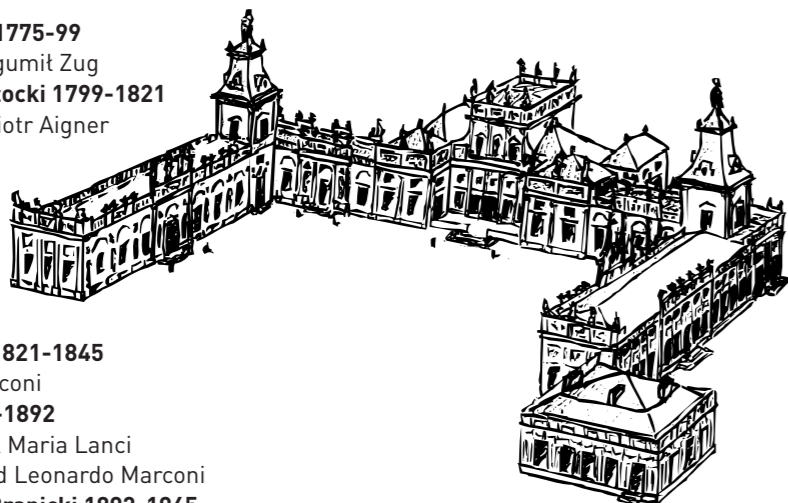




Bernardo Belotto called Canaletto,  
Garden view of the Palace in Wilanów, 1776,  
Royal Castle in Warsaw, phot. A. Ring and B. Tropitto

**Izabela Lubomirska 1775-99**  
Architect Szymon Bogumił Zug  
**Stanisław Kostka Potocki 1799-1821**  
Architect Chrystian Piotr Aigner



**Aleksander Potocki 1821-1845**  
Architect Henryk Marconi  
**August Potocki 1845-1892**  
Architects Franciszek Maria Lanci  
Henryk and Leonardo Marconi  
**Ksawery and Adam Branicki 1892-1945**  
Architect Władysław Marconi

## Stages of palace development

**Jan III Sobieski 1677-1696**  
Architect Augustyn Locci  
**1<sup>st</sup> building stage:**  
state around 1680



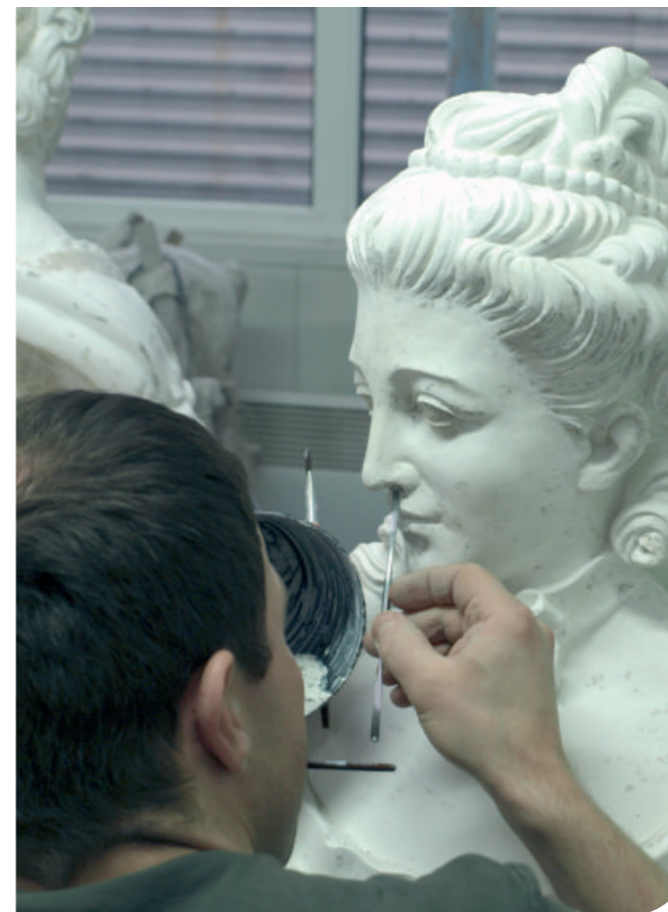
**2<sup>nd</sup> building stage: 1681-82**



**3<sup>rd</sup> building stage: 1683-96**  
**Aleksander and Konstantyn Sobieski 1696-1720**



**Elżbieta Sieniawska 1720-29**  
Architects Giovanni Spazio  
Jan Zygmunt Deybel  
**Maria Zofia Denhoffowa 1729-1730**  
Architect Jan Zygmunt Deybel  
**August II Mocny 1730-1733**  
Architect Jan Zygmunt Deybel  
**Prince and Princess August Czartoryski 1733-1775**  
Architects Jan Zygmunt Deybel  
Jan Kotelnicki



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Photos: W. Bagiński, W. Holnicki, R. Szambelan  
Translation: Iwona Zych



→ Restoration  
of the palace  
facades, 2003-2008



Art of Conservation - Wilanów Palace Museum



## → Restoration of the palace façades, 2003-2008

**A few times in its history the palace fell upon hard times when neglected and even deserted, it slowly turned into a ruin. The first time this happened was after the death of Jan III. In 1720 the royal residence was purchased from the heir, Konstanty Sobieski, by Elżbieta Sieniawska who embarked on a major refurbishment and development project under the supervision of the architect Józef Fontana. Restoration was needed again in the beginning of the 21st century when the state of the façades, sculptures and plastering were found to be in need of some major conservation work.**

The restoration of the façades was made possible by generous funding from the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage and the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism. Extensive research and material studies naturally preceded the restoration project.

The most obvious effect of the project was the new colors of the palace façades. The characteristic subdued ocher, which originated from the early 19th century, was replaced with vibrant “Wilanów yellow” on the elements of the architectural order, accentuating the architectural structure against the off-white of the walls. The contrast was emphasized by the intense “terracotta” color of the archivolts with allegorical scenes in the façades of the garden galleries in the courtyard. The colors reflect the results of examination of historic plasterwork, revealing the original tricolor decoration of the façades. Today’s appearance of the restored façades, captured on paintings by Bernardo Belotto in 1776-1777, goes back to the renovation of the building in 1720-1729.



The project carried out by Elżbieta Sieniawska developed in a harmonious way the original color structure and carved decoration of the façades, established as a principle by King John III for the main body of the building, the galleries and the towers. Color was one of the autonomic elements of the architectural language used by the founders, the king and his architect Augustyn Locci.

Sieniawska’s development of the palace in 1720-29 was momentous also because it established the final spatial structure of the building. The only later addition is the bathhouse built for Izabela Lubomirska, transformed into the so-called Marconiówka. This was the last event in the architectural transformation of the Wilanów residence from a traditional Old Polish manor house through a Palladian villa to the present palace form.

The poor condition of the façades in the early 21st century was the effect of progressing environmental pollution and spot conservation carried out in the past forty years.



The scope of the façade restoration project can be judged by the time it took – from 2003 to 2008 without break, the surface it covered (7500 square meters) and the number of architectural and sculptural elements that were treated – altogether 574. Among these one can mention allegorical figures, busts, vases, reliefs with figural scenes, Atlas figures and herm pilasters, portals, window frames, columns, pilaster bases and capitals, bay windows, pedestals and balustrades. The historic material that had to be treated included sandstone (both the Szydlowiec and Gotland varieties), diverse mineral masses and gold. At times there were up to 140 restorers and highly qualified craftsmen working simultaneously on the scaffolding. The work was carried out by the Institute of Conservation and Restoration of Art Works, a combined effort of the Fine Arts Academies in Warsaw and Kraków.



An integral part of the conservation program was the building of a special display area to house the numerous statues and sculptural compositions that were removed from the façades. Four priceless 17th-century attic sculptures depicting the Greek muses: Klio (history), Erato (love poetry), Euterpe (lyrical poetry) and Kalliope (epic poetry), were thus saved from destruction and are now on display in the Pavilion of Sculptures.

These sculptures carved in Gotland sandstone were made in 1687 and brought from Antwerp for King John III. They are now replaced with copies on the attic of the building. Initially they decorated the corners of the towers, but were removed from there when the towers received baroque cupolas. Eight of the statues were placed on the attic of the once again raised central part of the building. After three hundred years of standing on the attic, their condition had deteriorated significantly.



Seen before from the palace courtyard at the height of the third floor, they can now be admired face on through a transparent glass screen in the display pavilion, which stands back of the Stable to the west of the Rose Garden.

