

## GRAND VESTIBULE

- Historical names: Hall/Vestibule (17th century),  
Great hall/Middle or Mosaic Hall (18th century),  
Mosaic Room/Grand Vestibule or Front Room with sculptures (19th century), Vestibule/Grand Vestibule (20th century).
- Years of origin: 1677-1679
- Architect: Agostino Locci, 17th century. - the erection of walls,  
Johann Sigmund Deybel), 1830s. - reconstruction and downsizing project of the Grand Vestibule in favour of a Dutch Cabinet,  
Szymon Bogumił Zug?, Chrystian Piotr Aigner? - classical décor design: stucco marbled columns and door panels, 1791.
- Artists: Marcin Altomonte? - wall paintings presenting scenes of battles and victories of Alexander the Great - late 17th century - not existing,  
Jerzy Eleuter Siemiginowski - plafond *Day and Night* - late 17th century - not existing,  
Szwaner - equestrian monument, 17th century - moved to the South Gallery,  
Andreas Schlüter, "Master of the Summer Coving", stucco-maker Antoni? - coving stuccowork: allegories of the four elements and winds, 4th quarter of the 17th century,  
Fryderyk Bauman? - stuccowork, 18th century, 1791,  
Piotr Norblin? - figure painting frieze in en grisaille technique, around 1791,  
Henryk Marconi - ceiling stuccowork, 19th century, 1838.

### Description:

Grand Vestibule has a central place in the palace. Its present design is the result of many changes made by successive owners of the palace.

Originally, it was the main representative and dining room. In 1694 this function was taken over by the hall located on the newly erected second floor of the palace belvedere, the so-called Banqueting Hall of King Jan III. At that time, the Grand Vestibule was given a monumental decoration with an ideological programme that turned the interior into the so-called Hall of War glorifying the military achievements of Jan III Sobieski. The main element of the programme was an equestrian monument to Sobieski, depicting the king as the conqueror of the Ottoman Porte, set in a large triumphal arch opposite the main entrance to the palace (it was moved to the Southern Gallery in the 18th century, where it still stands today). The monument's original concept was based on presenting an equestrian portrait of the king by Jerzy Eleuter Siemiginowski. It is believed that Szwaner - a sculptor and stucco-maker from Gdańsk may also have contributed to the creation of the monument. Walls of the Grand Vestibule were covered with pilasters in the Tuscan order typical for military buildings, and the spaces between them were filled with paintings by Martin Altomonte presenting scenes of battles and victories of Alexander the Great. On the ceiling there was a plafond painting by Siemiginowski, representing the allegory of *Day and Night* with the central figure of Apollo, implied to be Jan III, defeating the enemies of darkness. The plafond was complemented by the 17th century stucco decoration on the coving, which still exists today. The allegories of the four winds in the corners symbolise the admiration for the king's merits, power and virtues spreading to the four corners of the world, while the allegories of Water, Fire, Air and Earth expressed the submission of the elements to the majesty of the ruler.

In 1729, the Grand Vestibule was downsized on the initiative of Maria Zofia Denhoff in favour of the Dutch Cabinet according to the design by Jan Zygmunt Deybel. The equestrian monument, as already mentioned, has been moved to the South Gallery. The side door to the Dutch Cabinet has been removed, creating a single passage in the middle with a double door.

At the end of the 18th century, the room was redecorated in the Neoclassical style, which has survived to the present day and is a joint work of the architect Piotr Aigner or Szymon Bogumił Zug, stucco-maker Fryderyk Bauman and painter Piotr Norblin. It is made up of stucco Ionic columns and placed between them stucco ones, *panneaux* imitating marble.

The ceiling was ornamented with stuccowork designed in 1838 by Henryk Marconi, which, on the initiative of Aleksander Potocki, replaced the 17th-century *Day and Night plafond*. It was then that a figural frieze on canvas with a representation of *Parcaewas* was created, imitating stucco decoration, which covered the frescoes from Lubomirska times.

Conservation works are currently being conducted in the Grand Vestibule.

Selected literature:

Fijałkowski Wojciech, *Wnętrza pałacu w Wilanowie*, Warsaw 1986, pp. 12, 18, 23, 64-66, 112

Karpowicz Mariusz, *Sztuka Warszawy czasów Jana III*, Warsaw 1987, p. 111, 114, 117

Fijałkowski Wojciech, *Vademecum Wilanowa*, Warsaw 2014, p. 208-212