



CROATIAN NATIONAL THEATER IN ZAGREB



The Human Voice / La Voix Humaine by Francis Poulenc

1 - 18 September 2025 | Croatian National Theater in Zagreb, Croatia



THE RESIDENCY

By Sanja Ivić, Director:

Working on this project was a truly special experience for me, not only because of the exceptional piece itself, but also because it engaged with themes that are both personally and professionally important to me. Although I am now retired, this was an opportunity to return once again to my home theatre, where I spent decades of my life, first as a dramaturg, later as the long-time head of the Drama, and later as the acting General Manager. From this perspective, I felt how crucial it is to rethink sustainability and to see how it can be integrated into the artistic process itself.

I chose a chamber form and, together with two opera soloists, shaped this major work using only what we already had at our disposal. The scenography and costumes were not created anew; instead, we relied exclusively on materials and elements found in the HNK repertory archive. Through this collective effort, we demonstrated how recycling and creative reuse can enrich a production, opening up new ways of thinking about the relationship between theatre art and the resources available to it. Every piece of fabric, every prop carried traces of past performances, creating a rich layer of meaning and continuity.

This process was not only practical but also deeply artistically challenging. It made clear that “sustainability” is not a limitation but, on the contrary, can become a driving force for creativity. In this case, the decision to work with existing elements encouraged us to be inventive and to discover new possibilities for interpreting Cocteau's text. I believe the audience recognized this, as the spirit of past productions and the freshness of new collective creation were both palpable.

For me personally, this project served as a bridge between my professional legacy and the contemporary challenges of theatre. The Human Voice, within the framework of the STAGES project, showed how theatre can be a place of innovation and responsibility, and how sustainable practices, rather than diminishing artistic value, can open up space for a new kind of artistic beauty.

UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) LINKED TO THE WORKSHOP

