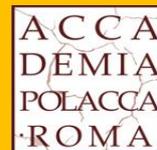


# ACCADEMIA POLACCA DELLE SCIENZE



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invita alla presentazione del progetto

## **THE CITRI ET AUREA**

In English

**Historical citrus collections of Museum of King Jan III's Palace in Wilanów**



**Martedì, 3 dicembre 2019, ore 18.30**  
presso l'Accademia Polacca delle Scienze a Roma,  
vicolo Doria, 2 (Piazza Venezia)

## THE "CITRI ET AUREA" PROJECT

The "Citri et Aurea" project was conceived as a collaboration between the Museum of King Jan III's Palace in Wilanów and the Uffizi Galleries – Boboli Gardens in Florence in the field of historical citrus collections.

The foundations of the project are the contacts between the courts of Duke Cosimo III de' Medici and King Jan III, established after the victorious Battle of Vienna, which resulted in eight chests of plants being sent from Florence to Warsaw in 1684. Among the species listed in historical sources are: lumia lemon (*Citrus lumia* 'Pomum Adami'), common peach (*Prunus persica*) and fig tree (*Ficus carica* 'Brogiotto'). In addition to plants the king had requested, others – recommended by the duke's gardeners – were included, and an Italian gardener was assigned to watch over them in transport.

In the 16th century, gardens were associated with the mythical Golden Age, and particularly in the eleventh of the twelve labours of Hercules, during which the hero had to steal golden apples from the garden of the Hesperides. Using sculptures and fountains, the Medicis created symbolic programmes in their gardens, meant to link their family with the heroic virtues and strength of Hercules. Citruses, which were identified with the golden apples of the Hesperides, became an important part of the gardens. This motif later spread throughout Europe, which resulted in the creation of many excellent citrus collections. The title of the Polish Hercules (Hercules Polonus) accompanied King Jan III throughout his reign (1674–1696) and was reflected in his summer residence in Wilanów, both in the decorations of the palace and in the Baroque garden surrounding it. Architects and gardeners created a true citrus paradise at the palace, which, together with a complex of sculptures, glorified the figure of King Jan III. The later turmoil in history led to the scattering and loss of the royal collection. The process of its reconstruction began in 2016, when 38 specimens of orange trees in characteristic oak pots appeared in the Baroque garden, reconstructed on the basis of paintings by Bernard Bellotto. At present, the Wilanów collection consists of over 100 specimens of such species as common lemons (*Citrus limon*), Chinese oranges (*Citrus × sinensis*), mandarin oranges (*Citrus reticulata*), grapefruits (*Citrus × paradisi*) and bitter oranges (*Citrus × aurantium*).

The Uffizi Galleries are the strategic partner of the project. Promotion is supported by Polish institutions in Italy – the Polish Institute in Rome and the Polish Academy of Sciences Scientific Center in Rome.