

**Stanislaw Moniuszko – Paria (Kunc)**



Act I 1 Wstęp / Introduction - orkiestra 2 Wśród cieniów nocy - Ratef, Idamor 3 Chwytać go! - chór, Idamor 4 Paria! To jeszcze jeden z tej kasty wzgardzony - Idamor 5 Uwertura / Ouwertura - orkiestra 6 Z pod gwiazdzistej noc opończy" - chór, Kapłanka, Neala 7 Czystego ducha wznosić korne modły! - chór 8 Mój drogi! O droga! - Neala, Idamor 9 O! Suria wspaniały! - chór 10 Braminowie, wezwałem was w ważnej sprawie - Akebar, Neala, chór 11 Wstrzymajcie wyrok wasz - Akebar 12 Przedwieczny, przedwieczny! - Akebar, Neala, 2 braminów, chór 13 Idamor! - Neala, Idamor, Akebar, chór Act II 1. Synu, On moim ojcem – Idamor 2. Wiec dzis jeszcze zona twa zostane – Idamor, Neala 3. Czemus ty nie z nami – Neala; Chor Braminem 4. Recitativo i Romans – On Paria ! – Neala 5. Przybył tu jakis atarzec podrozny – Neala, Ratek 6. Znam grod wspanialy – Dzares, Neala, Ratek 7. Ach prozno tak chodze – Neala, Dzares, Ratef 8. To on, Tak to on! – Dzares, Idamor 9. Act III, Scena 1 10. Bogowie miłości – Akebar 11. Balet – orkiestra 12. Co widze to mój ojciec – Idamor, Dzares, Akebar 13. Mój ojcze – Idamor, Akebar, Dzares 14. Los daje jej w zamiane za milosc czare lez – Ratek, Akebar 15. Dziecie ukochane – Akebar 16. To nie był sen – Neala, akebar 17. Finale – Akebar, Dzares, Neala

Neala - Katarzyna Hołysz - mezzosopran, Idamor - Tomasz Kuk - tenor, Ratef - Andrzej Lampert - tenor, Akebar - Janusz Lewandowski - bas-baryton, Dzares - Leszek Skrla – baryton Choir and Orchestra of The Castle Opera (Opera na Zamku) Warcislaw Kunc – director

Paria opera w 3 aktach, (1869). Libretto wg tragedii C. Delavigne'a napisał Jan Chęciński. Akcja rozgrywa się w Indiach ok. 1500 r. Kapłanka Neala waha się pomiędzy świętym powołaniem a miłością do Idamora. Tuż przed zaślubinami z Idamorem zjawia się na pół obłąkany starzec, Dżares, który wzywa zebranych kapłanów, by go zabili, gdyż jest pariasem. Idamor broni Dżaresa i wyznaje, że jest jego synem. Arcykapłan Akebar, naczelnik kasty braminów, przebija Idamora sztyletem. Przybyła na miejsce Neala (która dowiedziała się już wcześniej o pochodzeniu Idamora) odchodzi z Dżaresem, by dzielić jego los. Pomimo egzotycznej tematyki język muzyczny utworu pozbawiony jest wschodniej stylizacji, w niektórych miejscach przebijają wpływy Ryszarda Wagnera.

Paria (or Pariah in English) was the last of Moniuszko's operas. It had a seemingly successful première in 1869 but closed after six performances. The notes suggest that its lack of a patriotic schema had something to do with this. Its first international staging came as late as 1991 in Havana. I'm not sure the booklet makes the best case for the work, really, since there is very little remotely relevant material relating to its genesis and writing, nor is there any analysis of it. One doesn't want to be spoon-fed, but given the opera's almost total obscurity - it's not Halka - some critical apparatus should really be provided.

The plot relates to Brahmin priests and priestesses. It is set in Benares in the year 1500 and the story derives from a work by Casimira Delavigne. There are opportunities for some florid choral scenes, ballet music, and four big solo singing platforms in an opera divided schematically into a prologue and three acts, and, broadly, somewhat on Verdian lines.

The most impressive music, ironically, is to be located in the orchestral introduction, the ballet sections and in a few of the vocal scenes. If this suggests that the opera is something of a failure, I have to say that it is. The bold national-ceremonial Act I introduction whets the appetite, but too much of the action is static, and the text requires a fair degree of exegesis which would have been better spent constructing attractive ensembles and memorable vocal lines, of which there are, unfortunately, precious few.

Andrej Lampert makes an impression as Ratef, especially in his Act I Prologue scene, and Tomasz Kuk, as Idamor, a warrior chieftain, has good heft. Some of the choruses are attractive - not least that in the second scene of the so-called Picture No.1 - which follows the First Act, in which the strong percussion adds spice to the not unappealing jog-trotting vocal line. The duets Moniuszko espouses - try that in the Picture No.1 - have a decidedly hand-me-down Italiana quality, a sub-Verdian striving that seems more gestural than genuine. The chorus in the second Picture is decidedly by-the-motions. And when the composer does trust his instincts and utilises Polish folkloric material, which he does in the third scene of Act 2, it regrettably doesn't advance the musical argument and blunts the theatrical thrust. There are hints of a Smetana influence hereabouts.

The performances are by and large decent, though not outstanding. Conductor Warcislaw Kunc

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Written by bluesever

Wednesday, 01 June 2011 09:39 - Last Updated Friday, 04 January 2013 15:44

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directs briskly but not brusquely, and the recording is perfectly serviceable, but having recently reviewed Moniuszko's songs and having listened again to his better known operatic works, Paria really is for specialised collectors of the composer's oeuvre. ---Jonathan Woolf

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