

KING'S BEDROOM

Historical names:	King's Bedchamber (17th century), Second Room/Second Red Room (18th century), Side Room/Blue Room (19th century), King's Bedroom (20th century).
Years of origin:	1677-1679
Architects:	Agostino Locci - 18th century, Johann Sigmund Dyebel - approx. 1730
Artists:	Jerzy Eleuter Siemiginowski - plafond <i>Summer</i> , 1680s, Michelangelo Palloni - circular fresco paintings on the coving, 1688-1696 [?] Andreas Schlüter? Master of the Summer Coving? - stucco decoration of the coving, 1680s, Louis de Silvestre (workshop) - mythological paintings on overdoors, first half of the 18th century.

Description:

The King's Bedroom is one of the oldest historical royal apartments. It is an equivalent of the Queen's Bedroom located on the opposite side of the Dutch Cabinet. The sculptural decoration of the coving, the paintings on the tondi and the plafond painted by Jerzy Eleuter Siemiginowski are the original pieces of the room decor. During the reign of Jan III, the walls were covered with *white Venetian velvet in colourful flowers*. The room was heated by a tiled furnace.

Elżbieta Sieniawska's reverence for the Sobieski family mementoes was limited exclusively to the restoration of the royal rooms. Her daughter, Maria Zofia Denhoff, had a less sentimental attitude towards the original owners. Around 1729, she introduced major modifications to the decor, as well as the architecture of royal apartments. The Dutch Cabinet and the Grand Vestibule were transformed to the greatest extent, but some changes were also made to the antechambers and the royal bedrooms. Firstly, the doors located between the bedrooms and the antechambers were moved from the outer walls towards the centre. Furnaces were removed and replaced with corner fireplaces. Mirrors in gilded frames and white wainscoting with late Baroque ornamentation were also fitted at that time. The walls were covered with patterned, Genoese-style velvet fabrics.

The interior did not undergo any major modifications until the end of the 19th century. At the turn of the 20th century, as a result of maintenance work, velour wall cladding tarnished by the teeth of time was removed and replaced with cement imitations, and the historic floors were replaced with new ones.

The current design of the interior constitutes the final effect of scientific research and conservation work carried out in the 20th and 21st centuries.

The parade bed with a canopy decorated with ostrich feathers is a reconstruction of an 18th-century bed. No model from the time of Jan III Sobieski's reign has survived. In order to maintain the bedroom-like character of the room, the furniture was reconstructed based on an exact description of the bed ordered by Mikołaj Sieniawski, Elżbieta Sieniawska's husband. Types and patterns of materials were selected on the basis of existing foreign patterns, while colours of the wall cladding were replicated with the help of preserved residual fragments of furniture upholstery.

The main part of the interior is a plafond with the allegory of Summer. It was presented as a festival in honour of the goddess of crops and abundance, Ceres. The representation was divided into two areas: at the bottom, in the central part, the virgin Ceres is depicted with a wreath of corn on her head, surrounded by putti busy with harvesting crops and resting, offering a cornflower wreath to a young man dressed as a harvester, Vertumnus - the god of orchards and gardens, symbolising August. The upper part shows Aurora with features of Maria Kazimiera, a winged young man with a veil symbolising the receding night and Apollo approaching from the east in a chariot drawn by steeds. The sky features summer zodiac signs, Virgo and Leo, and animals of the two constellations, Little Dog and Big Dog.

The coving below is decorated with aquatic motifs rendered in deep relief: putti playing on sea horses, unicorns and dolphins, waves, putti supporting strings of flowers, bunches of shells tied with strings of pearls and tondi with paintings. Tondi depicting summer country work have been incorporated in the middle of each wall's coving. These scenes are illustrations of Virgil's *Georgics*, one of Sobieski's favourite readings. They are accompanied by Latin quotations from the work:

East wall - horse listening to the sounds of battle

Argutum caput huic [...]. Tum si qua sonum procul arma dedere, stare loco nescit, micat auribus et tremit artus.

(G. III, 80, 83-84)

With clean-cut head [...] Then lo! if arms are clashed afar, bide still he cannot: ears stiffen and limbs quake [...].

South wall - honey picking

Hi motus animorum atque haec certamina tanta pulveris exigui iactu compressa quiescent.

(G. IV, 86-87)

Such fiery passions and such fierce assaults
a little sprinkled dust controls and quells.

West wall - dance in honour of Ceres

Nunc Cereri torta redimitus tempora quercu det motus incompositos et carmina dicat

(G. I, 349-350)

Until with woven oak his temples chapleted,
he foot the rugged dance and chant the lay.

North wall - goat shearing

Ciniphii tondent hirci saetasque comantes usum in castrorum et miseris velamina nautis.

(G. III, 312-313)

Ay, and on Cinyps' bank the he-goats too, their beards and grizzled chins and bristling hair let clip for camp-use, or as rugs to wrap seafaring wretches.

Selected literature:

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Mańkowski Tadeusz, *Malarstwo na dworze Jana III*, BHS, R. 12, 1950, p. 227, figs. 13, 14, and p. 230, fig. 16; p. 232, fig. 17.

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