

Cracow University, founded in 1364 by King Casimir the Great of Poland, is the oldest Polish university and the second oldest in Central Europe following the Prague University. The Studium Generale, as it was named at the time, consisted of three faculties: liberal arts (philosophy), medicine and law. After the sudden death of the king in 1370, the university ceased to exist until a new foundation charter was issued in 1400 by King Ladislaus the Jagiellonian, the founder of the Jagiellonian dynasty. The renewal was made possible by the money and valuable bequeathed by Queen Hedwig in 1399. The royal couple was successful in obtaining papal permission for a faculty of theology which increased the University's prestige. With its extraordinary professor staff, the University gained international fame, attracting students from all parts of Europe.

Collegium Maius

Collegium Maius, located on the corner of Św. Anny and Jagiellońska Street, is the oldest university building in Poland. In 1400 King Ladislaus II Jagiello bequeathed a townhouse to the University, purchased from the town councillor Piotr Gerhardsdorf. Its remaining traces are the pieces of cobblestone wall in the current building's foundations and on its corner (both on Jagiellońska Street and in the courtyard). Over the 15th century, the college area was increased through the purchase of adjacent houses and the construction of new buildings. After the two fires in 1462 and 1492, all the individual houses were joined into a single harmonious structure, forming an arcaded courtyard surrounded by cloisters with the diamond vaults typical for the Late Gothic style. The uniform cloisters were interspersed by the 'Professor' stairs leading to the first-floor balcony. The ground floor housed the lectoria, or lecture rooms. Those long rooms with low ceilings were poorly lit and often damp. The library (Libraria), the Common Room (Stuba Communis), the treasury and the theologians' lecture room (the present-day Aula – assembly hall) were situated on the first floor. The professor dwellings, or residences, were located on the first and second floors. Up to the mid-19th century, the College's appearance and internal layout had not altered in a significant way. Its appearance and function completely changed with the alteration work for the period 1840-1870, giving Collegium Maius a new-Gothic look and creating a new seat for the Jagiellonian Library. After the Library abandoned the College in 1940, it was possible for Prof. Karol Estreicher to initiate new, extensive renovation works for the period 1949-1964, including the removal of the new-Gothic additions. As a result, the original pre-1840 appearance of Collegium Maius was restored.

During this period it was decided that the building was to become the location for the Jagiellonian University Museum, giving shelter to the old University collections (works of art and keepsakes), as well as a significant number of scientific instruments.

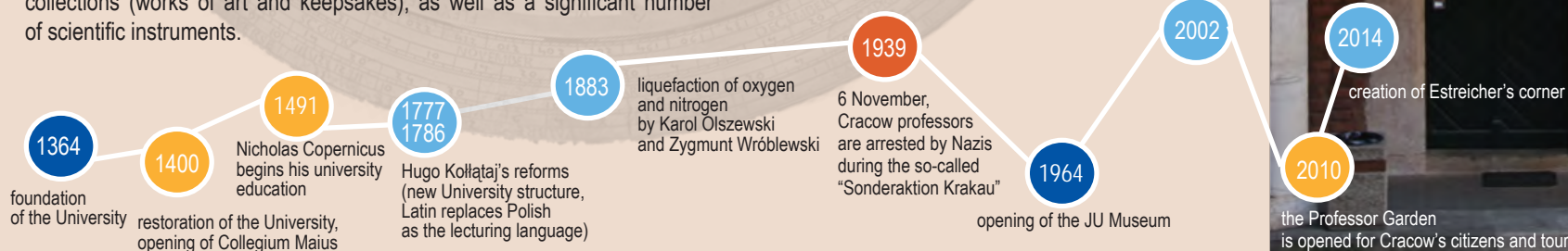


The Museum reserves the right to change the visiting order and opening times due to University events.

Online tickets

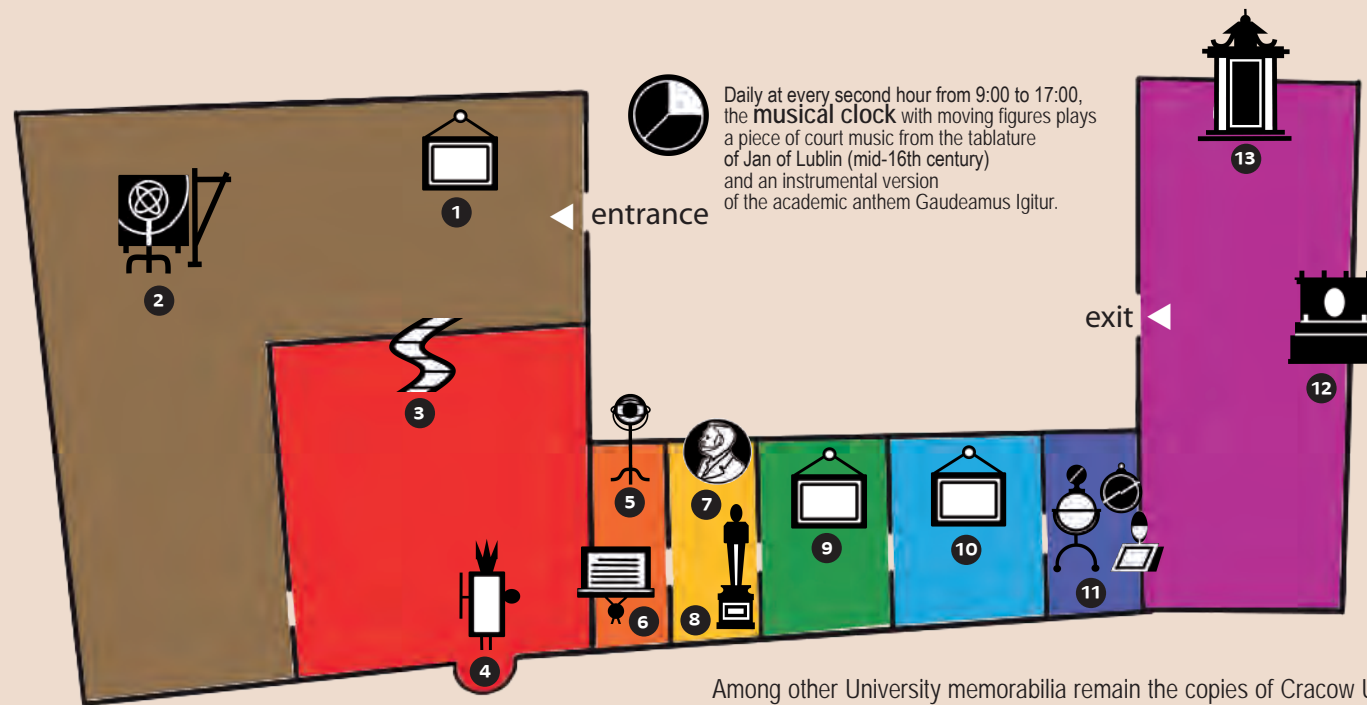


Opening of the 600th anniversary of University's restoration campus



Jagiellonian
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Museum
Collegium
Maius

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Libraria

Libraria is the old library hall built in the first half of the 16th century. The entrance is a decorative portal called *Porta Aurea* (Golden Gateway). The late-Gothic net vault was painted blue as a reference to the university library in Salamanca. The neo-Baroque cases contain books from the *Pusłowski* family's collection (18th and 19th century). A collection of busts represents distinguished Polish scholars and alumni. The walls are covered with portraits of the professors who contributed to the development of the Museum and its collection. Among significant objects is a set of three wooden replicas of instruments used by Nicolas Copernicus and a 19th-century bookwheel. At present the *Libraria* serves as the place for the monthly meetings of the University Senate. The professors hold debates around the neo-Baroque tables while the Rector sits on an 18th-century armchair.

Stuba Communis

Stuba Communis, or the Common Room, was built in the middle of the 15th century as the dining room and meeting place for theologians who lived in the building until the 18th century. The scholars would sit in seniority order around three oakwood tables. Imitating monastic communities, the youngest professor read fragments of religious texts during each meal. The room is decorated with a spiral stairwell made ca. 1700 in Gdańsk and a Baroque stove, made in 1647, from the Głębowice manor house. Inside the Gothic oriel stands a figure of King Casimir the Great from ca. 1380 and a wooden eagle-shaped lectern (Germany, 16th century). *Stuba Communis* remains the place for official meetings with the most distinguished guests visiting the University.

Treasury I

Thanks to generous donors, professors and alumni, the Museum's collection includes exquisite works of art and craftsmanship, scientific instruments and mementos of famous figures. The safe, previously used in Alfred Holzer's bank, features such objects as rector's insignia: sceptres, a chain and two rings.

Among other University memorabilia remain the copies of Cracow University's foundation documents: one issued by King Casimir III the Great on 12 May 1364 and another by King Władysław Jagiełło on 26 July 1400, both reconstructed using photographs of the originals.

Treasury II

This room features objects donated by various collectors and mementos which once belonged to distinguished personages associated with the University.

Antoni Żołędziowski Room

The room is named after the last theology professor who lived here, Antoni Żołędziowski (1711–1783), a longstanding rector of the University. His portrait hangs on the left side. Professors lived in Collegium Maius until the 1780s. Their rooms were modestly arranged, because as theologians they had to live a monastic life. In the past the rooms were not connected together – every habitation had a separate entrance from the cloister. Presently the room displays 18th century furniture from Lower Silesia, Lesser Poland and Germany. The name 'Żołędziowski Room' refers to Professor Antoni Żołędziowski (1711–1783), a theologian and repeatedly University rector. His portrait hangs on the green curtain. Visitors should pay attention to another portrait hanging above the entrance to the next room which represents Hugo Kołłątaj, the scholar responsible for the 1777–1786 reforms which replaced Latin with Polish as the language of instruction.

Ambroży Grabowski Room

Most of the furniture was once property of Ambroży Grabowski (1782–1868), a distinguished historian, bookstore owner and collector related to the Estreicher family. It was Grabowski who proved that the main altar in the St. Mary's Church was made by Veit Stoss. The room has a 19th-century arrangement. There is a curious smoking table and an unusually short bed here (the common 19th century opinion was that sleeping in a horizontal position may be detrimental to one's health).

- 1 Foundation painting *Resurrection*, workshop of Tommaso Dolabella, first half of the 17th c.
- 2 Reconstructed instruments of Nicholas Copernicus.
- 3 Gdańsk stairwell, ca. 1700.
- 4 Wooden sculpture of Casimir the Great, ca. 1380.
- 5 'Jagiellonian' Globe, early 16th century.
- 6 Reconstructed foundation charters of the Jagiellonian University.
- 7 Literature Nobel Prize medal donated by Wisława Szymborska, 1996.
- 8 The Oscar award donated by Andrzej Wajda, 1999.
- 9 Portrait of Prof. Antoni Żołędziowski by Tadeusz Konieczny, 1767.
- 10 Portrait by Ambroży Grabowski by Wojciech Korneli Stattler, 1838.
- 11 Scientific instrument set, end of 15th century.
- 12 Stalls—seats occupied by the rector and vice-rectors during celebrations.
- 13 Portal and door from the Lords' Room in the old Cracow town hall, 1593.

Nicholas Copernicus' Treasury

Nicholas Copernicus studied at the University in 1491–1495. At the turn of the 15th and 16th century the University witnessed a remarkable development in fields of mathematics and astronomy, with such extraordinary professors as Jan of Glogów or Marcin Bylica of Olkusz. The young Copernicus enrolled at the faculty of philosophy, treated as preparatory studies in the medieval period, where students learned the liberal arts (grammar, rhetoric, dialectics, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music) and Aristotelian philosophy. The room features astronomical instruments bequeathed by Professor Marcin Bylica in his last will, including a unique set of three medieval astronomical instruments consisting of an astrolabe, a torquetum and celestial globe, made near the end of the 15th century (displayed near the window), and a Moorish astrolabe made in 1054 in Córdoba (display case by the entrance). Contemporary exhibits include a photograph of the Earth signed by Neil Armstrong (wall near the entrance) and donated by the astronaut on the 500th anniversary of Copernicus' birth.

Jagiellonian Hall

The so-called Jagiellonian Hall is the former lecture room once used by theologians, which presently has a representative function. The professors received the most prominent guests here, including the kings of Poland. At present it is the place for the most important festivities, like habilitation or honorary doctorate ceremonies. The stalls (seats) were made in 1962 designed after 17th-century church stalls. The seats are occupied by members of the University Senate. The coffered ceiling is adorned with Renaissance rosettes, each having its own distinct shape. The walls of the Aula are decorated with one hundred portraits of the most prominent personages associated with the University. Visitors should pay attention to the portraits of Queen Jadwiga and King Władysław Jagiełło (painted by Jan Tryczusz, 1677) and a portrait of Karol Wojtyła (painted by L. Sobocki, 1980, above the entrance). At the end of the hall they can admire the mannerist inlaid door from 1593 and a stone portal from the former Cracow's town hall.