



THE HUMAN VOICE

**Lyrical tragedy in one act by Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)
based on a play by Jean Cocteau**

“The most beautiful music is to be found in the silences” are words that are readily attributed to Mozart. These silences inspired many composers, such as Debussy, who prized mystery so highly. It is this whole atmosphere of unspoken words that makes *La Voix humaine* a unique work.

Composed by Francis Poulenc in 1959 on a play by Jean Cocteau, itself created in 1930, the subject is nevertheless of a formidable modernity. A lonely woman, talking on the phone to a male interlocutor who seems to be her lover, a monologue made of false truths and real lies, a word that is only freed when despair prevails. Who is this woman? What is her story and what power does this man have over her to the point that she tries to kill herself? Her faces are multiple, the voice is a woman-child, a *femme fatale*, a rejected woman, a free woman. It is Eve who decides of her destiny, and carried through the generations by creators who are passionate about her, interpreters who dream of her, and an audience that guesses her, she seems to have no end.

Caroline Mutel

“By a curious mystery, it was only after forty years of friendship that I collaborated with Cocteau. I think I needed a lot of experience to respect the perfect construction of *La Voix humaine* which must be, musically, the opposite of an improvisation.”

Francis Poulenc

PROGRAMME
The Human Voice (1958), for soprano and piano

Caroline Mutel, soprano
Antoine Palloc, piano