

RECONSTRUCTION OF THE INTERIORS

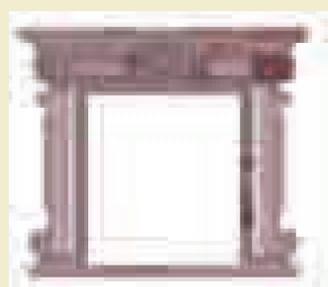
During the archaeological research, numerous interior decor elements from the grand ducal palace were discovered which aided in the reconstruction of the Gothic, Renaissance and early Baroque period room floors, ceilings, stained-glass windows, fireplaces, portals and stoves. A majority of the interior details made from conglomerate (a local coarse sandstone), greenish-pink sandstone, pink, white and black limestone, such as the cornices, window and door surrounds, fireplace details, floor tiles and balusters, recall the period of reign of the Jagiellon and Vasa dynasties when the palace flourished. Many of the sandstone profiles are decorated with the coats of arms of the Vasas and crowns, and motifs featuring the Order of the Golden Fleece. These stone details helped in the reconstruction of both the exterior and the interior stone architecture. The research also unearthed over 10,000 pink, grey, black and white-coloured stone tiles in various shapes and sizes, and different coloured glazed ceramic tiles, sometimes decorated with relief ornamentation. Based on this information, the hypothetic floors of the 15th–17th-century palace were reconstructed.

The collection of stove tiles found in the palace territory has proven to be very rich and varied, and is one of the largest in all of Europe. Six 15th–17th-century stoves have been reconstructed based on the discovered tiles. The stoves look similar to the historic structure and are an important part of the interior. The discovered Gothic tiles are decorated with coats of arms, allegorical, mythological and biblical motifs. Similar tiles have been traced to Poland, the Czech Republic (then

Bohemia) and Hungary. In the 15th–early 16th century, these Central European states were ruled by members of the Jagiellon dynasty.

The largest proportion of tiles discovered during the excavations were from the Renaissance period. Most are decorated with biblical scenes, plant motifs and allegorical illustrations, as well as a number of heraldic tiles from this period. The tile illustrations take inspiration from the etchings of Lucas Cranach, Georg Pencz and Sebald Beham. Among the more interesting finds is the series of cornice tiles featuring hares, depicting the world upside-down (*Mundus Inversus*). The marriage of Sigismund the Old and Bona Sforza took place in 1518, and it was their wedding and the construction of the Renaissance residential palace in Vilnius which lasted until the fire of 1530, that prompted this wave of Renaissance-influenced expression in the Vilnius Lower Castle.

Tiles were also discovered from the later periods of reign of Sigismund Augustus and the rulers from the Vasa dynasty that reflect the development in artistic tastes and styles, and differ in their heraldry, ornamentation and spectrum of colours. Heraldic tiles of the Lithuanian magnates were also among those found dating to the early 17th century. This serves to confirm our information from historical sources that the highest ranked Lithuanian state officials, such as Chancellor Lew Sapieha, contributed to the reconstruction of the residence of the Lithuanian grand dukes following the fire of 1610 and had their office apartments in the palace.



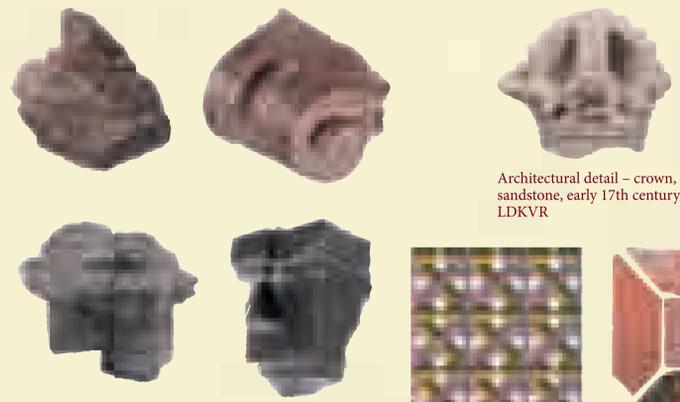
Early 17th-century fireplace with the Vasa coat of arms and with the surviving parts highlighted, reconstruction by Rasa Abramauskienė, PTC, LDKVR



Cornice stove tiles depicting an allegorical hunting scene with hares, mid-16th century, LDKVR



Model of a reconstructed mid-16th-century Renaissance tile stove, LDKVR



Fragments of fireplace surrounds, black and pink marble, early 17th century, LDKVR

Architectural detail – crown, sandstone, early 17th century, LDKVR

16th-century ceramic floor, reconstruction by Rasa Abramauskienė, PTC

Floor tiles, 16th century, LDKVR



Renaissance audience hall. The 16th-century floor and tile stove recreated on the basis of original find material. Heraldic frieze along the ceiling depicts coats of arms of the lands of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, 2013, LDKVR



Renaissance Great Hall. The 17th-century stone floor recreated on the basis of original find material, 2013, LDKVR