

Name of Event	The Human Voice
Company	Barbara Paterson, Soprano Gabriela Glapska, Piano Tabitha Arthur, Director
Country of Origin	Aotearoa/NZ
Partner	Academy Galleries/NZ Academy of Fine Arts 28 th Annual Wallace Art Awards
Performance Dates	6pm 27, 28 and 29. February
Thanks to	Academy Galleries, Music Planet, Random Group
Venue	Academy Galleries / 1 Queens Wharf
Description	<p>Experience the powerful intimacy of The Human Voice.</p> <p>Following a sold-out, critically acclaimed season at {Suite} Gallery, <i>The Human Voice</i> is coming to the Academy Galleries. A splintering relationship becomes high art in Francis Poulenc and Jean Cocteau's lushly operatic one-act monodrama, <i>The Human Voice</i> (<i>La voix humaine</i>). Tabitha Arthur directs soprano Barbara Paterson and pianist Gabriela Glapska in this deeply moving, complex portrait of a woman in crisis. Presented in English and set amidst the stunning imagery of the Wallace Arts Trust's 28th Annual Wallace Art Awards, <i>The Human Voice</i> examines critical questions of communication, authenticity and artifice in a technological age, featuring tour de force performances from some of NZ's most dramatically and musically incisive artists.</p> <p>Please note that The Human Voice refers to suicide. Please contact bpvoice.nz@gmail.com if you need further information on this content before booking.</p>
Quotes	<p>Barbara Paterson, Soprano:</p> <p><i>The Human Voice</i> (<i>La voix humaine</i>) is one of the towering operatic masterpieces of the 20th century, with a libretto by Jean Cocteau and music by Francis Poulenc. The one-act opera is a showcase for the solo soprano and the pianist, depicting the heroine Elle's final phone conversation with her lover. Elle is by turns sexy and funny, genuine and manipulative, pathetic and volcanically powerful, and the pianist's extraordinary accompaniment "bathes the whole work in an orchestral sensuality" (those are Cocteau's words, not mine). Presented in English, with a 45-minute running time, <i>The Human Voice</i> will be an intimate, compelling artistic event that will appeal to opera lovers and opera newbies alike.</p> <p>With my brilliant director Tabitha Arthur (a spectacular photographer and visual artist when she's not directing theatre), we have crafted a celebration of <i>The Human Voice</i>'s multi-faceted artistic history. We have forgone a traditional operatic "set" in favour of the lush imagery of contemporary visual artists in the 28th Annual Wallace Art Awards at the Academy Galleries, and in doing so, we're focusing deliberately on the porous boundaries between art, reality and artifice. It is going to look absolutely beautiful.</p> <p><i>La voix humaine</i> has always impressed me with its sophisticated understanding of ambiguity in romantic relationships, and I'm enjoying examining this notoriously emotionally fraught piece through a contemporary feminist lens. I've assembled an awesome team of women to help me tell</p>

	<p>Elle's story, and I am confident that audiences will find Elle's journey as relatable and relevant now as it was nearly a century ago, when Cocteau first penned the text.</p>
Biography	<p>Barbara Paterson, Soprano Barbara Paterson returned to NZ from New York City in 2016. While in the US, she made her concert debuts at Lincoln Center and the Kennedy Center, and sang in operas and concerts around the USA, Canada and France. Since her return to NZ, she has sung for Stroma, the CANZ annual Nelson workshops, Wanderlust Theatre, NZ Opera, the Audio Foundation, the Auckland Chamber Orchestra, Unstuck Opera, Eternity Opera, NIMBY Opera, CubaDupa, and as a soloist for choral societies around the country. Barbara is a passionate music educator who believes strongly in the role of music in building communities, and she has conducted Wellington's Capital Choir for two years. Barbara is a former Dame Malvina Major Emerging Artist for NZ Opera and is a 2020 Freemasons Resident Artist for NZO.</p> <p>Gabriela Glapska, Piano Gabriela Glapska was born in Poland and began her piano studies at the age of seven. In 2006 she began her higher musical education under the tutelage of Professor Ewa Poblocka in Feliks Nowowiejski Academy of Music in Bydgoszcz where she graduated with the highest distinction, receiving her Master's Degree in 2011. In 2011 she was also selected through an internal academy competition to perform a concerto with orchestra in the Bydgoszcz Philharmonic Hall and gave a debut in the Pomeranian Philharmonic playing Andrzej Panufnik's Piano Concerto. After graduating from the University, Gabriela worked as an accompanist and repetiteur for the Bydgoszcz Academy of Music. Since moving to New Zealand three years ago, Gabriela is completing her PhD degree in piano performance at Victoria University, as well as working as an accompanist in the brass department at the New Zealand School of Music. In 2016 she was awarded the Victoria Doctoral Scholarship, as well as the Postgraduate Scholarship in Classical Piano Performance for both 2017 and 2018. Gabriela was also selected for the Wellington International Student Excellence Award within the Creativity category. Gabriela is an active soloist and chamber musician, with a strong interest in contemporary music. Gabriela has been the resident pianist for the annual Nelson Composers Workshops and a pianist for the 44th International Viola Congress in 2017. As an advocate for the performance of new compositions she has collaborated with many award-winning composers on both solo and ensemble projects as well as with Wellington-based contemporary ensemble STROMA. Gabriela also collaborates with soprano Barbara Paterson presenting less-known American and Polish repertoire as well as non-standard projects, such as "<i>La voix humaine</i>" by Francis Poulenc. In August 2019 she was invited to join TrioNique, New Zealand's only professional flute saxophone piano trio with whom she has performed several concerts presenting various repertoire. Gabriela has performed in Poland, Germany, Slovakia, Belarus, and New Zealand.</p> <p>Tabitha Arthur, Director Tabitha Arthur has directed multiple theatre productions as well as created work for screen. Originally from the beautiful coastal town of New Plymouth, Taranaki, Tabitha has called Wellington home for the past 20 years. She finds endless inspiration from the diversity of the community, the ever-changing landscape, and the highly changeable weather in the windy and proudly Creative Capital of New Zealand.</p> <p>An award-winning director and strong creative visionary, Tabitha embraces all</p>

	<p>forms of communication to create thought-provoking and visually stunning experiences for audiences. Tabitha holds a Master of Theatre Arts degree in Directing (Toi Whakaari: NZ Drama School and Victoria University, Wellington), a Bachelor's Degree in Visual Communication Design (Graphic Design; Massey University Design School), and a Diploma of Media Communication (formerly Taranaki Polytechnic).</p> <p>As a director who relishes working closely with cast and crew, Tabitha has worked on acclaimed productions including Thinking Dolphins by Mark Nicholas, Committed by Clarissa Chandrahassen, Hold Me by award-winning NZ playwright Emily Duncan, a double season of Caryl Churchill's Love and Information and Far Away, Wings by award-winning NZ playwright Jess Sayer, and meta-musical [title of show] by Tony-award winning Hunter Bell and Jeff Bowen. She has also worked alongside prominent NZ actor and director Peter Hambleton as assistant director. Devised and site-specific theatrical works include: the sold-out season of Labyrinthine; and Traces. Ghosts From The Archives with sound designer Ryan Smith – with 21 emerging artists and a sold out season, Tabitha was nominated for Best Newcomer, and the production won Best Production Design at the Wellington Fringe Festival (2014).</p> <p>Tabitha is driven to create exciting new work with passionate and talented individuals. She collaborates with positive, hard-working, inspirational artists from a multitude of disciplines, including composers, musicians, actors, non-actors, dancers, designers, writers, singers, filmographers, and more. She relishes new challenges and adores working with people who bring their whole selves to the work.</p>
Reviews	<p>The Human Voice at {Suite} Gallery</p> <p>"There is no doubt that this production rises to the challenges of a contemporary interpretation in comprehensive fashion. First and foremost, soprano Barbara Paterson displays complete control and passionate commitment throughout all the moods of this very rich piece of writing, from spine-chilling wailing through powerful dramatic expression to gorgeous colouring in the denouement. Her acting is exemplary and there is a dignity and depth of understanding – a feminist understanding, as she notes – in her portrayal of Elle's position. It is good to see a performer of this standard get a chance to display the full range of her talents in a role like this. Paterson never misses a heartbeat in response.</p> <p>The direction, by Tabitha Arthur, is perfectly matched, using a cunning, minimalist set that allows for considerable variations in the height, angle and attitude of the singer. Isadora Lao's lighting plot successfully adds a further dimension, affecting the white spaces of Suite Gallery particularly. Gabriela Glapska's piano accompaniment is deeply attuned to the singing: rhythmically precise and produces wonderful tone from a fine instrument.</p> <p>Altogether this is a strong, uncompromising yet unquestionably cool production, performed at the highest standards. It opens up another dimension of Poulenc's genius in writing for the voice, in a coherent, sophisticated, contemporary interpretation. At just one act of about 40 minutes it makes for a very memorable but perfectly digestible evening's entertainment – and one that anyone interested in opera won't want to miss."</p> <p>– Michael Gilchrist, Theatreview</p> <p>--</p>

Barbara Paterson is a masterful soprano, and Poulenc's composition demands all that mastery....This role is both an emotionally demanding character, and a tremendously challenging singing part, and at no point did Paterson lose her grip on either. Her Elle was painfully affecting...Paterson's voice was as flexible and emotionally raw as her characterisation, and completely intertwined in it. Not afraid to make it ugly, she slid from sweet and pure to mellifluous, and then screechily shrill, before subsiding again into monotone responses as the caller takes over the conversation.

Supporting Paterson's intense delivery was **Gabriela Glapska's** competent and sensitive accompaniment. The word doesn't do it justice – more than accompaniment, her playing superbly framed Paterson's performance without ever distracting from it." – Sophie Thompson, **The Wellingtonista**

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Gabriela Glapska's piano-playing beautifully abstracted the colour in the orchestral score and gave us an immediacy of interaction between Elle and her "ex" whose direct quality had a definite and focused impact of their own – and singer and piano could and did, in those intimate spaces of Cuba St's Suite venue, run a gamut of radiant, searing, euphoric and despairing emotion which made a proper foil for the myriads of more lyrical and intimate moments.

Barbara Paterson compellingly held our attention...Both her face and form displayed remarkable aspects of grace and fluidity throughout...when contrasted with her rapid, almost furtive reactions to moments of shock or conflict, often succeeded by sequences of deflation and despair as if she suddenly felt drained of energy and will...The singer's own arresting looks and engaging stage personality couldn't help but sharpen the focus of our conjecture generated by her character's relationship's obvious dissolution...She's shown as a romantic dreamer, whether by nature or by artifice or both – at one point the mood created by some exquisite pianissimo singing was broken by her own realisation that she was in a dream of denial, while the world pursued its own course, leaving her stranded. Her attempts to preserve the vestiges of an old intimacy was given a wonderful sensuality.

Very great credit to all concerned regarding this production, the performers' sterling efforts backed up steadfastly by **Tabitha Arthur's** fluid, naturalistic and unobtrusive direction and **Isadora Lao's** sensitively-wrought illuminations. Such finely-crafted and deeply-committed presentations deserve the widest possible currency, as well as the heartfelt thanks of those of us fortunate enough to enjoy what was, for this audience member, a profoundly moving experience." – Peter Mechen, **Middle-C**

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Tabitha Arthur's direction was subtle and effective and used the set and the venue marvellously.

Gabriela Glapska played marvellously. She played the score sensitively: crashing chords in the angry and passionate moments, insistent 'phone' ringing tones, and lyrical and subtle for the gentler and ardent moments.

Barbara Paterson was magnificent. She explored the dynamic range of her voice – from molto pianissimo to the ecstatic, exultant, full voice glory of her

	remembrance of their love. With the lyrical phrases her voice was rich and full, and her diction was superb... As for the acting: Barbara Paterson was masterful, magnificent and marvellous! We saw the gamut of her emotions, every nuance of a passionate, fervent, loving, angry, heartbroken, despondent woman with every action and move.” – Stephen Gibbs, DMS Review Blog
Image/Video Links	<p>https://www.dropbox.com/sh/5e8reev6wz7o8gj/AAB8VS6oXU_x_kSGxKZash-a?dl=0</p> <p>Trailer for The Human Voice at {Suite} Gallery https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HmjefAv1fsg</p> <p>“At This Hour” – Art Song performance by Barbara Paterson and Gabriela Glapska https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=urbkSCtJRY8</p>
Tickets	\$20 - \$40 (excluding booking fees) Visit festival.co.nz
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