



**SPACEROWNIK  
TEATRALNY**

**WARSAW**

**Moniuszko Warsaw  
Walking Tour**

<https://moniuszko200.pl/en/guide/>



SPACEROWNIK  
TEATRALNY

**The Theatre Walking Tour** celebrates 250 years of public theatre in Poland. Coordinated by the Zbigniew Raszewski Theatre Institute, Warsaw, the project aims to encourage people to discover, or rediscover, the history of Polish theatre in local contexts.

The website [www.spacerownikteatralny.pl](http://www.spacerownikteatralny.pl) presents scripts of thematic city tours focusing exploring the history of the local theatre scene and its main figures. There are also tours personally designed by Polish theatre artists and historians, such as Joanna Szczepkowska (Warsaw), Agnieszka Wanicka (Kraków) or Mieczysław Abramowicz (Gdańsk). **Examples of thematic tours around Warsaw** include ones tracing the footsteps of Wojciech Bogusławski, Jerzy Grzegorzewski or Tadeusz Łomnicki, as well as a tour of the cafes where the artistic and literary circles used to meet and mingle. In Kraków and Łódź you can visit places associated with Helena Modrzejewska (Modjeska) and Leon Schiller, respectively.

Appealing and non-conventional, the routes offer a chance to see Polish cities from a different perspective and learn local theatre history. The project also aims to call attention to the city spots that were once very important for theatre-makers and theatregoers but have since become forgotten.



1. **The Piarist Middle School in Warsaw** ..... ul. Miodowa 22/24 **4**
2. **Teatr Wielki** ..... Plac Teatralny 1 **6**
3. **Moniuszko Statue** ..... Plac Teatralny 1 **8**
4. **Church of the Visitation Sisters** ..... ul. Krakowskie Przedmieście 34 **10**
5. **Holy Cross Basilica** ..... ul. Krakowskie Przedmieście 3 **12**
6. **Staszic Palace** ..... ul. Nowy Świat 72 **14**
7. **Copernicus Statue in front of the Staszic Palace** ul. Krakowskie Przedmieście **16**
8. **Holy Trinity Church** ..... Plac Małachowskiego 1 **18**
9. **Apartments where Stanisław Moniuszko lived in Warsaw - commemorative plaque memorialising the composer's last home** ..... ul. Mazowiecka 3/5 **20**
10. **Moniuszki Street** ..... ul. Moniuszki **22**
11. **National Philharmonic. The Chopin and Moniuszko statues above the main entrance** ul. Jasna 5 **24**

**OTHER PLACES YOU MAY VISIT:**

12. **Warsaw Music Institute** ..... ul. Okólnik 1  
(you may also enter off Tamka Street) **26**
13. **Warsaw Music Society** ..... ul. Morskie Oko 2 **28**
14. **Powązki Cemetery** ..... ul. Powązkowska 14  
(plot 9, row III) **30**

# The Piarist Middle School in Warsaw

... ul. Miodowa 22/24



The main reason why the Moniuszko family moved to Warsaw in 1827 was for little Stanisław to receive good education. For this to happen he was enrolled in a famous Piarist middle school in Warsaw.

The Piarists came to Poland in 1642 on an invitation from King Władysław IV Vasa. In Warsaw the king installed them on Długa Street, where a stone church was built between 1678 and 1681 next to the monastery. In 1740 a monk, Stanisław Konarski, founded the second Piarist school in Warsaw. Called Collegium Nobilium, it was at the forefront of the educational reform in Poland and the operations of the Commission of National Education. The school was meant for male offspring of rich gentry and nobility, or the country's future elite. Education lasted 8 years. The school had five grades: the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades lasted two years. The approach was revolutionary for the time and it went beyond the content: emphasis was put on teaching basic civic ideals and patriotism. The school prioritised life sciences but the curriculum also included history, Polish and international law, economics and sciences. Latin and ancient Greek was limited to make time for Polish and modern languages (French and German). The school theatre played a major educative role.

At first, Collegium Nobilium was located at the monasterial complex on Długa Street, then moved to a new building on Miodowa. Designed by Jakub Fontana, Warsaw's most important classicist architect, it occupied the plot between the old school building on Długa (formerly: Humański Palace) and Dwór Gdański. It had a long rectangular shape and three annexes on the north side. The main building had a two-storey principal block and two one-storey wings. The final shape

of the facade was less opulent than designed by Fontana. In 1785 the building underwent its first reconstruction.

After the school closed down, the building served many functions, then was almost completely destroyed. After World War II it was rebuilt based on a design by Wojciech Onitsch, Marian Sulikowski and Andrzej Uniejewski. The architects gave it a modern look: only the classicist facade was reconstructed in its original shape and form. A few rooms on the ground floor have the original 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century mouldings and overdoors, while the representative entrance hall is adorned by Ionic columns put in place by Antonio Corazzi back in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Today, the building on Miodowa is home to the Aleksander Zelwerowicz Theatre Academy. Established in 1946, the school replaced the State Institute of Theatrical Arts and installed itself on Miodowa in 1955 (then: State Higher Theatre School). Following in the tradition of the Piarist school and its theatre, since 1999 the building is also home to the Collegium Nobilium Theatre, which shows, among others, the Academy's performances.





Stanisław Moniuszko moved to Warsaw together with his wife and children after he was appointed director for opera at the Teatr Wielki in the late summer of 1858. The appointment came in the wake of the enormous success of his opera *Halka*, which premiered in Warsaw on 1 January 1858. After the curtain went down on the performance, Moniuszko received a standing ovation and was called on the stage many times. Overnight, a newcomer from Vilnius became the Poles' favourite composer. Soon he was appointed chief conductor and then director for opera at the Teatr Wielki by Ignacy Abramowicz, the head of the Warsaw Theatre Directorate.

In the course of almost 15 years as director for opera at the Teatr Wielki – he held the post until his death in 1872 – Stanisław Moniuszko prepared and staged all of his operas, starting with *Flis*, which was given its debut later in 1858. In 1865, the Teatr Wielki saw the triumphant premiere of *The Haunted Manor*, the second of Moniuszko's crowd-pulling operas and a piece that has a special place in the heart of Poles. Work absorbed the composer a great deal, practically shaping his life in Warsaw. He always lived nearby in order to be able to pop into the theatre at any time.

The Teatr Wielki is one of the most precious buildings in Warsaw that date back to Congress Poland. The idea to erect a playhouse that would show theatre and opera performances under one roof came from Wojciech Bogusławski. Modelled on Nicolini's San Carlo Theatre in Naples, the structure was designed by Antonio Corazzi, the most prominent architect based in Poland in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The monumental classicist building – originally called Teatr Narodowy (National Theatre) and renamed Teatr Wielki (Grand Theatre) by the tsarist authorities after the fall of the November uprising – was built at the spot

once occupied by Marywil, a palace and commercial complex. Its elaborate facade bounded Teatralny Square on the south. The square itself, also designed by Corazzi, was meant to be a centre of cultural and social activity together with Senatorska Street and Bankowy Square. The theatre's interior was designed with good sound and good stage visibility in mind. The auditorium had an echo reduction system as well as an innovative moving stage, advanced machinery that made it possible to shift scenery, and a large orchestra pit.

In 1939 the Teatr Wielki was badly damaged by the German artillery and air raids. In 1944, after the fall of the Warsaw Uprising, the building was almost completely razed: the only parts to survive were the pediment and fragments of the edifice along Wierzbowa Street. It took 15 years to rebuild the theatre after the war. Designed by Bohdan Pniewski, the new structure was visibly inspired by the original 19<sup>th</sup>-century facade. It reopened on 19 November 1965 with a gala concert featuring, among other pieces, the famous mazurka from *The Haunted Manor*. The opera was also the first to be staged at the theatre on the very next day. Nowadays, the building is home to two key Polish cultural institutions: Teatr Wielki – Polish National Opera and the National Theatre. In 2002 the facade was installed with the Apollo's quadriga. It had been Corazzi's idea from the start to have the sculpture adorn the pediment, yet after the November Uprising the tsarist authorities did not allow for the symbol of art and of power to top the building. Almost two centuries later, on the initiative of Waldemar Dąbrowski, the general manager of the Polish National Opera, the original plan of the Italian architect was put in place. Today, it seems like the four-horse carriage driven by the god of the Sun has been there forever.



→ On 17 January 1965, the twentieth anniversary of the liberation of Warsaw, a statue of Stanisław Moniuszko was officially unveiled in front of the Teatr Wielki's left wing. The sculpture dates back to 1936, when artist Jan Szczepkowski made twin effigies of two major figures associated with the Teatr Wielki: Stanisław Moniuszko and Wojciech Bogusławski. During the Warsaw Uprising (1944) both statues were badly damaged; the figure of Moniuszko was later found by its maker in a shed in the Ministry of Culture and the Arts courtyard. Both sculptures were restored to their original shape and returned to their respective spots in time for the theatre's post-war reopening.

The statue portrays Stanisław Moniuszko leaning against a hurdy-gurdy, the symbol of Polish folk music, which was a great influence on the composer, especially when writing the songs collected in *Songbooks for Home Use*. Moniuszko is dressed in a long coat over a frock coat and holds sheet music under his arm. The statue is over five meters high: cast in bronze, the two-meter figure of the composer stands on a plinth made of Finnish pink granite. The plinth is adorned with six reliefs featuring folk musicians reminiscent of a highland band and symbolising six attributes of stagecraft.

Jan Szczepkowski (1878–1964) was a major Polish sculptor and a leading representative of Polish art deco. He trained at the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków. He found fame after the 1925 International Exhibition of Modern Industrial and Decorative Arts in Paris, when the Polish pavilion dazzled the early 20<sup>th</sup> century artistic circles. Polish artists left Paris with 212 awards and accolades, including 35 Grands Prix. One of those went to Szczepkowski, who designed the interior of the Polish pavilion, for his *Nativity Shrine*. After the Parisian triumph, Szczepkowski became one of the most popular Polish sculptors. He received many commissions from the government. Before World War II he co-designed the decorations for the Sejm building and the reliefs adorning the facade of Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego in Warsaw. It is no wonder that he was asked to make the monumental statues of the two instrumental figures for Polish theatre and opera.

Szczepkowski's statue was not the first Moniuszko memorial in Warsaw. In 1887, thanks to the efforts of the Warsaw Music Society, Cyprian Godebski, an excellent Polish sculptor based in France who previously devised the Adam Mickiewicz statue in Warsaw, made a bust of Moniuszko in white marble. The sculpture was displayed at the All Saints Church in Grzybowski Square and destroyed in 1944 during the Warsaw Uprising. The composer's bust made by Hipolit Kasjan Marczewski unveiled in 1901 at the Teatr Wielki did not survive the war either.

## Church of the Visitation Sisters

... ul. Krakowskie Przedmieście 34



Asked to name any of Stanisław Moniuszko's pieces, most people would instantly cite *Halka* and *The Haunted Manor*. After a moment's thought, some might also add that he wrote many songs which he then published in *Songbooks for Home Use*. Let's not forget, however, that Moniuszko's output also includes operettas, ballet music, cantatas and sacred music, including some masses. He was a man of faith. He started each day by attending the mass. This is how his first biographer, Aleksander Walicki, described Moniuszko's daily routine: 'He would get up very early, that is at five o'clock, or even earlier if it was the summer, and was off to the mass right away. The only times he diverged from the habit was when he was ill. Having returned from church, he sat down to work: most of his pieces were brought into being at this time of day.' Writing religious music was for the composer a very personal, spiritual experience.

Moniuszko usually frequented the church of the of the Visitation Sisters on Krakowskie Przedmieście. On 19 May 1872, the Pentecost, probably with the composer in attendance, the shrine saw the premiere of Moniuszko's *Piotrowin Mass* (*Msza Piotrowińska*), the last piece he wrote before his untimely death. This mass for four-part chorus of mixed voices and organ saw the light of day in April 1872 after, as researchers claim, only four days of work. Importantly, it has a Polish text: religious poems by Justyn Wojewódzki.

The church and convent was built for nuns of the Order of the Visitation of Holy Mary brought to Warsaw in 1654 by Queen Marie Louise Gonzaga. The shrine owes its current shape and form to Elżbieta Helena Sieniawska, who commissioned Karol Bay, a prominent Italian architect based in Poland, to design it around 1727. The construction was completed

in 1761. The end result is a church with one three-bay nave surrounded by two rows of side chapels. Its dynamic, wavy facade is the church's most characteristic feature. Above the main entrance you can see the emblem of the Order: a heart pierced by two arrows topped with a cross and surrounded by a crown of thorns. The plasterwork inside the shrine and the superb pulpit in the shape of the bow of Saint Peter's boat were made by the phenomenal workshop of Jan Jerzy Plersch, while the painting of the Visitation was painted by Tadeusz Kuntze-Konicz, one of Poland's best 18<sup>th</sup>-century painters.

Another composer with links to the church is Fryderyk Chopin, who played its organ during Sunday services for students of the Warsaw Lycée, which he attended from 1825 to 1826. The church was also where the funeral of Maria Kalerjis was held. The pianist was an ardent admirer of Moniuszko, whom she often supported financially. (Incidentally, she was also the object of the unrequited love of the poet Cyprian Kamil Norwid.) Moniuszko's funeral mass was performed at the service. Inside the shrine you can see statues of other famous Poles: Tadeusz Czacki and Kazimierz Brodziński, Adam Mickiewicz's teacher. By the main entrance you will spot a memorial for Fr. Jan Twardowski (1915–2006), a kneeler engraved with the last poem by this priest-poet.

The church of the Visitation Sisters is one of very few buildings in Warsaw that were not destroyed in the course of World War II. The 1939 air raids damaged one of the building's corners and one chapel but the church came through the Warsaw Uprising almost unscathed. With its exquisitely sculptured facade, the shrine is one of the most beautiful buildings in Warsaw and a gem of baroque sacred architecture in Poland.



## Holy Cross Basilica

... ul. Krakowskie Przedmieście 3



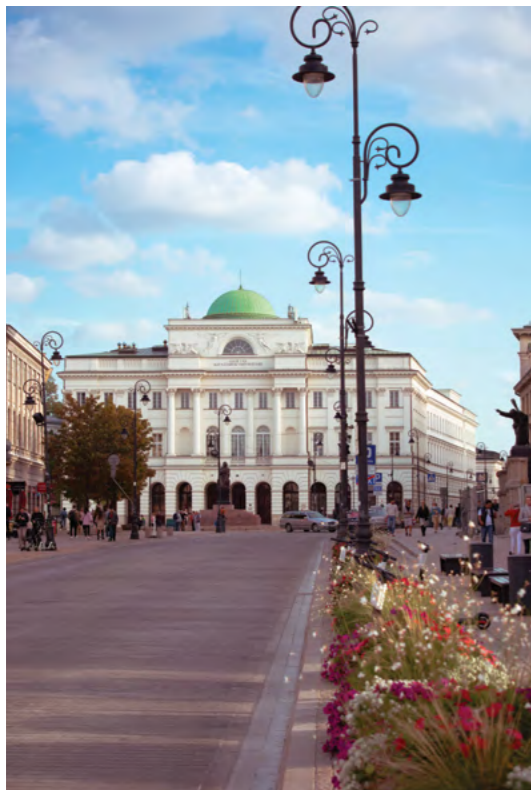
Stanisław Moniuszko never really enjoyed good health. He suffered of a heart condition for many years and overworked himself for most of his life: he wrote music, conducted concerts and operas, managed the Warsaw opera house and taught. We are able to reconstruct the last day of his life thanks to various chronicles' accounts and memories of his loved ones. He got up very early as usual, went to the morning mass – most probably at the church of the Visitation Sisters on Krakowskie Przedmieście – and went for his morning tea to Koch's famous tea house near the Staszic Palace, which was his habit. He was meant to head to the Music Institute but never did. He felt unwell. And after a short stop by the Teatr Wielki, he decided to return home to Mazowiecka Street. He collapsed when climbing the stairs to his apartment. Doctors were called in. He came round for a while in the afternoon. He died at 6 p.m. surrounded by his family. A heart attack was cited as the official cause of death.

The funeral was held at the Holy Cross Church three days later, on 7 June 1872. The casket was laid on a catafalque surrounded with a sea of flowers. The service started at 11 a.m. and was officiated by the bishop of Lublin, Walenty Baranowski, a great Polish patriot and participant of the November Uprising. After the mass, the casket travelled to Powązki Cemetery accompanied by a procession of tens of thousands of people.

The Holy Cross Church belongs to the Congregation of the Mission. The church has been the most important place of worship and charitable institution in Warsaw for centuries. The shrine in its present form was constructed between 1671 and 1696 according to a design by Józef Szymon Bellotti (actual name: Simone Giuseppe Belotti), the most important baroque architect in Warsaw after Tylman z Gameren (Tylman van Gameren). The two towers topped by late baroque headpieces were designed by Józef Fontana. His son, Jakub Fontana gave the facade its characteristic look and added the staircase with a driveway. The facade was adorned with sculptures by Poland's best sculptor of the late baroque period, Jan Jerzy Plersch. To complete the composition, Jakub Fontana also added two residential buildings on both sides of the church. In 1858 a figure of Christ carrying the cross was installed in front of the church on a plinth of black granite featuring the inscription 'Sursum corda', or 'Lift up your hearts'.

The church suffered some damage during the first days of World War II, yet it the 1944 Warsaw Uprising took a greater toll. The figure of Christ was taken away by the Germans who wanted to melt it down and reuse the material. It was recovered after the war, renovated and returned to its original spot on 19 July 1945. The church's reconstruction lasted from 1945 to 1953. In the recent years, the building underwent major renovation which saw the replacement of many elements of the interior design which had been lost during the war.

The Holy Cross Church has witnessed many important events in the life of the city and the nation. Here, King Jan III Sobieski prayed for success before his expedition to Vienna in 1683 and Stanisław August Poniatowski had his coronation in 1764. Fryderyk Chopin's heart is encased in a pillar in the main nave of the church. There are also numerous commemorative plaques and memorials to other great Poles: Juliusz Słowacki, Zygmunt Krasiński, Adam Mickiewicz, Bolesław Prus and Władysław Sikorski.



→ In 1827 the Moniuszkos moved from their family estate in Ubiel near Minsk (now in Belarus) to Warsaw. The composer's father, Czesław, wanted his beloved only child to grow up and study in the Polish capital. At first, the Moniuszkos lived in the district of Żoliborz. After a year they moved to the Staszic Palace, part of which was rented to tenants. The Moniuszko's took an apartment in the building's annex. The windows faced the Kazimierz Palace, where young Chopin lived with his parents at the time.

The Staszic Palace was erected between 1802 and 1823 as the headquarters of the Warsaw Society of the Friends of Sciences, whose members included the most prominent figures in the Polish Enlightenment. The organisation had been founded in 1800 on the initiative of Stanisław Sottyk, one of the most active proponents of the Constitution of Third May (1791).

Stanisław Staszic (1755–1826) was Poland's leading education and social activist of the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century. The neoclassicist palace named for him was designed by the most prominent Polish-based architect of the time, Antonio Corazzi, who also designed the Teatr Wielki. The impressive building was to serve as a meeting place for people of science and an archive for the manuscripts and books owned by the Warsaw Society of the Friends of Sciences as well as the collection of artworks, military antiques and other memorabilia gifted to the Society by General Jan Henryk Dąbrowski, the founder of the Polish Legions in Italy.

To get to the the main conference room, three library rooms and two rooms for mineral collections on the first floor one had to climb a marble stairway with banisters made of cast iron. The palace spaces were filled with artworks: excellent paintings by Jan Antoni Blank and Marcello Bacciarelli, sculptures and patriotic memorabilia, including the Black Standard captured during the Battle of Vienna by King Jan III Sobieski. Undoubtedly, the atmosphere of the place, the people who frequented it and its surroundings greatly influenced Stanisław Moniuszko in his formative years.

After the fall of the November Uprising the Society was dissolved by the tsarist authorities and the palace changed hands, and functions, for the next few decades. Completely destroyed during War War I, it was subsequently rebuilt, and damaged again in September 1939, when it lost its right side and upper storeys along Nowy Świat during the air raids. During the Warsaw Uprising (1944) the building was the stronghold of two insurgent units, Harnaś and Krybar. After the uprising's fall, the palace was burnt down by the Germans. Reconstructed between 1946 and 1950 under the direction of Piotr Biegański, it now houses two faculties and institutes of the Polish Academy of Sciences. Since 1981 it has also been home to the reactivated Warsaw Scientific Society.

## Copernicus Statue in front of the Staszic Palace

... ul. Krakowskie Przedmieście



On 11 May 1830 eleven years old Stanisław Moniuszko witnessed a historic event: the unveiling of the Copernicus statue in front of the Staszic Palace, where the future composer lived with his parents for two years. The idea to commemorate one of the most important figures in Polish and world history had originated in the Society of the Friends of Sciences circles, with Stanisław Staszic being its main champion and sponsor.

The unveiling ceremony took place on a cloudy May day with crowds of Warsaw residence in attendance. The first one to take the floor was Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz. According to first-hand accounts, when he said: 'A day has come when the Sun into which Copernicus stared so hard for half a century will shine kindly on his edifice...' the clouds dispersed and a ray of May sun shone on the memorial. The crowds heard a hymn written for the occasion by Karol Kurpiński, a prominent composer and, as it later turned out, Moniuszko's predecessor as director of the Teatr Wielki. The piece was performed by an orchestra and choirs led by Józef Elsner, Fryderyk Chopin's teacher.

The statue was made by excellent Danish-born sculptor, Bertel Thorvaldsen (1770–1844) and was his second realisation in Warsaw after the edifice of Prince Józef Poniatowski on horseback. Copernicus is shown in a seated position with a pair of compasses in his right hand and an armillary sphere in the left one. Originally, the astronomer was supposed to be seating on a huge celestial globe, yet in the end a much moderate plinth design by Adam Idźkowski (1798–1879) was chosen. The figure of Copernicus was cast in the Jan Baptist Gregoire and Son foundry on Świętojerska Street. The plinth bears two inscriptions, in Latin and Polish. They read 'Nicolao Copernico Grata Patria' and 'Mikołajowi Kopernikowi Rodacy',

respectively, and can be translated as 'To Nicolaus Copernicus, Grateful Nation'.

The monument came to greatest harm in 1944, during the Warsaw Uprising. After its fall, the astronomer's figure was removed from the plinth by the Germans and taken away from the city to be melted. After the war, the statue was found on a scrapheap in the village of Hajduki Nyskie, immediately shipped to Warsaw and installed provisionally in its original place on 22 July 1945. In 1949 prominent sculptor Stanisław Jagmin (1875–1961) led the restoration of the figure. The Warsaw foundry of the Łopieński Brothers filled the cracks and holes made by the projectiles. The monument was unveiled again four years later.

The statue of the brilliant astronomer is not only one of the finest examples of early 19th-century monumental sculpture but also one of the symbols of Warsaw. Proving its significance to Poles around the world, in 1966 the Polish diaspora in Canada commissioned two copies of the statue, one of which now stands by the entrance to the Montreal planetarium, while the other is in Chicago.



## Holy Trinity Church

... Plac Matachowskiego 1



As Stanisław Moniuszko displayed a genuine music talent already in his early childhood, while living with his family in Warsaw and attending the famous Piarist Middle School, he also took lessons in the organ from a young organist of the Lutheran Holy Trinity Church. August Freyer (1801–1883) hailed from the small German town of Oberschaar near Annaberg. He came to Warsaw in 1827 to continue his studies under excellent composer Józef Elsner, who was also of German origin. Through Elsner, Freyer got to know his other student, Fryderyk Chopin, who counted him among his closest friends. Freyer stayed in Poland for the rest of his life, working mainly as a teacher. He was considered the best organist in the city. He did most of his teaching and composing in connection with his job as the organist of the Holy Trinity Church.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century the church was the highest building in Warsaw. The decision to build a church for the members of the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Poland was taken in 1773. The first design was made by Efraim Schroeger, however, King Stanisław August Poniatowski, who reserved the right to have the final say in the matter, chose Szymon Bogumił Zug to be the architect. The construction started in April 1777 and officially ended as soon as on 2 July 1779.

The shrine is the only central-plan church in Warsaw, reminiscent of the Roman Pantheon. It is a rotunda based on a plan in the form of a Greek cross, with a dome of 34-metre diameter topped with a characteristic lantern tower.

In 1861, as the director of the Teatr Wielki, Stanisław Moniuszko supported the Lutheran community by holding a fundraiser for an old people's home and orphanage. The charity concert was performed twice, on 19 and 21 June, attracting a big audience. The programme, which Moniuszko set himself, mainly

included music by Polish composers. The newspaper *Kurier Warszawski* later reported that 'The professional artists and amateurs spared no effort. Mr Dobrski [...] sang a dazzling rendition of *Modlitwa* [Prayer] by Stradella. [The concert] was led by the tireless Director Moniuszko, to whom the Society owns the concept of the whole event'. Moniuszko staged more concerts in partnership with the Lutheran community in the subsequent years.

Apart from a few renovations and minor alternations, the church survived in its original form until the outbreak of the Second World War, becoming one of the city's landmarks. Unfortunately, it burnt down almost completely in early September 1939. It was reconstructed between 1949 and 1957 according to a design by Teodor Bursche. In 1951 the church was taken over by the Ministry of Culture and the Arts and was to be used by the Warsaw Philharmonic as a representative concert hall, meeting place and exhibition space. That did not happen and the building was returned to the Lutheran parish in 1956.

Continuing the music tradition of the place, the church hosts many concerts.



## Apartments where Stanisław Moniuszko lived in Warsaw – commemorative plaque memorialising the composer's last home

... ul. Mazowiecka 3/5



Before settling down in Warsaw, Stanisław Moniuszko visited the city on numerous occasions. He would then stay at Hotel Rzymski located on Nowosenatorska Street (now: Moliere). He lived for a longer while in a tenement at Obożna 8 working on *Halka*, whose premiere at the Teatr Wielki on 1 January 1858 brought him fame and popular admiration. It was the de facto reason why the composer moved to Warsaw with his family in the second half of 1858 after he had been appointed director at the Teatr Wielki. Moniuszko was married to the love of his life, Aleksandra Müller (1821–1891) and the couple had ten children. He was a family man, something he learnt growing up among close and more distant relatives who always enjoyed spending their time together. Stanisław, Aleksandra and their numerous children lived for a long time with Stanisław's mother-in-law, whom the composer respected a great deal. His contemporary biographers described moving scenes of Mrs Müller blessing her son-in-law before every important event in his life.

Forced to support a big family and helps, which often meant 16–17 people, the composer worked extremely hard, sometimes harder than he could. He was a very loving husband and father, and sacrificed a lot to give his family a good life. It was difficult to find a decent apartment for a family of this size and the Moniuszkos moved from place to place a few times. To cope with frequent financial troubles and save on rent, they would sometimes vacate a flat when Aleksandra left with the children for the summer.

We know the addresses of all the Moniuszkos' apartments in Warsaw. They lived twice on Krakowskie Przedmieście, first at number 81, then at 71. A commemorative plaque on number 81 reminds the passersby that the 'father of

Polish opera' lived there between 1858 and 1860. Stanisław Moniuszko was fond of the street. He attended morning services at the church of the Visitation Sisters and drank his morning tea at Koch's excellent tea room at number 1, near the Copernicus statue. The Moniuszkos then lived at Wierzbowa 2 (1860–1866), Niecała 9 near the Saxon Garden for a year, and at Nowy Świat 39 (1867–1870). The last two years of his life, the composer spent at Mazowiecka 3, where he died of a heart attack surrounded by his family in the evening of 4 June 1872.

In 1908 a commemorative plaque sponsored by the Warsaw Music Society was unveiled on the facade of the townhouse on Mazowiecka Street. The building did not survive World War II, yet on the centenary of the composer's death (4 June 1972) a new plaque was put up on the wall of the house that was erected at the spot (Mazowiecka 3/5).

## Moniuszki Street

... ul. Stanisława Moniuszki



Considering that the city of Warsaw is a few centuries old, the street named for Stanisław Moniuszko (ulica Stanisława Moniuszki) is relatively new. It was laid out just over a hundred years ago, in 1900, when the Warsaw Philharmonic Hall was to be built at the spot previously occupied by the Baby Jesus Hospital. Thanks to the efforts of the Warsaw Music Society the street was named for the composer that very year.

The year 1900 was a turning point for Warsaw urban planning. Many new investments were launched at the time to give the city a new face. The modernisation of the central district of Śródmieście, including the erection of a new philharmonic hall, made it necessary to demolish some of the old houses and lay out new, wider streets. When the decision was made to erect the new philharmonic hall in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, three new streets were laid out at the former Baby Jesus Hospital site. Later they were to be named for Stanisław Moniuszko, Henryk Sienkiewicz and Fr. Gabriel Boduen. The hospital moved to Lindleya Street, where it still exists today. In 1900 the headquarters of the the Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts were erected at the former hospital site as well.

The vicinity of the philharmonic hall, officially opened in 1901, made Moniuszki Street an attractive spot to invest in, triggering the development of representative townhouses. A few were later home to institutions of local and national importance.

When Józef Piłsudski came to Warsaw from Magdeburg in 1918, which symbolically marks the beginning of the process that resulted in the declaration of Polish independence, he stayed on the second floor of Wanda Roman's guesthouse at Moniuszki 2 from 10 to 13 November. Between 1912 and

1914 the headquarters of Bank Pierwszego Warszawskiego Towarzystwa Wzajemnego Kredytu (Bank of the First Warsaw Mutual Credit Union) were built on the neighbouring parcel. Destroyed during World War II, the building was reconstructed and enlarged. Currently, it is home to Warszawski Ośrodek Telewizyjny, one of the regional branches of TVP, Poland's public television broadcaster. In 1930 the headquarters of the Italian insurance company Riunione Adriatica di Sicurtà were built at number 10. The same building also housed Adria, one of the most elegant restaurants operating in Warsaw after the war which was frequented by cabinet members, the establishment, poets and artists.

The buildings along Moniuszki Street did not survive the Warsaw Uprising (1944). Most of the townhouses and the Church of the Most Holy Name of Jesus were razed to the ground, and so was the philharmonic hall. Reconstructed after the war, the street runs differently than before. It begins from Powstańców Warszawy Square, crosses Jasna, Młynarskiego (the latter is named for Emil Młynarski, one of the proponents of building a philharmonic hall in Warsaw) and Rowickiego (named for Witold Rowicki, a conductor and composer), and ends in a cul-de-sac just before Marszałkowska Street. The new philharmonic hall was rebuilt in a different style than before the war. The entrance to its Chamber Music Hall is located off Moniuszki Street.



## National Philharmonic. The Chopin and Moniuszko statues above the main entrance

... ul. Jasna 5



The unveiling of the statues of Fryderyk Chopin and Stanisław Moniuszko on the facade of the Warsaw Philharmonic Hall in November 2001 was a crowning event of the programme of celebrations making the concert hall's centenary. Originally, the building was adorned by sculptures of four composers: Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin and Moniuszko. Only the last two survived the war, albeit badly damaged, and spent the subsequent fifty years in the lapidarium of the Museum of the Earth in Warsaw. Before the war, the statues adorned the hall's wall along Jasna Street; currently, they are positioned above the main entrance to the hall. Made by Władysław Mazur in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, the figures are the only remnants of the building's pre-war external design. Executed in sandstone, the sculpture of Moniuszko portrays him in an standing in formal clothing with his coat thrown over his left shoulder. After the war, the statue was left with its face, right arm and both feet destroyed, yet thanks to photographs held at the National Museum and expert renovation, it was restored to its original shape.

The idea to build a philharmonic hall in Warsaw came about in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Its main proponent was Aleksander Rajchman (1855–1915), editor and publisher of the music, theatre and artistic magazine *Echo Muzyczne, Teatralne i Artystyczne*. The hall was erected between 1900 and 1901. Devised by Karol Kozłowski, its design was modelled after European concert halls and 19th-century opera houses, in particular the Paris Opera. The building was impressive, with a characteristic mansard roof imitating a dome and adorned with opulent sculptures and eclectic decorations, mostly in Neo-Renaissance style. The figures of the four composers complemented the adornments of the avant-corps which were topped with allegorical sculptures by Stanisław Lewandowski.

Inside, there was a huge concert hall surrounded on three sides with one tier of balconies. The portrait gallery of Poland's most important musicians in the foyer featured a likeness of Stanisław Moniuszko by one of the best portrait painters of the time, Stanisław Lentz. The official opening of the philharmonic hall took place on 5 November 1901. The gala featured a solo performance by Ignacy Jan Paderewski. The programme contained Polish music: Chopin, Zygmunt Stojowski, Zygmunt Noskowski, Władysław Żeleński and Stanisław Moniuszko.

The building was completely destroyed during World War II. The new concert hall erected in its place between 1950 and 1955 was designed by Eugeniusz Szparkowski and Henryk Białobrzeski. In a nod to socialist realism, the eclectic facade and sculptural adornments were replaced with a portico supported by a row of columns. The official opening took place on 21 February 1955 to coincide with the inauguration of the 5<sup>th</sup> International Fryderyk Chopin Piano Competition. To mark the opening of its new home, the Warsaw Philharmonic was renamed as the National Philharmonic.

## Warsaw Music Institute

... ul. Okólnik 1 (you may also enter off Tamka Street)



Following his move to Warsaw in 1858, Stanisław Moniuszko was busy composing and working as opera manager. Still, he found time to get involved in the work of the Warsaw Music Society and take a teaching post at the Warsaw Music Institute (Warszawski Instytut Muzyczny).

Moniuszko started working at the Music Institute six years after settling down in Warsaw. He taught harmonics, composition and counterpoint from 1864 until his death in 1872. He also led the Institute's choir. Among his students were Zygmunt Noskowski, excellent composer and conductor, and Henryk Jarecki, who was an exceptional student and his teacher's favourite: Moniuszko included Jarecki's early pieces in the programmes of his concerts. The Music Institute, the oldest and most important Polish music college, is a continuator of the Central School of Music (Szkoty Głównej Muzyki) established in 1810 by Józef Elsner and Wojciech Bogusławski, which was closed down by the tsarist authorities after the fall of the November Uprising. Founded in 1861 by Apolinary Kątski, a prominent Polish violinist and a student of Paganini, the Institute operated until the end of World War I. In 1854 the school moved to the neglected Gniński Palace (Ostrogski Castle) located between Tamka and Okólnik streets, which previously served as barracks. That is where Moniuszko gave his lectures. Currently, the Ostrogski Castle is home to a state-of-the-art Chopin museum, the largest in the world. It was not until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century that a decision was made to build a new music college on Okólnik Street as the land was being developed for residential purposes. Stefan Szyller, an architect who had designed the Warsaw University of Technology and the Zachęta Gallery, devised a neoclassicist building in the Empire style housing a concert hall and lecture rooms. In 1918 the

Music Institute was transformed into the State Conservatory of Music, which in 1930 was upgraded to tertiary education status. Its first head was one of Poland's most important composers, Karol Szymanowski.

During World War II, the conservatoire operated officially as a vocational school of music. It burnt down during the Warsaw Uprising just like most of the buildings in the district of Śródmieście. A competition to design a new home for the Warsaw Academy of Music was held after the war. The contract was awarded to a team of four architects Witold Benedek, Stanisław Niewiadomski, Stefan Sienicki and Władysław Strumiłło. The building was erected between 1959 and 1966. In 2008 the school was renamed the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music.





Busy as he was composing, conducting and teaching music, Stanisław Moniuszko would often work to promote musical culture. He was significantly involved in the foundation of the Warsaw Music Society, which was established on 15 January 1871 on the initiative of Władysław Wiślicki, a music critic and educator. The founding members were, among others, Maria Kalergis, a prominent pianist and patron of the arts, and Henryk Wieniawski, a world-famous violinist and composer.

Already in March 1871 a library and reading room opened at the Teatr Wielki's Redutowe Rooms, which at the time were the home of the Society. The sheet music and books were used by the members, amateur choirs and music ensembles as well as students of the conservatoire. The first publication issued was the piano reduction for four hands of Moniuszko's *Crimean Sonnets* (1874).

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Society intensified its efforts to collect and process material connected with Polish musical culture. In 1891, on the initiative of ethnographer and musicologist Jan Karłowicz, the Stanisław Moniuszko Section was set up to gather the composer's manuscripts, memorabilia, prints and letters. Karłowicz also began to issue unpublished Moniuszko pieces.

Between 1909 and 1939 the Society operated from the Warsaw Philharmonic Hall. The organisation's main objective at the time was to hold concerts and promote Polish music. It also had its own choirs and amateur string orchestra. It was because of the Society that the first three editions of the International Fryderyk Chopin Piano Competition took place in Warsaw (1927–1937) and the new street laid out by the site where the Warsaw Philharmonic Hall was to be erected was named for Moniuszko in 1900.

World War II interrupted the Society's operations and left its collections badly damaged. All printed sheet music and 40% of all manuscripts were destroyed. The Society was reactivated just after the liberation of the city. In 1951 it was named for Stanisław Moniuszko. Since 1966 it has been operating from its headquarters at the Szuster Palace, which is beautifully located in the park of Morskie Oko in the Warsaw district of Mokotów. The organisation's most precious possessions are the outputs of Moniuszko, Mieczysław Karłowicz, Zygmunt Noskowski, Ignacy Feliks Dobrzyński and other composers as well as the private collections and correspondence of Chopin, Karol Szymanowski, Moniuszko and Karłowicz. Apart from collecting and keeping printed sheet music, memorabilia and manuscripts of Polish composers and 19<sup>th</sup> century musicians, the Society promotes classical music by staging concerts, exhibitions and clubs for children.

## Powązki Cemetery

... ul. Powązkowska 14 (plot 9, row III)



After the funeral service at the Holy Cross Church came to its close on 7 June 1872, Stanisław Moniuszko set out on his final journey across Warsaw heading to Powązki Cemetery. At first the casket of the great artist was carried by Sergei Mukhanov, director of the Warsaw Theatre Directorate and Moniuszko's patron, then by the theatre's staff.

It took the procession four hours to reach the cemetery, by which time it had turned into a political manifestation of around eighty thousand Poles. As a journalist for *Kłosa* magazine reported: 'The funeral procession started at half past one, led by orphans and old people in the care of the Charitable Society, of which the deceased was a member, followed by public school pupils with a wreath of flowers, students of the Music Institute, preceded by the members of the Institute's board and professors. Walking behind them was an orchestra under Bilsie performing Chopin's *Funeral March* arranged for wind instruments'.

The procession marched down Krakowskie Przedmieście and Senatorska. It stopped by the Teatr Wielki, where a funeral march based on themes from *Halka* was played. The casket was then carried down Bielańska and Nalewki to Powązki Cemetery. Writer, Moniuszko's friend and the librettist of *The Haunted Manor*, Jan Chęciński gave a speech by the composer's grave.

Powązki Cemetery was established in 1790. The land had been donated by Melchior Korwin Szymanowski, the owner of the Szymanowszczyzna estate located north of Warsaw's New Town. The land adjoined the village of Powązki to which the necropolis owes its name. The cemetery was designed by Dominik Merlini, King Stanisław August Poniatowski's court architect. As the day when the cemetery's was established was

the feast day of Charles Borromeo (4 November), two years later a cornerstone was laid for the construction of a cemetery church, also designed by Merlini. St. Charles Borromeo's Church is a one-nave structure with a transept topped with a dome. On the south side of the church there are classicist catacombs where distinguished people were buried, including prominent political figure Hugo Kołłątaj, author Franciszek Bohomolec and Warsaw's most famous clockmaker, Michał Gugenmus. In 1925 Avenue of the Distinguished (Aleja Zasłużonych) was laid out. The first to be interred there was Władysław Reymont, winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature. You can now enter the cemetery using one of the gates in its brick wall: there are three off Okopowa Street – no. 1 near the church, no. 2 called the Onorata di Pavia Gate and adorned with a sculpture and no. 4, as well as gate no. 5 off Tatarska Street, and two gates off Ostroroga Street.

In 1908 the remains of Stanisław Moniuszko and his wife Aleksandra (1821–1891) were laid in a new family tomb funded by the Warsaw Music Society. After World War II the composer's body was moved to a separate tomb (plot 9, row III) next to the grave of Chopin's parents.

The cemetery and its buildings were seriously damaged during the war. The reconstruction of the church took the whole 1950s decade to finish. In 1974 the Social Committee for the Preservation of Old Powązki (Społeczny Komitet Opieki nad Starymi Powązkami) was founded. The organisation has managed to save and renovate many of the historic tombstones and memorials.

Author: Joanna Tarnawska

English translation: Monika Tacikowska

Photos: Wojciech Olszanka

Graphic design: Maria Bukowska/Temperówka

Edition and coordination: Marcin Bogucki

Polish proofreading: Katarzyna Budzyńska

Organiser:

**Moniuszko**  
2019 THE YEAR OF 200.  
STANISŁAW MONIUSZKO

Implemented as part of the  
Stanisław Moniuszko bicentenary programme  
Part funded by the Ministry  
of Culture and National Heritage of Poland

Ministry of  
**Culture  
and National  
Heritage of  
the Republic  
of Poland**

Partner:

• +  
• :instytut+eatralny

  
United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

200th anniversary of the birth  
of Stanisław Moniuszko  
Celebrated in association with UNESCO

[www.spacerownikteatralny.pl](http://www.spacerownikteatralny.pl)



