



Let Them See Us!

Image, Attire, Body

10 October 2025 – 8 February 2026

The Royal Castle in Warsaw

Paintings by Marcello Bacciarelli and Bartłomiej Strobel, alongside porcelain figurines, ceremonial swords, kontusz belts, Yves Saint Laurent *haute couture* outfits, and Thierry Mugler's rainbow suits – the latest exhibition at the Royal Castle in Warsaw reminds us that the history of clothing is the history of culture and of how we wish to be seen. The exhibition features around 250 diverse objects from different eras, spanning the 16th century to the present day. Among them are valuable works on loan from national and international museums, including the Louvre in Paris, the Museum of Art History in Vienna, and the Old Masters Picture Gallery in Dresden, as well as from private collections.

The starting point for the exhibition's narrative is the Royal Castle's collection. In subsequent sections, it explores the figures of the ruler, knight, hunter, Diana, Flora, philosopher, oriental costume, and female attractiveness, revealing the wealth of meanings contained in clothing over the centuries. Art, craftsmanship, and fashion come together in a single narrative – not as illustrations, but as equal voices.

The primary aim of the exhibition is to decipher the meanings embedded in the works of art found within the castle's interiors. By extending the time frame from the 16th century to the present day in an unconventional way, the exhibition draws attention to the processual nature of change within European culture and highlights the metamorphoses and transgressions of the iconographic motifs selected for display – says Monika Przytkowska, curator of the exhibition.

Among the works presented at the exhibition are artefacts of inestimable value to Polish history, such as Stanisław August's coronation mantle (1764), which opens the exhibition, and Zygmunt August's youth armour (1533). These are displayed alongside masterpieces by Old Masters such as Antoon van Dyck, Louis-Michel van Loo, and Alexandre-François Desportes.

The exhibition also offers a significant representation of works by renowned Polish artists of the 19th and 20th centuries, as well as by contemporary young artists working in Poland. It provides a unique opportunity to see works by Zofia Kulik, Natalia LL (Natalia Lach-Lachowicz),



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Karol Radziszewski, Magdalena Abakanowicz, Edward Dwurnik, Agata Agatowska, Ewa Juszkiewicz, Teresa Pągowska, and Agnieszka Rożnowska all in one space.

The *haute couture* and *prêt-à-porter* creations and accessories by world-renowned designers and fashion houses from Adam Leja's collection also play an important role in the exhibition. Their creators include Coco Chanel, Elsa Schiaparelli, Cristóbal Balenciaga, Christian Dior, Gianfranco Ferré, John Galliano, Alexander McQueen, Paco Rabanne, Daniel Roseberry, Yves Saint Laurent and Vivienne Westwood.

The exhibition *Let Them See Us! Image, Attire, Body* also shows how individual motifs return after centuries, imbued with new, often diametrically opposed, meanings. One of them is the corset – once a tool of patriarchal oppression, today a symbol of female strength.

"Let Them See Us!" is an exhibition that reminds us of something obvious, yet far from banal. It abounds in objects and narratives, combining art, craftsmanship, and fashion into a multi-voiced story. When we look at a crown, a philosopher's dressing gown, or a drag queen's shoe, we see that the history of clothing is a continuous series of visibility strategies – stories of how much we want, and how much we fear, to be seen – emphasises Dr Jarosław Trybuś, Deputy Director for Museums and Programmes at the Royal Castle.

An educational programme and a wide range of accompanying events have been prepared in connection with the exhibition, including a tour with the curator, evening guided tours, and intergenerational activities. We encourage you to take part in expert-led tours of the exhibition – meetings with specialists who will share their own perspectives, shaped by their knowledge and passion: Karolina Sulej, Dr Anna Straszewska, Dr Artur Badach, Adam Leja, Dr Tomasz Mleczek, and Marcin Różyc.

The exhibition is accompanied by a richly illustrated publication featuring essays by Stach Szabłowski, Anda Rottenberg, Marcin Różyc, Joanna Wasilewska and others.

We also invite you to explore our diverse programme of in-person and online lectures.



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Let Them See Us! Image, Attire, Body Exhibition

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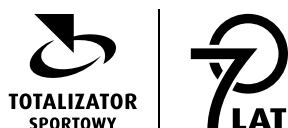
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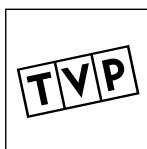
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