

Lithuania

Introduction Lithuania

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Art Collecting in Lithuania: Every End is a new Beginning

After 1863 rebellion against the Tsarist Russia, up to the World War I the national movement became more active in Lithuania, which roused the national self-consciousness not only of Lithuanians but also of Polish people and foreigners who lived in Vilnius and other parts of the country. In the beginning of the 20th century socially and nationally rather split up communities composed the population of Vilnius – Polish gentry, newly enriched citizens trying to follow traditions and behaviour of the gentry as well as multi-national intelligentsia. Gentry made a significant impact on the cultural development of the city and it distinguished itself by strong conservatism both, from the point of view of cultural ideas and forms of art, therefore, the local artists supported the prevailing stereotypes of those days: condemned cultural revolt, despised lower layers of people and supported Christian values. Due to low citizens` demand for art, the strongest artists looked for the buyers abroad – in Warsaw, Krakow and Lvov. Up to 1904, when the Russian Tsar abolished the prohibition to write in Latin letters, art criticism was not practically developed.

I. Art during the search for national identity

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Printed: 2012-05-20 16:34