

Love on the  
Left Bank



**Juliette Gréco**  
the muse of Saint Germain des Prés



*“Blackwell commands the stage and holds the audience in her thrall”*  
Canberra Critics Circle

Photo - Alex Frayne

# Love on the Left Bank

Juliette Gréco,  
the muse of Saint Germain des Prés

*Written by Louise Blackwell*

Love on the Left Bank follows the remarkable story of legendary French singer Juliette Gréco.

Young Juliette, just 16, recently released from prison, lands in the occupied city of Paris. Tiny, starving, and alone, she finds refuge in a boarding house in the bohemian quarter of Saint Germain des Prés.

There, charismatic, free-spirited and talented, she is adopted by the older guard of culture and ideas, such as Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir, who encourage her to take the first steps in realising her dream of becoming a singer.

So many of the great philosophers, writers and artists gathered round Juliette like moths round a fragile but mesmerising candle, as she made her debuts in the legendary local nightclubs, where cabaret nights presented a myriad of different performers, poets and musical acts.

It was here that American jazz musicians like Miles Davis and Duke Ellington found refuge from the racism and violence in America.

And it was here that the love story between Juliette and Miles Davis played out.

Juliette Gréco became synonymous with this liberty and celebration of the arts and she is known today as the muse of Saint Germain des Prés.

Backed by a superb 6-piece band led by musical director Mark Simeon Ferguson, and featuring Cuban trumpet sensation Lazaro Numa from The Cat Empire, actress and singer Louise performs songs that celebrate love, life and liberty as it occurred in the Left Bank of Paris at the time of its liberation from Nazi German occupation.

*“Nothing short of majestic”*  
Theatre Travels



Photo - Peter Tee

My academic studies took me to France where I lived the dream of singing in the Paris jazz scene. I had a life-changing experience, every year getting a deeper understanding of this rich culture where the arts play such a central part of daily life. I brought my inspiration back home and created a French musical act with some of Adelaide’s finest jazz musicians, Louise Blackwell and the French Set have built up a strong following in Adelaide over the years. But I wanted to take our act further and write a full-blown cabaret show. *Love on the Left Bank* is my love song to Paris.

It is a 70-minute musical tribute to the life of one of the great artists of ‘la chanson française,’ Juliette Gréco. Catherine Fitzgerald is dramaturg and director and I play Juliette and the narrator. Our musical director Mark Simeon Ferguson leads an incredible six-piece band...it’s an absolute feast

of beautiful songs. The musicians play characters in the story and perform songs in the Tabou nightclub, which adds to the show’s charm. Cuban trumpet sensation Lazaro Numa plays Miles Davis, Juliette’s young love, violinist Julian Ferraretto plays Jean-Paul Sartre, saxophonist Tom Pulford plays a French police officer working for the Gestapo, John Aué plays double bass and Josh Baldwin plays the drums and lettrist poet Gabriel Pomerand.

*Love on the Left Bank* opened to great acclaim and a standing ovation at the 2022 Adelaide Cabaret Festival, it also won a 2023 Adelaide Fringe Weekly Award for cabaret.

*Love on the Left Bank* is proudly supported by Arts SA and the Fringe Artist Donor Circle.

## **LOUISE BLACKWELL – Juliette/narrator**

Louise Blackwell started as an actor in Geoffrey Rush's Magpie Theatre, including the 1986 Adelaide Festival production *The Small Poppies and Carols by Lazerlight* at Belvoir Street Theatre. Further credits include SATC's *Essington Lewis: I am Work*, *Pearls Before Swine* at Q Theatre, telefilm *The Harp in the South* and film *Dad and Dave: On Our Selection*.

As a singer, Louise was member of the Irish vocal band Friends and Relations in Melbourne, appearing at The Guinness Festival of Music and on The Steve Vizard show with Paul Kelly and Archie Roach. In Barcelona, she sang on vocal composition *Herbarium* by Javier Navarrete, Oscar nominated for his soundtrack of the film *Pan's Labyrinth*.

In France, Louise sang in Celtic band *Gulf Stream*, playing Paris, Bretagne and Switzerland. She spent three years studying with American jazz vocalists Sara Lazarus and Michèle Hendricks and went on to sing with many jazz musicians in the Paris jazz scene, playing at clubs such as Sunside, Les Sept Lézards, Le Franc Pinot and Café Universel. She recorded three CDs: *Blue Lou Quartet*, *Sea is Turning* and *Paris Hop* featuring pianist Vincent Bourgeyx, bassists Gildas Boclé and Chris Jennings, and drummer Karl Jannuska.

Louise Blackwell and the French Set have performed at all the major French events in Adelaide such as Masters of Impressionism Exhibition at Art Gallery of South Australia, Alliance Française French Market, Adelaide Festival Centre's French Festival, Bonjour Barossa French Festival and Bastille concerts at La Bohème, The Wheatsheaf Hotel and The GOV. Their many sell-out Fringe seasons include: *A NIGHT IN PARIS I & II* and *FROM PARIS WITH LOVE*, winning a 2018 Fringe Weekly Music Award for *A NIGHT IN PARIS* including CD release and video clips, and the 2021 Advertiser Pick of the Fringe for music. They have been on 3 tours to Melbourne playing at Alliance Française and the Paris Cat Jazz Club.

[louiseblackwell.com](http://louiseblackwell.com)



*“Louise Blackwell is at her absolute best in Love on the Left Bank...  
an incredibly skilled chanteuse and easily among the crème de la crème of Australia’s performers of French chanson”*  
Matilda Marseillaise



## **CATHERINE FITZGERALD – Director/dramaturg**

Catherine trained at Flinders University of SA (Acting -1982). has worked as a director, actor and writer in theatre for over forty years. She has directed over 90 professional theatre productions and events, 15 of which were for State Theatre Company of South Australia. She has worked Australia wide as well as in Japan, New York, Edinburgh, Malaysia, Indonesia. Athens and Mumbai.

Catherine was Artistic Director Feast Festival (2013- 2015), Associate Director State Theatre Company South Australia (2011-12), Artistic Director of Vitalstatistix, National Women's Theatre (1996 -2002) where she produced and/or directed over 40 productions, and Artistic Director of Mainstreet Theatre 1990-1992. She has had 8 plays produced by professional theatre companies and has worked as an actor for stage and screen. Most recently she directed *GASLIGHT* for STCSA and *Say No More* for Tutti Arts - a multi-cultural, multi arts performance with disabled and non-disabled performers (Georgetown Festival, Malaysia and OzAsia Festival, Adelaide).

She and producer Lee-Anne Donnelly (FAR & AWAY Productions) received the Major Commission from Arts South Australia and produced and directed Catherine's play *DRY* in association with Country Arts SA which premiered in 2021. She directed and dramaturged Louise Blackwell's Award Winning *Love on the Left Bank* in 2022.





## **MARK SIMEON FERGUSON – Musical Director**

Composer/arranger/pianist Mark Simeon Ferguson was a finalist in the National Jazz Awards in 1999 and in the same year he completed a Master of Music in Jazz Performance at the University of Adelaide (where he is now Head of Jazz). In 2018 he was co-curator of International Jazz Day celebrations for the Adelaide Festival Centre (AFC) and in 2020 he released his sixth album, *Songs From an Imperfect World* on the Wizardtone Label.

His commissions for the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra include the orchestration of *Pudnanthi Padninthi* (their new Kurna welcome) (2021) and the shows *ASO Does Latin with the Marmalade Man* (2018), *Herman and Rosie* (2016) and *The Bush Concert* (2014) [which has also been performed by the SSO in the Opera House, the MYO in the Recital Centre and the ASO in Harbin, China]. In 2021 he was commissioned, through the ABC Jazz Composer Commissioning Fund to write and record his new project *Where Emus Roam the Streets*.

In 2020 he arranged songs for the Australian String Quartet's *Ukaria* livestream broadcast. He composed the song cycles *The Moral of the Story* (2013) and *Next Stop North Terrace* (2018) for the SA Public Primary Schools Music Festival.

As a pianist Mark has performed with Rufus Wainwright, Mark Murphy, Paul Capsis, Lady Rizo, Vika and Linda Bull, Tina Arena and Ray Vega. He has been Musical Director for Johanna Allen, Camille O'Sullivan, *UNSUNG* (the Frank Ford Commission for Adelaide Cabaret Festival 2018), *Songs my mother taught me*, the Adelaide Cabaret Festival's 2021, 2022 and 2023 Opening Gala, 2017 and 2018 Closing Gala, the AFC's 2018 Walk of Fame Gala and 50th birthday concert in 2023, and QPAC's 2019 *Songs of Hope and Healing*.

**[marksimeonferguson.com](http://marksimeonferguson.com)**

*“A tender, witty, sexy and stylish show,  
all through the prism of Lou Blackwell’s  
sensational voice”*

Mitchell Butell  
Artistic Director State Theatre Company of South  
Australia





# Love on the Left Bank opened at the Dunstan Playhouse for the Adelaide Cabaret Festival 2022

Followed by an award winning season at Adelaide Fringe 2023



**Glam Adelaide**

*“Blackwell’s performance and vocals are exemplarily; you can’t help but feel the emotions of Gréco through Blackwell’s commanding vocals and storytelling.”*

*“Director Catherine Fitzgerald and Musical Director Mark Simeon Ferguson’s arrangements for each song provide Blackwell and band with the support needed to deliver a performance that makes you feel as though you are sitting in the café theatres of Le Tabou, Les Assassins or La Rose Rouge”*

*“The highlight of the show was Blackwell’s performance of Jacques Brel’s anti-war song “Ça va le diable” first sung by Juliette in 1955. The combination of red lights, powerful vocals, and assortment of strings left you enraptured.”*



**Matilda Marseillaise**

*“Louise Blackwell is at her absolute best in Love on the Left Bank.”*

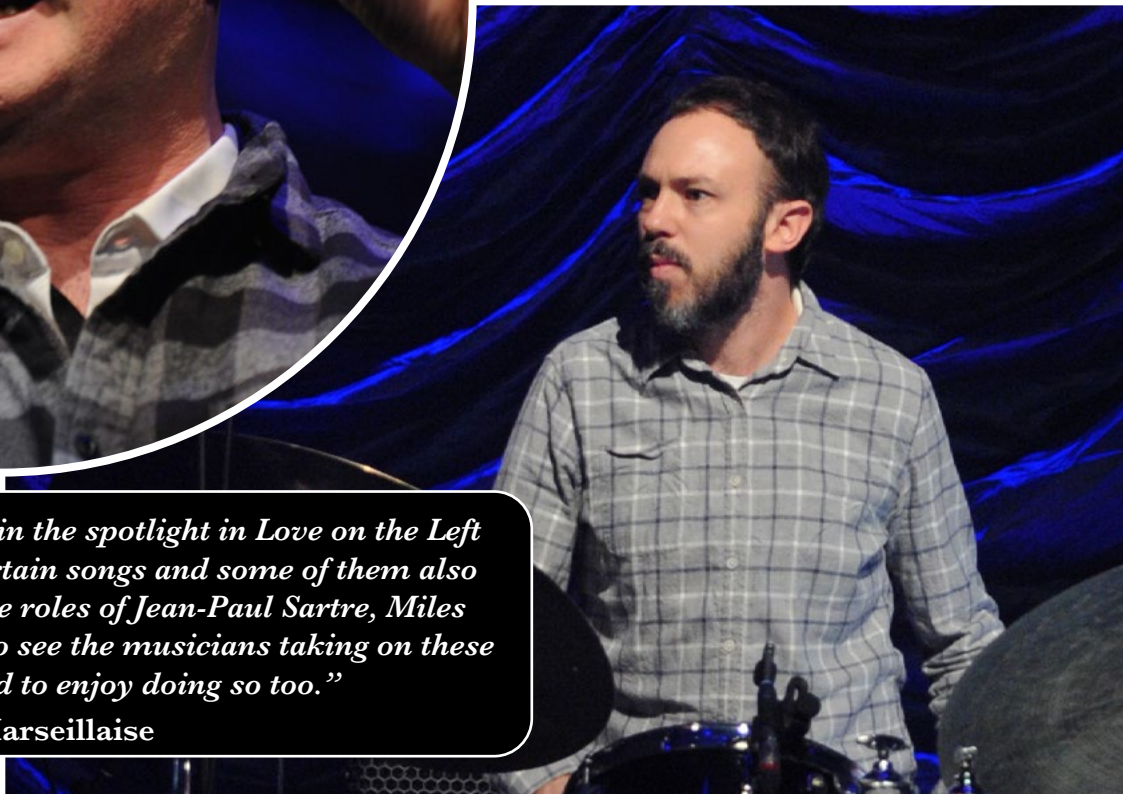
*“Louise is an incredibly skilled chanteuse and easily among the crème de la crème of Australia’s performers of French chanson.”*



**Matthew Hctor Theatre Travels**

*“Blackwell’s first foray into the Adelaide Cabaret Festival was a masterclass in how true storytelling is done.”*

*“Words, for all their power, complexity and emotion, have a sensual beauty, something that Blackwell not only understood, but articulated and ultimately conquered with Love on the Left Bank.”*



*“The musicians all get their turn in the spotlight in Love on the Left Bank, with them joining in on certain songs and some of them also having brief speaking parts in the roles of Jean-Paul Sartre, Miles Davis, among others. It was nice to see the musicians taking on these roles, and they appeared to enjoy doing so too.”*

**Matilda Marseillaise**



# Love on the Left Bank

## Technical Specifications

<b>AUDIENCE</b>	GP 12+
<b>CONTENT RATING</b>	PG
<b>DURATION</b>	70mins without interval
<b>TOURING PARTY</b>	7 Performers, 1 Director/Stage Manager (able to call the show), 1 Production Assistant
<b>FORMATS</b>	Proscenium Arch, Spiegeltent, Black Box, Hall
<b>BUMP IN</b>	2-3 hours with pre rig completed
<b>BUMP OUT</b>	2 hours
<b>STAFFING</b>	Venue to supply: 1x LX & 1x SND & 1 follow spot operator & staff for bump in & out of performance
<b>DRESSING ROOMS</b>	2
<b>OTHER</b>	Public Liability & COVID Safe Plan

## Sound

All sound must be set up prior to our arrival.

### PA:

A professional-quality PA system capable of providing clean, coherent, direct full range sound to all seats in the venue at moderately high SPL.

### Equipment:

1x wireless handheld microphones with 1x straight mic stand (lead vocals) 1x wireless headset mic

6x microphone with a boom stand (piano, violin, saxophone, trumpet, double bass and drums vocal)

1x tuned grand piano OR 88 note weighted keyboard with stand, sustain pedal, stool and all necessary cables.

2x DI's for weighted keyboard if used.

1x drum mic kit suitable for venue

1x bass DI or bass amp (company can provide)

1x XLR output and power supply for violin

## Backline Hire

For all non South Australian bookings, the presenters is to provide the following back line:

Drum kit with pedals and cymbals

Bass Amp

\*\*\* When a grand piano is not available, please provide an 88 note weighted keyboard with stand, sustain pedal, stool and all necessary cables.

## Lighting

All lighting must be pre-rigged prior to our arrival.

Lighting states synopsis for pre-plotting suitable to a variety of venues are available on request. 45 minutes required for LX plotting as part of bump in.

3 general wash states

7 specials

Haze

Follow spot

## Staging

Minimum stage size 6m wide x 4m deep. Larger would be preferred.

## Props

Minimal props required:

1x small round cafe table

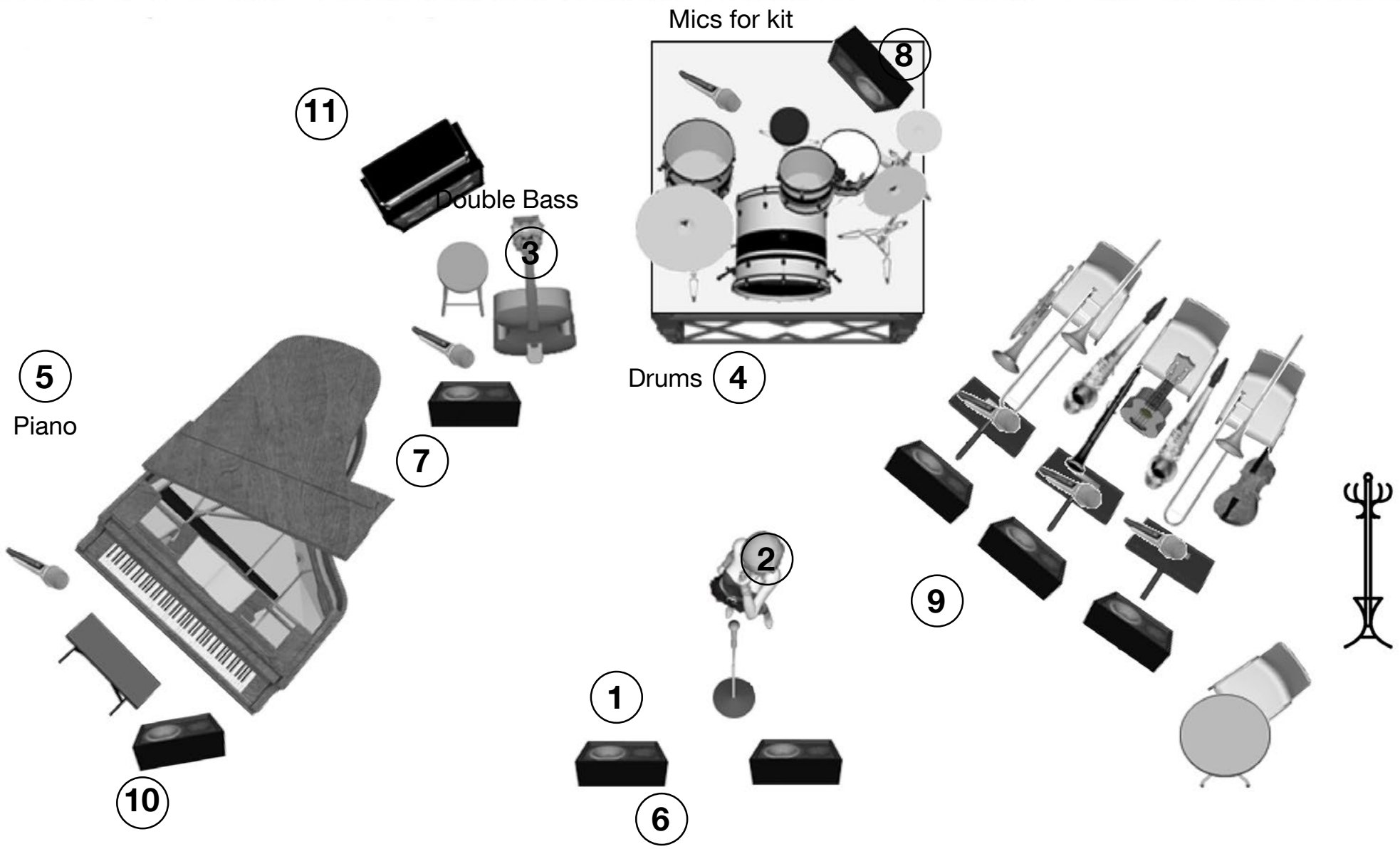
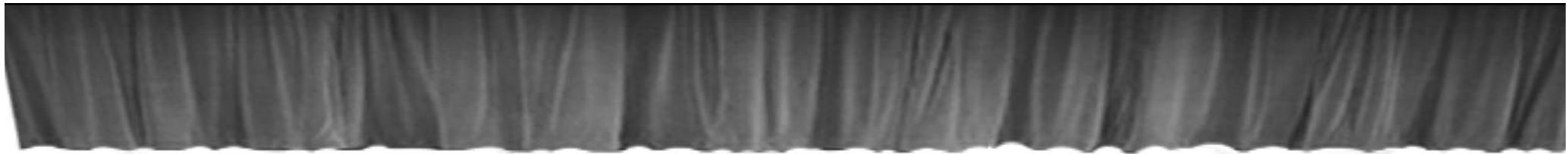
5x cafe chairs

1x hat stand

# **Love on the Left Bank**

## **Stage Plot**

1. Louise Lead Vocal (wireless)
2. Louise Headset (wireless) Mic
3. Bass Out - DI, 1x Vocal Mic
4. Drum Mic Kit (2x Overheads, KD, SD, 2x Toms, Hi Hat etc. 1x Vocal Mic
5. Grand Piano OR Keyboard (if piano is not available) Stereo DI, 1x Vocal Mic
6. 2x Foldback for Lead Vocals (send 1)
7. Foldback for Bass (send 2)
8. Foldback for Drums (send 3)
9. Foldback for 3 Musicians (Lazaro, Julian & Tom) (Send 4), 3x Vocal Mics
10. Foldback for Grand Piano OR Keyboard (send 5)
11. Acoustic Bass DI





**Juliette Gréco**









*“It would be a shame if this captivating one-night performance of Love on the Left Bank could not be revived for further standing ovations for Louise Blackwell and her band.”* Peter Wilkins Canberra Critics Circle

Take your audience on a trip to the fascinating world of Juliette Gréco’s bohemian post-war Paris!

**Contact**

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**Writer and performer**

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**SHOWREEL**