



Stanisław  
**MONIUSZKO**

**Halka**

Sutowicz

Molendowska

Goliński

Korpik

Wilczyńska-Goś

Konieczek

Poznań Opera House  
Orchestra and Chorus

Gabriel Chmura



Stanisław  
**MONIUSZKO**  
(1819–1872)  
**Halka**

Opera in four acts (1848, rev. 1858)  
Libretto by Włodzimierz Wolski (1824–1882)  
Sung in Polish

First performance: 1 January 1858 at the Teatr Wielki, Warsaw, Poland

<b>Jontek</b> .....	<b>Dominik Sutowicz, Tenor</b>
<b>Halka</b> .....	<b>Magdalena Molendowska, Soprano</b>
<b>Janusz</b> .....	<b>Łukasz Goliński, Bass-baritone</b>
<b>Stolnik</b> .....	<b>Rafał Korpik, Bass</b>
<b>Zofia</b> .....	<b>Magdalena Wilczyńska-Goś, Mezzo-soprano</b>
<b>Dziemba</b> .....	<b>Damian Konieczek, Bass</b>
<b>Highlander</b> .....	<b>Piotr Friebe, Tenor</b>
<b>Piper, Guest I</b> .....	<b>Bartłomiej Szczeszek, Tenor</b>
<b>Guest II</b> .....	<b>Piotr Maciejowski, Tenor</b>
<b>Guest III, Guest IV</b> .....	<b>Andrzej Ogórkiewicz, Bass-baritone</b>

**Poznań Opera House Chorus**  
**Mariusz Otto, Chorus Master**

**Poznań Opera House Orchestra**  
**Gabriel Chmura, Conductor**

1 Overture	7:33	<b>Aria</b>	
		14 I ty mu wierzysz, biedna dziewczyno ( <i>Jontek, Halka, Chorus</i> )	4:58
<b>Act I</b>		<b>Finale</b>	
<b>Scene 1: Polonaise</b>		15 Puszczajcie mnie! ( <i>Halka, Jontek</i> )	1:31
2 Niechaj żyje para młoda ( <i>Dziemba, Stolnik, Chorus, Guest I, Guest II</i> )	4:30	<b>Scene 4</b>	
<b>Scene 2: Trio</b>		16 Wszak ci mówiłem ( <i>Janusz, Jontek</i> )	3:10
3 Pobłogosław, ojcze panie ( <i>Janusz, Zofia, Stolnik, Halka</i> )	6:03	<b>Scene 5</b>	
<b>Scene 3: Recitative</b>		17 Dziwna jakaś dziewczka! ( <i>Dziemba, Chorus, Jontek, Stolnik, Zofia, Janusz, Halka</i> )	1:40
4 Skąd tu przybyła mimo mej woli? – Song of Janusz: Czemuż mnie w chwilach samotnych owych ( <i>Janusz</i> )	2:37	<b>Act III</b>	
<b>Scene 4: Song</b>		18 Entr'acte	2:43
5 Jako od wichru krzew połamany ( <i>Halka</i> )	2:09	<b>Scene 1</b>	
<b>Duet</b>		19 Po niesporach przy niedzieli ( <i>Highlander, Chorus</i> )	5:11
6 O Jaśko! Mój drogi! ( <i>Halka, Janusz, Chorus</i> )	7:23	20 Tańce góralskie ('Highland Dances')	4:20
<b>Scene 5: Chorus</b>		<b>Scene 2</b>	
7 Gdzieżeś, gdzieżeś panie młody? ( <i>Chorus, Janusz, Guest III, Guest IV</i> )	1:37	21 Patrzajta! Cóż tam? ( <i>Chorus, Jontek, Halka</i> )	7:00
<b>Aria</b>		<b>Finale</b>	
8 O mościwi mi panowie! ( <i>Stolnik, Janusz, Dziemba</i> )	2:53	22 Tak to, tak z dziewczętami ( <i>Chorus, Halka, Highlander</i> )	2:10
9 Mazurka	3:54	<b>Act IV</b>	
<b>Act II</b>		<b>Scene 1: Recitative and Dumka</b>	
10 Entr'acte	1:03	23 [Orchestral Introduction]	1:04
<b>Scene 1: Recitative</b>		<b>Recitative</b>	
11 O! Jakżebym klęczeć już chciała ( <i>Halka</i> )	2:07	24 Nieszczęsna Halka! Gwałtem tu idzie ( <i>Jontek</i> )	1:22
<b>Aria</b>		<b>Scene 2: Recitative</b>	
12 Gdyby rannym słonkiem ( <i>Halka</i> )	4:28	25 Hej dudarzu! ( <i>Jontek, Piper</i> )	1:18
<b>Scene 2: Recitative</b>		<b>Dumka</b>	
13 A widzisz Jontku ( <i>Halka, Jontek</i> )	2:53	26 Szumią jodły na gór szczyście ( <i>Jontek</i> )	5:45

### Scene 3

27 Dobrze, żeście tu gromadą!  
(*Dziemba, Chorus, Stolnik, Janusz, Zofia, Halka, Jontek*)

9:54

### Scene 4: Duetтино

28 Oj wesoło, oj wesoło!  
(*Halka, Jontek*)

2:07

### Scene 5: Prayer in the Church

29 Ojczye z niebios, Boże, Panie  
(*Chorus*)

2:00

### Scene 6: Recitative

30 Ha! Dzieciątko nam umiera  
(*Halka*)

1:52

### Cavatina

31 O, mój maleriki!  
(*Halka, Chorus*)

6:30

### Scene 6: Cantilena

32 Jazbym cię miała zabić, mój drogi  
(*Halka*)

1:18

### Scene 7: Finale

33 Halko, O, Halko!  
(*Jontek, Chorus, Zofia, Janusz, Stolnik, Dziemba*)

1:59

## Stanisław Moniuszko (1819–1872)

### Halka

#### My Moniuszko

Although I was born in Poland, I have spent most of my life abroad. Focused on conducting operas by Mozart, Strauss or Verdi, I honestly admit I did not pay much attention to Moniuszko. I knew, of course, he was a national composer of my fellow countrymen. Through a twist of fate I became artistic director at Poznań Opera House, which is named after the composer Stanisław Moniuszko. This fact led me to give due consideration to his music. The first thing I did was take an old, covered in dust full score of *Halka* from my bookcase.

Soon after that all my doubts regarding Moniuszko's artistic skills were dispelled and replaced by joyous admiration. I quickly noticed that Moniuszko was not just one of those thousands of long-lost composers, whose pieces were nothing remarkable. Living in the 19th century, Moniuszko could not avoid being influenced by Auber and Donizetti. After receiving a good education abroad, however, he managed to create his own individual music language with characteristic modulations and harmonic patterns – including the use of the Lydian mode.

What is more, in *Act IV, Scene 2*, one can find proof that Moniuszko – similarly to other composers such as Chopin, Bartók or Szymanowski – managed to infuse his music with inspirations that came from folklore. I personally regard Jontek's *Act IV, Scene 2* aria *Szumią jodły na gór szczytynie* ('The firs are rustling on the mountain top') as one of the most beautiful opera arias of the 19th century. Moreover, some of the writing for chorus, for example in *Act IV, Scene 3*, where Janusz is singing: *Czy też jej nie poznała!* ('I hope Zofia doesn't recognise her!'), may compete with the ensemble writing of some of the greatest masters of the previous centuries. Although the libretto's ending is very dramatic in connection with the death of the title heroine, the music itself is rather light and cheerful at times, devoid of any severe Germanesque style or Puccini's pathos. In *Act IV, Scene 4: Duetтино* – which I personally experience as one of the most dramatic moments in this opera, and which is unfortunately often removed by some unwise conductors – Jontek is looking through the church glass at Janusz and Zofia getting married. Halka is standing next to him and she can hear the bride and groom receive the priest's blessing. It means

the death of all hope for Halka to win Janusz back – the father of her baby. This music may recall a similar scene from Berlioz's *La Damnation de Faust (Part IV, Scene 18)*, where Faust sings: 'Dans mon coeur retentit sa voix désespérée', and, harried by Mefisto, is stepping down into hell. In Moniuszko's opera, Halka at this point is very close to reaching her personal hell. In these two compositions one can feel the same atmosphere, based upon an ostinato – the repeating of a rhythmic pattern of triplets or semiquavers perpetually beating, creating an atmosphere of intimidation.

Hans von Bülow, considered one of the most outstanding conductors of the 19th century, wrote in *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* that Stanisław Moniuszko 'is worthy of respectful recognisability in the world of music'.

#### Gabriel Chmura

Stanisław Moniuszko was a Polish composer, conductor and teacher who wrote many popular art songs and operas, with his music being particularly notable for its patriotic folk themes from the former Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth.

Moniuszko was born on 5 May 1819 in Ubiel in the Minsk Governorate. In 1837 he left for Berlin, where he took private instruction in harmony, counterpoint, instrumentation and conducting with Carl Friedrich Rungenhagen, the director of the Singakademie Music Society. Having spent three years in Berlin, Moniuszko returned to Poland in 1840, where he married Aleksandra Mueller and settled down in Vilnius, where he took the organist's position at St John's, and is credited with reviving the local music scene with concerts of both choral and orchestral music. At around the same time, Moniuszko travelled to St Petersburg to introduce its audiences to his own compositions. His music was received with acclaim and had favourable reviews from some of Russia's leading composers and musicians, including Mikhail Glinka and César Cui.

In 1848, Moniuszko's two-act version of the opera *Halka* had its premiere staging in Vilnius, conducted by the composer himself. A decade later, following the triumphant

Warsaw premiere of the four-act version of *Halka* on 1 January 1858, Moniuszko was appointed the first conductor of the Polish Opera at the Teatr Wielki (Grand Theatre) in Warsaw on 1 August 1858. The same year, Moniuszko put on his one-act opera *Filis*, followed by the staging of all of the subsequent operas during his 15-year term.

Moniuszko's music has earned him widespread recognition in his home country, where he is widely referred to as 'the father of Polish national opera'. He died of a heart attack on 4 June 1872 in Warsaw.

#### About Halka

The world premiere of Moniuszko's four-act *Halka* at the Teatr Wielki ('Grand Theatre') in Warsaw on 1 January 1858 was highly acclaimed by both the audience and reviewers, and turned out to be not only an artistic event, but also a national one. There was even a suggestion that Polish opera was born in that moment. The overjoyed composer bowed six times, and *Kronika Wiadomości* ('The News Chronicle') newspaper proudly announced: 'Today Moniuszko has grown more powerful in our eyes, because he is a great talent, almost a genius.' The enormous success of the premiere resulted in significant changes in the composer's life. The guaranteed position of conductor at the Grand Theatre in Warsaw allowed him and his family to leave Vilnius, which was fairly provincial at that time, and start working with a professional opera company – something he had long dreamed of. Over the years, Moniuszko would become the director of the Grand Theatre, and professional stability would affect the development of his work, with this period resulting in the operas *The Raftsmen* (1858), *The Countess* (1860), *Verbum Nobile* (1861), *The Haunted Manor* (1865), *Paria* (1869) and the one-act operetta *Beata* (1871), as well as many other pieces.

But before *Halka* became the fully formed work that won the hearts of the Warsaw audience, Moniuszko composed its more modest, two-act version in 1848. Unlike 'Halka warszawska' ('Warsaw Halka'), the two-act 'Halka wileńska' ('Vilnius Halka'), named after the place of its creation, was not enthusiastically received. Moniuszko was

accused of a lack of patriotism and of immorality. The composer used the poem *Halszka* as the libretto, by Włodzimierz Wolski, a young writer and a conspirator with revolutionary inclinations, who in his works touched upon the topic of freedom. *Halszka*, based on the previously existing work *Góralka* by Kazimierz Władysław Wójcicki, was transformed by Wolski into a libretto. However, the original political themes were scrupulously cut by Russian censorship. The librettist and composer focused on the individual story of the emotionally sensitive poor highlander who falls in love with the rich young nobleman Janusz. The love affair between the poor girl and the rich man can be summed up in one sentence: Janusz was for Halka the love of her life, and Halka was only a fleeting love interest for Janusz. Halka's romance violated the conventions of 19th-century society in quite a strong fashion. Halka and her love are not the first such example of crossing social boundaries, however, that can be found within an opera plot. As indicated by experts, such as Noskowski and Ritter, who wrote independently about the opera, Moniuszko and Wolski drew inspiration from Daniel Auber's *La Muette de Portici* (1828), which was extremely popular at that time, while working on the libretto. As with Halka, Fenella, the mute title character of *La Muette de Portici*, is caught up in a doomed romance that cannot end in marriage, because the social background of the lovers stands in their way, and the only right solution to this stalemate seems to be the girl's death. In creating a theme similar to Auber's work, *Halka* became not only part of a Polish opera tradition, but also part of a wider shared European phenomenon.

The sources of the harsh assessments of the Vilnius version of *Halka* should also be looked at in the context of a Poland that at that time did not exist as a country on the official map of Europe, divided from the years 1772 to 1795 between the three powers of Russia, Prussia and Austria. From the point of view of the Poles, it was important to maintain national identity and unity through works referring to times of past glory, bringing comfort and hope for regaining sovereignty. Commonalty was the priority, not an individual, and life was to be sacrificed for the motherland, not for love. Meanwhile, the work by Moniuszko and Wolski, through focusing on the problem of an individual and their

impossible love, highlighted the differences between the poor peasantry and the upper class, who were portrayed as merely playing games and having fun. Moreover, such a clear division between peasants and nobility echoed the recent Galician uprising of 1846, a bloody anti-nobility and anti-serfdom movement.

The two-act version of *Halka* staged in Vilnius in 1854, and then submitted to the management of the Grand Theatre in Warsaw, could not be included in the repertoire despite the efforts of Moniuszko's friends. Moniuszko found out that the theatre was preparing to stage *Halka* from a newspaper, and he started work immediately, finally extending the opera to four acts. In the last additions, written in a rush just before the rehearsals began, he added to the existing work the arias which are now the most recognisable elements, without which *Halka* would not be *Halka* – the title character's 'Oh, to be a lark' and Jontek's aria 'The firs are rustling on the mountain top / Rustling away in the wind'. In the opera's final version, Jontek's part was also transposed from the baritone into a tenor voice. A distinctive accent was also added to the work thanks to ballet music. Highlander dances and the lively *Mazurka* were perceived by the audience at the premiere as a fitting display of national spirit, and over time the position of *Halka* as a national opera strengthened.

## Synopsis

### Act I

② 'Niechaj żyje para młoda' ('Long live the bride- and groom-to-be') – Dziemba raises a cup in honour of Zofia and Janusz, drinking to the health of the betrothed couple. The nobleman's rite, blessed by the hand of Stolnik, continues to the tune of a polonaise. ③ Halka, a simple peasant girl from one of the villages in Janusz's estate, is drawn to the castle like a moth to a flame. She is waiting for her sweetheart, humming – 'Jako od wichru krzew polamany, / Tak się duszyczka stargata' ('Like a flower torn by wind / Is my poor, poor soul to die?'). The melody of her singing gradually keeps on interfering with the nobleman's custom. It is made worse by the fact that the peasant girl is in love with Janusz himself, who has just

been betrothed to Zofia. ④–⑥ Janusz breaks out in a cold sweat. Standing on his right-hand side is Zofia, oblivious to his betrayal, while the peasant girl's voice is still ringing in his ears – indeed, they did have a good time together, but no one in his right mind would have seriously considered marrying her! Some force pulls Halka inside. It's him at last! She can see him! She falls into his arms, he cradles and kisses her, promises her love and marriage, and arranges to meet her in the evening, while pushing her towards the door more and more urgently. ⑦–⑧ One can already hear the chorus of guests – the dance will begin in just a moment ⑨ *Mazurka*).

### Act II

⑩–⑫ Halka, however, has not gone far. She is walking around the palace, dreaming and sighing – 'Gdyby rannym słonkiem wlecieć mi skowronkiem' ('Oh, to be a lark and fly out to meet him'). She believes in the sincerity of Janusz's feelings, and is happy that she has found a young master who is not afraid of falling in love with a peasant and does not pursue gold and fame but a genuine, passionate emotion. ⑬–⑭ In such a state of mind she is found by Jontek, who has been in love with her for years, and who accompanied her on her trip to the town, where he watched her fatal attraction with bitterness. He tries to make her understand that she is dealing with an impostor – 'Że cię nie zwodził, ty wierzysz mu?' ('How can you believe he's not lying again?'). This makes Halka furious – 'Puszczajcie mnie!' ('Let go of me!'). The screams and cries attract the guests from the garden. ⑮ Janusz denies ever knowing the girl. ⑯ It comes to blows and finally, stripping Halka of all illusions, Janusz orders both visitors to leave.

### Act III

⑰ A Sunday afternoon in the countryside – 'Po nieszpiorach przy niedzieli' ('Sunday's come and after mass'). The peasants are resting after a long week of hard work – ⑱ *Tarice góralskie* ('Highland Dances') – ⑲ when suddenly they see a disturbing sight. Is it an

apparition or a living girl? Dishevelled, with madness in her eyes ... it's Halka! It's Jontek! The boy explains why Halka has broken down but he is unable to stay calm himself. He is increasingly more aggravated by her foolish infatuation. Halka tells her story as if in a hypnotic trance. It is about Janusz and herself, a dove whose wings of innocence have been broken by the debauchee. ⑳ 'Z gołąbki trup' ('The dove is dead') she screams, and old peasant women cross themselves in horror. The words and gestures of compassion and pity cannot stop the girl's tears as the wedding party appears on the horizon ...

### Act IV

㉑ Jontek has mixed feelings about Halka. He loves her, but is shaken by disgust with disbelief. How naive has the girl been in her actions! Oh, Halka ... ㉒ 'Szumią jodły na gór szczytynie' ('The firs are rustling on the mountain top'). ㉓ Janusz, Zofia, Stolnik, Dziemba and the rest of the wedding guests then appear, who take congratulations from the peasants, heading to the village church for the wedding. Zofia recognises the lunatic as the woman from the palace. Now she knows. Janusz has also realised his mistake, and he admits to having used the girl for entertainment. He quickly rushes to the church, wishing to leave all the sad old affairs behind him with the closing of the chapel door. ㉔ Halka's despair is further aggravated by Jontek, who gives an account of the ceremony. ㉕ Halka runs to set fire to the chapel, then she comes back, grabs her belly, falls down and cries 'Ha! Dzieciątko nam umiera' ('Our baby is dying'). ㉖–㉗ The sacrament is coming to an end, and the wedding rings are already sparkling on the fingers of Zofia and Janusz. Suddenly quite sober and strangely calm, Halka climbs on top of a rock. After just one more minute, the door to the chapel is opening. The organ pipe is playing, just one more minute ... ㉘ Finally, an ominous splash can be heard.

*Booklet note and synopsis compiled from material supplied by Poznań Opera House*

### Dominik Sutowicz



Dominik Sutowicz graduated from the Academy of Music in Łódź. His repertoire includes major tenor roles such as Cavaradossi (*Tosca*), Pinkerton (*Madama Butterfly*), Manrico (*Il trovatore*), Steersman (*Der fliegende Holländer*), Stefan (*The Haunted Manor*), Gaston (*La traviata*) and Max (*Der Freischütz*). He has appeared with Kraków Opera, Polish National Opera, Poznań Opera House and Tiroler Landestheater.

### Magdalena Molendowska



Magdalena Molendowska studied at the Academy of Music in Gdańsk and Guildhall School of Music & Drama. She subsequently appeared as Minnie (*La fanciulla del West*) and Katerina (*The Greek Passion*) with Opera North. She frequently performs at leading opera houses and festivals across Europe, including Glyndebourne Festival, Polish National Opera, Wrocław Opera, Kraków Opera, Poznań Opera House and Clonter Opera. As a soloist, her extensive repertoire spans songs, cantatas and oratorios.

### Łukasz Goliński



Łukasz Goliński made his professional debut as Zbigniew in Moniuszko's *The Haunted Manor* with the Baltic Opera in Gdańsk. He has since appeared with the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia under Antonio Pappano, Oper Frankfurt and Royal Swedish Opera and National Theatre, Prague. Roles have included Wissmann/Innkeeper (*The Fiery Angel*) for Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, Escamillo (*Carmen*) for Poznań Opera House and Opera Australia; Selim (*Il Turco in Italia*), Lord Guglielmo Cecil (*Maria Stuarda*) and Janusz (*Halka*) for Polish National Opera, as well as Tonio (*Pagliacci*), Figaro (*Le nozze di Figaro*); Barone Douphol (*La traviata*) and the title role in *Falstaff*.

Photo: Karpati&Zarewicz

### Rafał Korpik



Rafał Korpik has been a soloist with Poznań Opera House since 1996. Roles have included Pogner (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*), Titirel (*Parsifal*), Zaccaria (*Nabucco*), Ramfis (*Aida*), Banco (*Macbeth*), Sparafucile (*Rigoletto*), Gremin (*Eugene Onegin*), Warlaam (*Boris Godunov*) and Colline (*La bohème*), as well as numerous appearances in operas by Mozart, including Sarastro (*Die Zauberflöte*) and Masetto and Komandor (*Don Giovanni*).

### Magdalena Wilczyńska-Goś



Since 2005, Magdalena Wilczyńska-Goś has been a soloist at Poznań Opera House, where she made her debut as Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*). Other roles have included the title role in *Carmen*, Magdalene (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*), Maddalena (*Rigoletto*), Fenena (*Nabucco*), Flora (*La traviata*), Suzuki (*Madama Butterfly*), Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*), Aksinia (*Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*), Siébel (*Faust*) and Prince Orlofsky (*Die Fledermaus*).

### Damian Konieczek



After studies at the Academy of Music in Łódź, Damian Konieczek made his professional debut in Poznań Opera House in *Don Carlos*. He has worked with numerous opera houses across Poland, including Wrocław Opera, Opera Śląska, the National Opera in Warsaw, Kraków Opera and Opera Nova, Bydgoszcz. His repertoire spans roles such as Zaccaria (*Nabucco*), Sarastro (*Die Zauberflöte*), Don Basilio (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), Lindorf and Coppélius (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*) and Sparafucile (*Rigoletto*).

### Piotr Friebe



The tenor Piotr Friebe studied cello, singing and acting at the Ignacy Jan Paderewski Academy of Music in Poznań. He made his operatic debut in a staging of Monteverdi's *Il combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda* on the chamber stage of the Poznań Opera House in 1993, where he has appeared as a soloist since 1994. His repertoire includes leading tenor roles in Moniuszko's *Halka*, *The Countess* and *The Haunted Manor*, Millöcker's *Der Bettelstudent*, Halévy's *La Juive*, *Salome*, *La traviata*, *Macbeth*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Don Pasquale*, *L'elisir d'amore*, *Les Pêcheurs de perles*, *Carmen* and *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

### Bartłomiej Szczeszek



Bartłomiej Szczeszek graduated from the Academy of Music in Poznań. He has performed with many orchestras in Poland and at opera houses such as Łódź Grand Theatre and Poznań Opera House. He gives concerts in Poland and abroad. Since 2012, he has served as an assistant to Wojciech Maciejowski in the solo singing class and a teacher at the vocal and acting department of the Academy of Music in Poznań.

### Piotr Maciejowski



Piotr Maciejowski studied voice at the Poznań Academy of Music and Conservatorio di Musica 'Giuseppe Verdi' in Milan. From 2013 to 2018 he was a member of the Opera Academy Young Talents Development Programme of the Polish National Opera. He is currently studying for his PhD at The Fryderyk Chopin University of Music in Warsaw. A prizewinner of a number of Polish and international singing competitions, he has performed with the Polish National Opera, Warsaw Chamber Opera, Poznań Opera House and philharmonic orchestras of Poznań, Opole and Warsaw, Sinfonia Varsovia and the Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra.

### Andrzej Ogórkiewicz



Andrzej Ogórkiewicz has been associated with Poznań Opera House since the 1980s, participating in almost all notable performances. He is best known for his appearances in *Don Pasquale* (title role), *Fiddler on the Roof* (Tewie), *Die Zauberflöte* (Papageno), *Le nozze di Figaro* (Count) and *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Bartolo). Ogórkiewicz has served as a professor at the Academy of Music in Poznań since 1990.

Photo: Osko/Bogunia

### Poznań Opera House Chorus



Poznań Opera House Chorus has been revered as one of the best choral groups in Poland for many years, with its high artistic level acknowledged by many reviewers in Poland and abroad. Mariusz Otto has served as chorus master since 2007. Aside from opera, the group successfully performs oratorios and cantatas as well as contemporary works. In addition to regular performances at the Poznań Opera House, the chorus co-operates with musical institutions throughout Poland and participates in international choral festivals including those in Brighton, Bilbao, Santander, Carcassonne and Xanten. The chorus is also regularly invited to perform in theatres and with philharmonic orchestras located in Warsaw, Szczecin, Heilbronn and Frankfurt. [opera.poznan.pl/en/chor-teatru-wielkiego-w-poznaniu](http://opera.poznan.pl/en/chor-teatru-wielkiego-w-poznaniu)

Photo: Osko/Bogunia

### Mariusz Otto



Mariusz Otto has been associated with Poznań Opera House since 1997, primarily as the assistant chorus master and then as chorus director. Under his management the chorus has prepared for productions such as Wagner's *Parsifal*, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* and *Tannhäuser*, Haydn's *The Creation*, Puccini's *La bohème*, Donizetti's *Maria Stuarda* and *L'elisir d'amore*, Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*, Janaček's *Jenůfa*, Verdi's *Macbeth* and Gounod's *Faust*, with each production gaining wide recognition from critics and audiences alike.

## Poznań Opera House Orchestra

Poznań Opera House Orchestra is one of the leading ensembles in Poland and has collaborated with renowned conductors such as Walerian Bierdajew, Jacek Kasprzyk, Tadeusz Kozłowski, Grzegorz Nowak, Andrzej Borejko and Gabriel Chmura. Aside from operatic repertoire, the ensemble performs contemporary compositions, commissioned especially for Poznań Opera House, as well as symphonic works. The orchestra has toured in Poland and abroad, including a concert version of Moniuszko's *Halka* at the Berlin Philharmonic in 2019. The performance, organised as part of the celebrations of the 200th anniversary of the birth of Moniuszko, was enthusiastically received. The musicians of the orchestra also develop their talents as soloists and perform in chamber ensembles. The orchestra also undertakes educational activities.

[opera.poznan.pl/en/orkiestra-teatru-wielkiego-w-poznaniu](http://opera.poznan.pl/en/orkiestra-teatru-wielkiego-w-poznaniu)

## Gabriel Chmura (1946–2020)



Winner of first prizes at the Conducting Competition in Besançon (1970), the Guido Cantelli Conducting Competition (1971) and the Herbert von Karajan Conducting Competition (1971), Gabriel Chmura conducted leading orchestras such as the Berliner Philharmoniker, Orchestre national de France, Orchestra Filarmonica Di Roma, Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, Israel Philharmonic Orchestra and the NHK Symphony Orchestra. Chmura was music director of the opera house in Aachen (1974 to 1983), the Bochumer Symphoniker (1983 to 1987), the National Arts Center Orchestra in Ottawa (1987 to 1990) and the Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra in Katowice (2001 to 2007). From 2012 to 2020 he was artistic director of Poznań Opera House.

Polish composer, conductor and teacher Stanisław Moniuszko is widely known as ‘the father of Polish national opera’. *Halka* tells the tragic story of its title character, a peasant girl whose love for the noble Janusz is betrayed when he abandons her to wed Zofia, daughter of the Esquire. Recorded here in an acclaimed production by Poznań Opera House, *Halka* possesses a deeply lyrical character making it one of the composer’s greatest works. The aria ‘*Szumią jodły na gór szczycie*’ (‘The firs are rustling on the mountain top’) is considered one of the most beautiful of the 19th century.



INSTYTUCJA KULTURY  
SAMORZĄDU WOJEWÓDZTWA  
WIELKOPOLSKIEGO

Stanisław  
**MONIUSZKO**  
(1819–1872)  
**Halka**

Ministerstwo  
**Kultury**  
i Dziedzictwa  
Narodowego.

Opera in four acts (1848, rev. 1858)  
Libretto by Włodzimierz Wolski (1824–1882)  
Sung in Polish

Jontek ..... Dominik Sutowicz, Tenor  
Halka ..... Magdalena Molendowska, Soprano  
Janusz ..... Łukasz Goliński, Bass-baritone  
Stolnik ..... Rafał Korpik, Bass  
Zofia ..... Magdalena Wilczyńska-Goś, Mezzo-soprano  
Dziemba ..... Damian Konieczek, Bass



**TEATR WIELKI**  
IM. STANISŁAWA MONIUSZKI  
W POZNANIU

Poznań Opera House Chorus  
Mariusz Otto, Chorus Master  
Poznań Opera House Orchestra  
Gabriel Chmura, Conductor

A detailed track list and full artists’ details can be found inside the booklet.

The Polish libretto and an English translation can be accessed at [www.naxos.com/libretti/660485.htm](http://www.naxos.com/libretti/660485.htm)

Recorded live: 11 November 2019 at Poznań Opera House, Poland

Producers, engineers and editors: Andrzej Sasin, Aleksandra Nagórko (CD Accord)

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