

The world is constantly evolving. People change, and so does the environment around them. It is worthwhile to give some thought to the consequences of these transformations. For example, the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere was 280 ppm (particles per million) in the pre-industrial period; by 1956, it increased to 310 ppm, and now it is over 415 ppm. Special financial programs and information campaigns are being created to limit the climate change that leads to glacier melting and increased intensity of torrential rains. Historical gardens are an important element in counteracting the alteration of the environment. This can be seen in the example of the Wilanów complex, one of the few spaces constituting the so-called cool oases for the residents of the capital, who, due to the progressive investment pressure, have to live in areas covered over with concrete. However, the question arises as to what happens to historical complexes in the era of change.

Volume XXIX of *Wilanów Studies* is almost entirely devoted to the question of historical gardens. Their past, present, and future are considered. The following mottoes were chosen to inspire the authors: creation, meaning, and existence.

**Creation** is an act of making, of calling into existence. The concept is related to designing gardens – which can be understood as a holistic process – as well as individual elements, such as sculptures or items of small-scale architecture. Cicero's adage: *Historia magistra vitae est*, also refers to the history of garden life. After all, when designing, we are often inspired by objects we have already seen or heard about. When learning the history of garden art, we must pay attention to the transformations of historical spatial and aesthetic patterns, but also to the form, structure, and functionality of individual parts of garden complexes as well as objects located therein.

**Meaning** refers directly to the areas of axiology and semiotics. A garden should be considered a work of art whose principal designer is nature, as it is nature that determines the choice of species to be planted. Recognising the various values of gardens, the symbolism of spatial compositions, plants, architectural objects or sculptures composing them, we have the opportunity to experience artistic exultation. In recent years, we have been looking at garden values in an increasingly broad manner. These are not only specific species of fauna and flora or relationships expressed in the climate, ecosystem services or biodiversity but also other values, e.g. economic (as a tourist attraction or in the context of transport costs and carbon footprint) or socio-cultural ones (including identity shaping, memory and testimonies of history, local communities or symbolism).

Garden **relationships** can be understood in various ways. Gardens are spaces subject to dynamic transformation, hubs of multi-layered values

## INTRODUCTION

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at Wilanów*

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that go beyond the boundaries of the garden itself. The perception of the garden depends on many factors, including natural ones: seasons, climatic conditions, complex dependencies among representatives of flora and fauna, correlations between natural habitats and the surrounding landscape. Also, we can often talk about the bond between Man and Nature, which is expressed in the narrative potential. That bond leads to a better knowledge and understanding of its world; this, in turn, offers an opportunity for a fuller perception of its value, which is important for artistic creation, but also, for instance, for social relations. The form of gardens and their condition is one of the key elements of how people choose spaces and, consequently, how they identify with them.

**Existence** is closely related to the identity of gardens, and preserving their authenticity – although the idea can be understood in various ways in this context – is crucial for their survival. This concept refers directly to the exchange of experiences related to the protection and maintenance of garden complexes and their surroundings, as well as the natural and cultural elements forming them. However, it cannot be concealed that in the modern world, duration is directly related to cooperation. In many projects, to obtain funding, it is necessary to establish a research consortium. Thus, we may venture to say that existence is based on the exchange of experience and constant search for the best remedies enabling the existence of objects.

This year's issue of *Wilanów Studies* can be divided into several parts. The volume opens with scholarly articles devoted to Italian historical gardens in Trieste and Caserta. In their texts, Andreina Contessa and Paola Viola have put particular emphasis on the masterful composition and implementation of various garden concepts. The changes taking place in these green spaces are treated as continuous processes associated with structural but also with botanical changes. The authors also took into account the contemporary challenges faced by museums wishing to preserve their unique green heritage. The articles that follow focus on the faunistic aspect. Piotr Skowroński and Ewa Sosin discuss the animals kept in the eighteenth-century Łazienki Królewskie park, among which there were exotic and local species, both ornamental and wild. Aleksandra Jakóbczyk-Gola, in turn, presents a broad spectrum of possibilities regarding animal exhibitions.

The second part of the volume is devoted to the spaces of the palace and garden complex at Wilanów. Currently, it is often visited by tourists, as well as locals looking for relaxation after work or rest from everyday urban noise. It is hard to imagine this space without items of small-scale architecture. The garden furniture has been studied by Łukasz Przybylak, who describes it in the context of renewal processes. Also, gardens contain a multitude of plant and animal species; to effectively manage the space, it is necessary to organise those logically. In the description

of the *Natura Protectata* project conducted by a team of employees of the Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów, the authors: Jacek Kuśmierski, Damian Makowski, and Marta Poławska attempted to systematise the natural collection of the Wilanów museum. Organising it in a specific hierarchy not only makes it possible to study the relationships between individual elements but also improves the efficiency of education. As the authors rightly pointed out, the natural collection alone is not enough; it is important to talk about it in such a way that the listeners' memory retains as much content as possible. It is not without significance that the environment plays the role of a unique narrator in the context of both history and nature. In the article that follows, the aspect of disseminating natural knowledge was taken up by the author of these words, referring to the potential of the place: he confronted the advantages and disadvantages of traditional aids and digital tools, which are increasingly fashionable (but are they equally effective?). This section concludes with Philippe Walter's text on non-invasive analytical methods used to study the painting *Salvator Mundi* from the workshop of Leonardo da Vinci, now in the historical collection at Wilanów.

A separate section of the volume is the news, again opened with information from the world. Dirk Syndram, describes the Saxon Baroque and Egyptomania in the 18th century. Ingo Pfeifer's text, in turn, deals with Ignacy Krasicki's *Listy o ogrodach* (*Letters on Gardens*) and his correspondence on this topic with Prince Leopold III of Anhalt-Dessau, known as Prince Francis.

In the texts that follow, we return to Wilanów. Aleksandra Głowacz has shown how nature connects with culture – in a truly 'cosmic style' – using the example of the exhibition 'The Moon and Sobieski's Shield: Hevelius' Masterpieces and Contemporary Art'. The event was an expression of the link between the history and knowledge related to Johannes Hevelius and contemporary artists associated with the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw. In the following communication, Anna Czarnecka and Martyna Sowińska-Pasek vel Paszkowska raised an important aspect of museum activities, namely the security. The authors refer to the series of seminars conducted under the auspices of the International Council of Museums ICOM and the National Committee ICOM Poland, with the support of the National Institute for Museums and Public Collections, describing one of the tools that can be used in crisis situations. Nela Kokoszka and Jacek Kuśmierski have presented the achievements of the Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów within the framework of the European Route of Historic Gardens between 2017 and 2021. It is a non-profit association founded by the Municipal Corporations of Lloret de Mar (Girona) and Aranjuez (Madrid, through the Aranjuez Cultural Landscape Foundation) and the Laboratory of Heritage, Creativity and Cultural Tourism at the University of Barcelona.

The goals of ERHG's activities include raising awareness and promoting historical gardens, developing contacts with the Council of Europe and other European institutions, promoting good practices in the field of cultural heritage appreciation, and promoting identity-enhancing educational activities. Joanna Paprocka-Gajek has presented the latest acquisitions in the Wilanów collection. The volume concludes with Aleksandra Jakóbczyk-Gola's review of the book *Chanteloup, the Renaissance Garden of the Villeroy. An Initiation to Humanism*, which constitutes an interdisciplinary study of the garden, and the Chronicle of the Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów, compiled by Marta Gołabek and Jagoda Kruszezewska.

Historical gardens are very often connected with cultural institutions. The ICOM Convention, created in 2016, deals with the museums' responsibility for the surrounding landscape. It underlines that museums are part of the landscape and have a particular responsibility to manage it and preserve its heritage in accordance with the principles of sustainable development. In order to meet the challenges of the modern world, the competences of museums are expanded. This is what the present times require in a situation of increasing risk to maintaining natural and cultural values. Let us keep in mind the words of Professor Janusz Bogdanowski: 'The state of the landscape is a testimony and a strict verifier of actions'. This also applies to historical gardens, which are a part of landscapes, often with priority status.

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