismund's II marriage to Barbara Radziwill (1523–1551). As to the medal, or rather Virgil's quote on its reverse, it might have also contributed towards inciting erotic connotations. The line comes from the IV Book of the *Aeneid*, dedicated to Aeneas's stay in Carthage and relation to Queen Dido, and is an extract from Aeneas's farewell:

... *Ego te, quae plurima fando Enumerare vales, numquam, regina, negabo Promeritam, nec me meminisse pigebit Elissae Dum memor ipse mei, dum spiritus hos regit artus.*⁹

... *O queen, I will never deny that you deserve the most that can be spelt out in speech, nor will I regret my thoughts of you, Elissa, while memory itself is mine, and breath controls these limbs.*¹⁰

These words mark the turning point of the *Aeneid*: upon the will and warning of gods, Aeneas leaves Dido and Carthage, to pursue his destiny across the sea – to found Rome and establish the line of its rulers up to Augustus. The episode in Carthage was especially dramatic: warmly welcomed and involved in the union, which Dido called marriage (IV, 172), Aeneas was caught in pleasant trap, where he would have stayed if gods were not willing otherwise. Looking at Sigismund II Augustus' reign through the lens of Carthagian episode

of the *Aeneid* it is ease to evoke a parallel with the king's marriage to Barbara. This brief and passionate liaison established through secret wedding concluded in 1547 was taken by public opinion as union 'without God, honour, and sense'.¹¹ Barbara's death caused profound grief to the king and relief to the lords of his realm. Within this context, the reverse might be read as declaration of lifelong memory of the loved woman, Dido in case of Aeneas, and Barbara in case of Sigismund II Augustus.¹² While Virgil's authority and high status of medallic art, guaranteed the medal dignified interpretations, the quotation's erotic potential (Dido was seen as embodiment of female lust¹³) might have prompted a production of the medal's interpretative remake (Fig. 3).

This remake joins the bronze aftercast of the obverse with a reverse made of a former pendent (as hole on its top indicates). *The Catalogue of Italian Medals in British Public Collections* (2003) identifies the figures on the reverse as follows: 'To l[eft], Mars and Venus, both semi-nude and reclining, embracing at the entrance to a cave. To r[ight], standing Jupiter, nude holding a sceptre surmounted by an eagle, Mercury, nude but for a petasus, holding a caduceus, and three goddesses, two of whom are draped, the other being semi-nude. Above, Apollo, holding a torch, moves in his chariot

¹¹ Urszula Borkowska, *Dynastia Jagiellonów w Polsce* (Warsaw: PWN, 2012), p. 544.

¹² Contemporary minds indeed paralleled Barbara and Dido, e.g.: 'Stracziłam męża wdzięcznego / Sigmunta krolia zycznego, / Ktoro swim krolewskim stanem / Zrownal skazdim swieczkim panem. / Stracziłam sławną koronę, / Stracziłam powagę one, / Którei i Dido nimiała, / Gdzi na swiecie korolowa', 'Sacrae Reginalis Maiestatis Reginae Barabarae olim Regine Poloniae Epitaphium Anno 1551', in *Nieznane polskie i łacińskie wiersze politycznej treści: 1548–1551*, ed. Józef Korzeniowski (Kraków: Drukarnia Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 1886), III, 29–36, p. 12.

¹³ For broader discussion on Dido's image, see: Jan L. De Jong, 'Dido in Italian Renaissance Art. The Afterlife of a Tragic Heroine', *Artibus et Historiae*, 30, 59 (2009), pp. 73–89.

⁹ Publius Vergilius Maro, *Aeneis*, in *P. Vergili Maronis Opera*, ed. R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), <https://latin.packhum.org/loc/690/3/0#3> [01/03/2019].

¹⁰ Virgil, *The Aeneid*, translated by A. S. Kline, Book IV, www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/VirgilAeneidIV.php#anchor_Toc342025 [25/08/2021].



4. **Vulcan Informs Gods of Having Captured Mars and Venus in His Net.** 1540. Artist Maarten van Heemskerck. Oil on canvas, 960 × 990 mm. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Gemäldegalerie, inv. no. 6395. Image in public domain

through the sky'.¹⁴ However, this description of the figures and identification of their attributes fails to establish the subject of the reverse, since one god is mistaken for a goddess. The semi-nude figure at the centre of the composition is God Vulcan, recognized from specific posture, indicating his lameness, drapery tied around his waist is smith's apron, hammer seen in his right hand, and gestures: facing the standing gods, he points towards Venus and Mars reclining by the cave. Having recognized Vulcan, the subject becomes clear: it shows Mars and Venus surprised by Vulcan and Olympian gods mocking them. However, the iconography of the reverse situates the scene known since Homer and popularised by Ovid¹⁵ as well as numerous verbal and visual interpretations¹⁶ in the landscape rather than indoors.¹⁷ While the composition of the reverse follows none of the known texts, it does have parallels in visual arts.¹⁸ The closest comparison as to the subject and composition is offered by painting 'Vulcan Informs Gods of Having Captured Mars and Venus' (1540; Fig. 4) by Maarten van Heemskerck (1498–1574). However, stylistically related to plaquettes by Cristoforo Foppa called Caradosso (~1445–1526/7),¹⁹

¹⁴ Atwood, vol. 2, no. 1169, p. 465.

¹⁵ Homer, *Odyssey* (VIII, 266–366), Ovid, *Metamorphoses* (IV, 168–189) and *Ars Amatoria* (II, 561–592).

¹⁶ For visual and verbal sources as well as scholarship, see: 'Marte, Venere e Vulcano', www.iconos.it/le-metamorfosi-di-ovidio/libro-iv/marte-venere-e-vulcano/ [20/10/2019].

¹⁷ The scene is set in a landscape in: Reposianus, 'De Concubitu Martis et Veneris', *The Latin Library*, www.thelatinlibrary.com/reposianus.html [30/10/2019].

¹⁸ E.g.: Paris Bordone, 'Mars und Venus, von Vulkan überrascht', in Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Gemäldegalerie, inv. Nr. gg3352_083, in: *Bildindex der Kunst & Architektur*, www.bildindex.de/document/obj02554344 [01/11/2019]; Guglielmo della Porta, 'Mars und Venus', in Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, Kunstkammer, inv. Nr. 7766, www.khm.at/de/object/94c7ac665b/ [01/11/2019].

¹⁹ Atwood, *Italian Medals*, vol. 2, no. 1169, p. 465.

the former pendent predates the painting by few decades. Importantly, it also predates the Caraglio's medal of Sigismund II Augustus. Arguably, it was the pendant and its iconography that prompted the remake of the king's medal upon the wit and will of someone concerned with erotic reputation of Sigismund II Augustus.

In line with humanist spirit of drawing parallels with Antiquity, the composition exposing illicit love of gods was related with the last Jagiellonian king, whose intimate life was a public issue. It took to make an aftercast of the medal's obverse and get it fixed to the pendant turned into the reverse. What is more, the two faces of the medal were joined together along the horizontal axis; hence, when one looked at the reverse, the king's portrait on the obverse was turned head downwards. In contrast to Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, where the story of Mars and Venus surprised by the Vulcan ends with the laughter of gods rather than transformation, the medals remake in the viewers' hands made a transformation. Turning around the medal as if a coin, the image and the royal dignity of Augustus (whose name in Latin means the elevated) was turned upside down allowing the erudite and powerful onlookers to downgrade their lord and join Olympian gods in laughter by a mere twist of fingers.

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Medals in the numismatic collection of the family of Grużewski of Kelmė Manor

During preparation for the readings of Paulius Galaunė in the M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art in 2011, 52 bronze medals of Imperial Russia (Nn 26715–Nn 26766) were found among the medals stored in the department in the envelopes marked as “Grużewski’s collection”.

That is how the remains of the Grużewski’s collection of Kelmė landlords “returned”, which were missing from sight for a long period of time. The items of the Grużewski’s collection were documented in the museum books in one of the transfer of exhibits from Povilas Karazija to Rimutė Jablonskytė-Rimantienė. There is no data of how the medals got to the museum.

The collection was presented to the public in a numismatic conference at Medininkai Castle in 2013, comparing the items in the museum with the list of the collection, compiled by General Jerzy Grużewski in 1807. The medals form a large part of the Grużewski’s numismatic collection that were stored in the museum. The Act of the 21st November 1949 consists of 197 medals, two of which could not be identified in the inventory of the museum. In the Act, they were grouped as follows:

- 1–5: silver medals:
- Cheap metal medals:
- 1–56: “Medals of the Rulers of Russia series”,
- 57–146: “Various Russian Medals”,
- 147–192: “Historical Medals of Various Countries”.

The collection of medals shows interests of the nobility in Russian Empire in the 18th–19th centuries. Most of the medals can be called “propaganda” medals today – medals commemorating various Russian victories. The other part of medals – the medals of foreign countries that entered the collection in various ways, reflect the realities of political life of the 18th–19th centuries, such as the satirical Austrian medals of the reign of Maria Theresa, medals for historical events of Prussia and Germany. There are also presented various jettons, including the counter of Jan Lutomirski of the Vilnius Mint.

In the Russian Empire, the tradition of commemorative medals was introduced by Tsar Peter I. Catherine II, who came to power through coup, focused on issuing medals to create the image of the Empress raising Russia to new victories. Thanks to her, such European engravers as Johann Baltasar Gass, Johann Georg Caspar Jaeger or Johann Georg Wechter, were invited to Russia. They were trained by Russian medalists T. Ivanov, S. Judin and others. The Empress edited medal inscriptions herself and the Russian language fortified positions on the medals during her reign. No medal was issued without her confirmation. With the medals, she consolidated herself as a successor of the works of Peter I, while promoting her approach to historical events and the state.

In Russia during the reign of Catherine II (1762–1796), collecting became a matter of prestige, a laudable pursuit of nobility, and could even influence careers. The issuance of a series of 58 portrait medals of the Russian Grand Princes and Tsars in 1768–1774 and the establishment of medal committees for the creation of a series of medals dedicated to Russian history are considered to be a major step in the art of propaganda medals. Mikhail Lomonosov’s *Short Russian Chronicle* (*Краткий Россійский летописецъ*) became the basis of the series of portrait medals. The obverse of the medals contains portraits with titles, and the reverse contains an entry from the *Short Russian Chronicle* about the depicted person. Out of 58 medals of this series, 55 medals came to the museum with the Grużewski’s collection (there are two items of the no. 12).

By the decree of 1772, Catherine II established two medal committees which were tasked with creating the history of medals from the time of Emperor Peter I. These government agencies had to produce an album with drawings and historical commentary on all medals previously issued and newly designed, as well as to mint new medals at the Coin Palace. Both – the album and the series of medals were planned. In 1774, the Medal Committees prepared an album with 128 medals for the reign of Peter I, drawings, 82 of which were new projects, but it was not printed and the medal projects



Grand Duke Igor II. 16th century

Artist Johan Baltazar Gass (1730–1813), Russia. Bronze, Ø 38.9 mm. M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art, inv. no. Nn 26243



Medal dedicated to the deceased friend – Nicolai Kederi Holmiensis (1659–1735). 1760

Artist Johann Carl Hedlinger (1691–1771), Sweden. Metal, Ø 43.3 mm. M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art, inv. no. Nn 26459



War for the inheritance of Austria. 1742

Satirical medal. Austria. Copper, gold-plated, Ø 43.1 mm. M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art, inv. no. Nn 26399



Louis XVI – Gaul has fallen, the Golden Age is entombed. 1793

Satirical jetton. France. Metal, Ø 26 mm. M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art, inv. no. Nn 26476

were not realized because the Coin Chamber focused on producing the medals created by the Empress. The immortalization of Peter I's legacy in the style of classicism became the central subject of Catherine II's medals. The medals of this period in the Gruzewski's collection are represented by the medals commemorating the deeds of Peter I, which prevail in the group "Various Russian Medals".

Medals collected in the numismatic collection of Gruzewski's of Kelmė are an example of the traditions of collecting in Russian-occupied Lithuania in the 18th–19th centuries and it is a window into the life of the Lithuanian nobility of the 19th century.

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Innovation in the iconography and stylistics of contemporary Polish medal art

In the 1960s, Polish medal art saw the spread of a new form of so-called artistic medals. In addition to the creation of commissioned works, where the sphere of iconography and stylistics often were subject to the influence, appraisal, and acceptance of the commissioning party, a new type of work was born, one whose creation flowed from "a need of the heart" in the artist, a work in harmony with the artist's inspiration where only one's imagination could impose limitations on artistic expression. Since that time, contemporary Polish medal art has undergone a period of intensive development, at the end of which a type of work has emerged that seems difficult to classify as one belonging to the creative domain known as "small relief" art. Classical medal art is a branch characterized by the design of flat works of art with either a circular form or one resembling square or rectangular plaquettes covered on one or both sides with relief, with such works fitting in the palm of one's hand and thereby limiting them to being several centimeters in size. These works are created using various types of metals or alloys. Remaining true to the centuries-old tradition of typical medal art, whose classical principles were forged during the Renaissance and Baroque periods, Polish artists introduced their own stylistics- and iconography-related ideas to this small-relief art. This made Polish medal art one of the most revolutionary and innovative in the world. The completeness of this picture was complicated by an ambiguous nomenclature of works, from whom viewers as well as some contemporary researchers demanded clarity and transparency in the message conveyed. In the end, medal art – in its official form – arose as a discipline of art that was meant to honor and recall important historical events and illuminating figures. The artistry thereof was to manifest itself in the skillful agility and precision of the medalist's hand, he or she being masterfully prepared academically, and not in the execution of works that are difficult to interpret or unintelligible upon initial viewing.

It will be worthwhile to mention the impressionist and surrealist works created as early as the mid-20th century by the nestor of Polish medal art – professor

Józef Stasiński. This artist created works of complicated design often corresponding both to the composition of motifs on the surface of the obverse or reverse and to the mood of the scenes depicted. The artist, hailing from Poznań, did much to spread the open-medal form, where particular elements (medals) can either function separately or constitute a certain wholeness, uniform in its content, form, or iconography. Additionally, the artist introduced elements into the structure of his works that were hitherto foreign to medal art, such as plant impressions or finger prints. He also reflected authentic photographs on the surfaces of his works. Thanks to this, his medals oftentimes acquired a reporter-like function, or served the role of a chronicler, as it were. Bronisław Chromy, in turn, made the structure of medals more spacious by introducing openwork, which gave the figures a full plasticity. He supplied his works with pedestals, which turned them into small statues or even small monuments. In this way, the idea of monumentalism in medal art was fully realized – a "pocket monument" as some artists called it. Ewa Olszewska-Borys, however, enriched her works with three-dimensional effects in a remarkable way: by applying an interplay of flatness and convexity, and of "positive forms" and "negative forms." In doing so, she remained faithful to the flat surface of her works. Thanks to the techniques applied, figures on the surface of her works were strongly plasticized by the falling light that accented the convex elements and disappeared into the concavities. Images became strikingly three-dimensional. In the oeuvre of the artist, the actualization of the eternal dream of artists came to fruition: to create representations that appear detached from the flat surface of works through the means of artistic expression. An additional interest of this artist lies in movement and air, both becoming intensely felt on the surfaces of her works. The figures moving across her works left streaks, much like shifting objects in nature produce a palpable movement of air.

The greatest number of revolutionary solutions appeared in Polish medal art in essentially the last ten years, mainly due to a project spearheaded by the deceased Bernard Marek Adamowicz – a collector

from Legnica. As part of an undertaking titled “Medal art conversations with John Paul II” he amassed several dozen of the most eminent Polish medalists who, through their art, take up the theme of Saint John Paul II, his teachings, and his theological-philosophical legacy. In this way, the rich tradition of the Polish religious medal was expanded, a tradition which in the 20th century embarked on a new path after the determinations reached at the Second Vatican Council. Starting in the 1960s, religious art became an emanation of deep, intimate, and transcendent experiences belonging to the artist, whose message often was more difficult to grasp and comprehend due to the use of ambiguously understood signs and symbols. In this context, many works devoted to the Polish pope were completed, at times depicting him very casually. For this project, artists often resigned from the convention – in place up till that time – of creating images that were full of dignity proper to the highest ecclesiastical office. Hence, the portraits of the pope viewed from behind, blurred or fragmentary, which had been absent in medal art up to that time.

The development of contemporary Polish medal art has followed a two-track path. On one hand, we have revolutionary proposals with an innovative approach to matters of iconography and stylistics. On the other hand, many artists remain faithful to clear, flagship motifs, creating works that continue to be circular in shape. By and large, artistic works continue to be classically flat, two-sided, and covered in relief. The most typical iconographic motif continues to be the portrait, most often of a realistic nature. In the case of many artists, such as Magdalena Dobrucka or Anna Wątróbska-Wdowiarska, artistry manifests itself, above all, not in innovative aesthetic solutions or in the enrichment of the array of iconographic motifs applied, but in the remarkable precision with which the image is crafted, and in the delicateness exhibited by the portrait lines. It must be stressed that medallic portraits are among the most difficult motifs executed in art. Executing them successfully is the exclusive domain of only the most accomplished sculptors. The claim that every medalist can be a good sculptor, but not every sculptor a good medalist, is not an exaggeration. The number of eminent Polish medalists that can sculpt beautiful portraits comes to at least a few dozen.

Over the last several years, several hundred works have been completed, many of which are difficult to categorize as medal art. On one hand, a trend has begun of using materials foreign to medal art – wood, glass,

epoxy resin, stones, plexiglass, and even concrete. On the other hand, artists have decided to diversify even more the array of shapes that their works exhibit. Projects have been completed that take the form of, for example, an hourglass, a medal closed in a bottle, a fragment of a typewriter (Sebastian Mikołajczak), or forms far removed from shapes known from nature, ones that are abstract and devoid of figurativeness, such as the works of Janusz Trzebiatowski. Three-dimensional, multi-part, erectable works have been created – effectively small-scale sculptural forms. And this small size is the only factor which these objects have in common and which makes it possible to apply nomenclature from the domain of medal art to them. Of the greatest importance, insofar as revolutionariness is concerned, is the fact that media, hitherto proper exclusively to other areas of art, has been introduced to medal art. Light, music, or, most surprisingly, movement – these elements have begun to enter the sphere of small-relief art. Works have been created that glimmer not only due to external light reflecting off of polished surfaces of relief, but due to a shine whose source is inside the object, in an internally installed mechanism with a battery and lightbulb. Music also resounds from within some works (the latter being works by Monika Molenda). Some of the works, or parts of them, can be set in motion, and thus they affect the viewer in time, which evokes associations with kinetic art. The question arises as to what else Polish artists will come up with and how far they will stray from medal art traditionally understood. Oftentimes, in the context of academic forums, the question arises as to whether some contemporary objects should even count as medals at all. In science there still exists a need to classify and assign everything possible to specific fields. In the age of art’s interdisciplinarity, blending genres, combining styles, techniques and materials, where an attempt to classify a work as belonging to one or another branch of art is impossible, the decision how to classify lies not with scientists and experts on the subject but rather with the artists themselves, who have the right to call their projects whatever they please. It seems that, in the context of Polish medal art’s innovation and revolutionariness – phenomena that benefit the development of all of contemporary Polish art – problems of nomenclature are of secondary importance.

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Collecting medals

Collecting is an interesting hobby. Most collectors start pursuing this passion in the childhood, some collections are handed over by their parents or grand-parents and discover the joy of collecting at an early age, some start collecting later in life triggered by an interesting issue of a post stamp, coin or a medal for an event. Medals are usually less familiar to us than paintings or sculpture. These exquisitely crafted objects, typically made of lead, bronze, silver, or gold, were produced to commemorate individuals, to acknowledge special events and to disseminate the identity and power of their sitters.

Whatever the motivation or situation, the field of historical and commemorative medal collecting is so wide that it offers inspiration for everyone. Medal collecting is a hobby embraced by the people of all backgrounds. Most people become interested in medals when they are passed on as inheritance to a relative and ever since someone enters into the fascinating world of medal collecting and finds an intellectual hobby to enjoy for the rest of the life. Some enter collecting by a single interesting commemorative medal issue with the prospect of potential value increase while most collectors of medals are passion-driven; for some it is just a dear hobby. Medal collecting is incredibly fulfilling. It shows appreciation for beauty, history and art. It can also act to preserve memories that matter in life, not forgetting the many likely opportunities to gain new knowledge it opens. Today’s collectors value medals primarily for their aesthetic merit and historic significance. Medals are undoubtedly one of the best ways to explore history. The tradition of medal art in Lithuania dates back to the 16th century.

The art of medal reached Grand Duchy of Lithuania after the emergence of medal art schools in Western Europe – Italy, France, Germany. The main patrons of medal art in Lithuanian were the grand Duke and the Radziwiłł family. Vilnius medal art school emerged

in the second half of the 16th century, but the art of medal was evolving rather slowly. Many medals of local Lithuanian themes were mostly created by the Italian, German, Polish, French, and Russian artists. The first ruler known to order a medal himself was Sigismund I the Old (1506–1548). The great admirer of medal art was his son Sigismund II Augustus (1548–1572). A celebrated Dutch medal artist Steven van Herwijck is known to have made medals for him. Medals were often produced to acknowledge specific events or milestones, such as marriages, deaths, coronations and military victories. During the reign of Stephen Bathory, Vilnius became a significant centre of medal art for the whole Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The Mint of Vilnius (operated in 1589–1627) had significant input for Lithuanian art medal during Sigismund III Vasa times. By the seventeenth century in Europe medals were not limited to commemorating only the royal and aristocratic classes. Individuals of sufficient means could purchase ready-made medals depicting a generic event, such as an anniversary or marriage, then personalize them by inscribing their names and biographical details. During the 45 years’ reign of Sigismund III Vasa over a hundred medals were issued. The tradition of art medal in Lithuania undoubtedly was affected by the dramatic historical events of 18th century – partitions of the Commonwealth.

Lots of dramatic moments from our history are embodied in medals. Depicted eminent people, battles, treaties, and other historical turning points were kept and carried over the centuries. Due to the skilful masters engravers from the past, we can enjoy great pieces of art created a few hundred years ago and rejoice the continuing tradition of medal making and collecting today.

Ieva Galiauskienė

Marketing Director Baltics at Samlerhuset Group BV
UAB “Monety Namai”



Portraits of Sigismund II Augustus and Barbara Radziwiłł. 2011
Obverse. Author: Elles Kloosterman.
Copper, gold-plated 999/1000, proof-like, Ø 38.6 mm, p – 24 g



Canonisation of St. Casimir 1604. 2011
Obverse. Author: Algirdas Bosas.
Copper, gold-plated 999/1000, proof-like, Ø 38.6 mm, p – 24 g

Medals from the collection: Majestic Lithuania



The Statutes of Lithuania. 2015
Obverse. Author: Lina Kalinauskaitė.
Copper, gold-plated 999/1000, proof-like, Ø 38.6 mm, p – 24 g



The Battle of Chotin. 2015
Obverse. Author: Lina Kalinauskaitė.
Copper, gold-plated 999/1000, proof-like, Ø 38.6 mm, p – 24 g

Medals from the collection: We are born to be Lithuanians



Vytis. 2020
Obverse. Author: Trudy Otterspeer.
Copper, gold-plated 999/1000, colorized tampography, Ø 40 mm, p – 25 g



The seal of Vytautas the Great. 2020
Obverse. Author: Trudy Otterspeer.
Copper, gold-plated 999/1000, colorized tampography, Ø 40 mm, p – 25 g



The Iron Wolf. 2020
Obverse. Author: Trudy Otterspeer. Copper, gold-plated 999/1000, colorized tampography, Ø 40 mm, p – 25 g

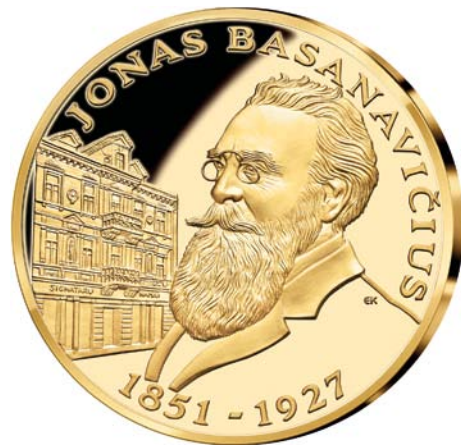


Reverse of the collection
Author: Elles Kloosterman

Medals from the collection: The prominent people of Lithuania



Martynas Mažvydas. 2011
Obverse. Author: Elles Kloosterman.
Copper, gold-plated 999/1000, proof-like, Ø 38.6 mm, p – 24 g



Dr. Jonas Basanavičius. 2011
Obverse. Author: Elles Kloosterman.
Copper, gold-plated 999/1000, proof-like, Ø 38.6 mm, p – 24 g



President Antanas Smetona. 2011
Obverse. Author: Elles Kloosterman.
Copper, gold-plated 999/1000, proof-like, Ø 38.6 mm, p – 24 g



Reverse of the collection
Author: Elles Kloosterman

Medals from the collection: Battles for the Independence 1918–1923



Voluntaries of Lithuania. 2017
Obverse author: Tuomas Koivurinne.
Bronze, cold enamel technique, Ø 61 mm, p – 110 g



Battles with Bermontians. 2017
Obverse author: Tuomas Koivurinne.
Bronze, cold enamel technique, Ø 61 mm, p – 110 g



Battles with Bolsheviks. 2017
Obverse author: Tuomas Koivurinne.
Bronze, cold enamel technique, Ø 61 mm, p – 110 g



Reverse of the collection
Author: Elles Kloosterman.
Bronze, cold enamel technique, Ø 61 mm, p – 110 g

**Our flag. 2019**

Author: Elles Kloosterman.

Obverse copper, gold-plated 999/1000, colored tampography, Ø 40 mm, p – 25 g
 Reverse copper-nickel alloy, Ø 40 mm, p – 25 g

**To Defenders of the freedom of Lithuania. 2021**

Author: Lina Kalinauskaitė.

Copper, gold-plated 999/1000, proof-like, Ø 38.6 mm, p – 24 g



Monetų namai is a privately owned company established in 2009. It is part of Samlerhuset Group, a Norwegian company based just outside of Oslo who are one of Europe's biggest distributors of commemorative coins and medals and the owner of the Norwegian Mint. The Mint of Norway is certified to use Fairmined Gold in their products, in accordance with the Samlerhuset Group values. The Mint of Norway and its predecessor has a history back to 1686. The mint has also been entrusted by the Norwegian Nobel Committee to strike the **Nobel Peace Prize Medal** each year.

Together with its sister organisations across Europe, Monetų namai provides a wide range of medals and coins from ancient to modern, originating from every country in the world. Through long grown partnerships with most of the major state mints and national banks across the globe, Monetų namai has become one of the leading sources in the collecting community in Lithuania.

With unrivalled expertise in this specialist field and a visionary approach to sourcing and customer service, Monetų namai is committed to enhancing the enjoyment, understanding and knowledge of collectors of all levels of experience.





LIETUVOS MONETŲ KALYKLA

Lithuanian Mint

The main activity of the Lithuanian Mint is minting of collector and circulation coins, high-quality lapel pin and medal production, and metal processing services. According to individual orders of companies or individuals, are designed and produced medals and representative gifts for employees and business partners. These are not only exclusive but also long-lasting gifts that will be recognized by employees and appreciated by partners and customers.

Artists of the Mint consults and helps to implement the customer's ideas from the earliest stage to their realization. Conceptual graphic images and 3D digital designs are submitted for customer approval prior to the start of production of each work. To ensure the production of the highest quality products, the Mint manufacture all the tools needed for minting themselves. The accumulated experience from the beginning of the Lithuanian Mint in 1990 and exceptional production

base allows the Mint to quickly and efficiently prepare the necessary components for minting.

Modern technology is using in the process. For example, partial gilding, high-embossing, surfaces paintings, etc. Partial gilding is a method of coating in which individual parts of a coin or a medal as well as its accents are covered. It is a relatively complex, meticulous, time-consuming, and knowledge-intensive process that results in a substantial high-quality product. High-embossed coins are a masterpiece in the field of coins. Few companies around the world are able to use this manufacturing technology. The Lithuanian Mint controls the technological production processes, so it can offer this production method and create products of exclusive design. Modern coins are unimaginable without painted surfaces. There is a wide range of possibilities in combining different metals and stones, which is now one of the most interesting ways to design coins or medals.



Lithuania. 5-euro. 2018. Coin dedicated to Joninės (Rasos). Designed by Eglė Ratkutė.
Silver, pad printing, diameter – 28.70 mm, weight – 12.44 g
Photographer Gediminas Trečiokas



Lithuania. Four coins series "The 100th Anniversary of the Restoration of Lithuania's Independence". 2018. Designed by Liudas Parulskis:

- 50-euro. Coin dedicated to Signatories. Gold, diameter – 16.00 mm, weight – 7.78 g;
- 5-euro. Coin dedicated to Diplomacy. Silver, diameter – 32.00 mm, weight – 12.44 g;
- 10-euro. Coin dedicated to Armed Forces and Militarised Organisations. Silver, diameter – 49.50 mm, weight: 23.30 g;
- 20-euro. Dedicated to the Legal System. Silver, diameter – 65.00 mm, weight – 28.28 g
Photographer Gediminas Trečiokas



Lithuania. 20-euro. 2019. Coin dedicated to Sapiėha Palace (from the series "Lithuanian Castles and Manors"). Designed by Eglė Ratkutė.
Silver, diameter – 38.61 mm, weight – 28.28 g
Photographer Gediminas Trečiokas



Lithuania. 10-euro. 2020. Coin dedicated to Tree Beekeeping (from the series "Lithuanian Nature"). Designed by Vytautas Narutis.
Silver, pad printing, diameter – 34.00 mm, weight – 23.30 g
Photographer Gediminas Trečiokas



Lithuania. 20-euro. 2021. Coin dedicated to the 230th Anniversary of the Constitution of 3 May and Mutual Pledge of the Commonwealth of the Two Nations. Designed by Giedrius Paulauskis.
Silver, pad printing, diameter – 38.61 mm, weight – 28.28 g
Photographer Gediminas Trečiokas



Lithuania. 20-euro. 2021. Coin dedicated to the XXXII Olympic Games in Tokyo. Designed by Vladas Žukas.
Silver, diameter – 38.61 mm, weight – 28.28 g
Photographer Gediminas Trečiokas



Niue. 2-dollars. 2021. The last look on Palmyra.
Silver, antique finish, diameter – 50.00 mm, weight – 62.20 g



Niue. 2-dollars. 2021. "Mosaic" Coin.
Silver, antique finish, digital printing, diameter – 50.00 mm, weight – 62.20 g



Niue. 2-dollars. 2021. Nicolas Flamel – Philosopher's Stone.
Silver, digital printing, partial gilding, Swarovski crystal, diameter – 50.00 mm, weight – 62.20 g



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The Mint of Poland continues its **255-year-old tradition** dating back to the times of Stanisław August Poniatowski, the king of Poland. We are a sole manufacturer of commemorative and circulation coins issued by the central bank of Poland. Thanks to **ambitious projects, state-of-the-art technologies** and **highest craftsmanship**, our products win **major awards** during prestigious international numismatic contests.

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