

Barbara Wysocka

Actress, Director

A huge success, an indescribable triumph

Le Monde, Lucia di Lammermoor, Bayerische Staatsoper, Munich

Barbara Wysocka is an actress, theatre and opera director. She creates experimental multidisciplinary works combining installation, drama, documentary and music. Born in Warsaw, she graduated from both the acting and directing departments of the State Drama School in Kraków. Previously she studied violin at the Hochschule für Musik, in Freiburg. In the academic year 2019-2020 she will be a Cornell Visiting Professor of Theatre at Swarthmore College.

Wysocka has been honoured with the Paszport Polityki for her debut opera production Glass' *The Fall of the House of Usher*, the main acting award in the competition for staging early works of Polish literature for Idalia in *Fantasy*; and the Golden Yorick for her production of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* that she directed and also played Mark Antony.

From 2004 to 2014 she was an actress at the Stary Teatr, Kraków, which at this time was the most innovative theatre in Poland. She is presently a company member of the Teatr Powszechny, Warsaw, which is at the forefront of political performance. At both theatres she has performed lead roles and has received numerous prestigious acting prizes. She has also performed at the National Theatre, Warsaw, Berlin's Maxim Gorki Theater and Schaubühne am Lehniner Platz as well as in German language feature films and TV productions.

Wysocka's acting experience includes performing as a narrator in Schönberg's *Gurrelieder*, Debussy's *Le Martyre de saint Sébastien* and with Jordi Savall in *Éloge de la Folie*. She also performs in experimental music theatre pieces such as her creations *Anti-Oedipus* and *Chopin without Piano*.

Wysocka has directed Wyspiański's *The Curse* (2007), Bohomolec's *The Drunkards* (2009) at Stary Teatr, Kraków; Handke's *Kaspar* (2009) at Teatr Współczesny, Wrocław; Müller's *Volokolomsk Highway* (2010), Sophocles' *Philoctetes* (2012) at Teatr Polski, Wrocław; Büchner's *Lenz* (2011), *Dantons Tod* (2018) at National Theatre, Warsaw; *Woyzeck/Wozzeck* after Büchner and Berg (2012) at Kammerspiele, Munich; Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* (2016), Orwell's *1984* (2018) for Teatr Powszechny, Warsaw and Schiller's *Don Karlos*, (2018) for Volkstheater, Vienna.

On the opera stage she has directed Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* (2015) at Bayerische Staatsoper, Munich, Mozart's *Don Giovanni* (2016) at Bregenzer Festspiele, and for Polish National Opera: Glass' *The Fall of the House of Usher* (2009), Dusapin's *Medeamaterial* to a libretto by Heiner Müller (2012), the world premiere of Knapik's *Moby Dick* (2014), Różycki's *Eros i Psyche* (2017) and Puccini's *Tosca* (2019).

Barbara Wysocka combines filmed images with live action to create multimedia environments in which she sometimes performs herself, as in Dusapin/Müller's *Medeamaterial* at Polish National Opera, Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* at Teatr Powszechny, Warsaw and *Szapocznikow. Stan Nieważkości. No gravity.* at Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw.

Wysocka is a founding member of the artistic collective CENTRALA. Their piece *Chopin bez Fortepianu* (*Chopin without Piano*) in which she accompanied by full orchestra, describes and acts out the piano part of Chopin's piano concerti in a monologue that fits precisely in its place was presented at many festivals in Poland, Russia, Belarus and the USA. The Boston Globe declared it to be the best theatre production of the year in 2015.

CENTRALA has also produced ten other innovative pieces since its founding. The latest pieces are *Sprawiedliwość* (Justice) whose main part is a notification sent to the state attorney explaining how a current MP is guilty of crimes against humanity for her involvement in anti-Semitic purges in 1968; and *Filmy z epoki smogu* (Films from the time of Smog), a series of short artistic films about air pollution.