

Rauch overwhelms with sheer talent, warmth

Diane de Beer

Laurika Rauch is one of those people who can perform anywhere and within the first few minutes, she has captured the room.

But especially following her orchestra-backed concert in the State Theatre's Opera last year, this intimate show on the Breytenbach stage, where she has eye contact with the audience, is a wonderful kickstart to the Rauch year.

And in particular, this selection of favourites hits all the right spots although, with her rich repertoire, there's no real danger that she could go wrong. Most of her songs have become popular property and the audience obviously knew the words to most of her material.

Her choice of cover songs reflect just where she stands musically – from the haunting *Time in a Bottle* by Jim Croce to the encore *Dry Land* which most followers probably own as hers anyway.

On stage, Rauch is a gem and she simply glows brighter as time goes by.

Her voice wraps gloriously around any song and with her novel and intense interpretive skills, every number is special. Small wonder the audience demanded three encores and had Rauch given them an option, they would have kept her there for the night.

She has always worked magic with her accompanists and her latest acquisition, Fanie Fouché, is another golden find. Not only is he a fine pianist, he also has a remarkable voice and with Rauch's grace, she passes him the spotlight for his own number, draws on his harmonising talents and the two of them do a rousing rendition of Paul McCartney's *Wanderlust*.

To single out any of the songs is out of the question for this is a singer who, even when she sings her first hit, *Kinders van die Wind*, does it with a freshness, often a new slant – as each number is reworked from time to time – giving it new life.

In cabaret, this singer is at her best as she overwhelms her audience with sheer talent, warmth and nary a step out of place.

SHOW

Laurika Rauch in
Cabaret at the Breytie

VENUE

Breytenbach Theatre

DATES

Until February 8