

Tete a Tete Festival 2017 review at the Place, London – ‘an engine room for new opera’

by [Edward Bhesania](#) - Jul 28, 2017

In exploring themes of personal freedom Federica Santambrogio and Matteo Manzitti's *Deeply* proves to be strikingly contemporary and heartfelt. A married, middle-aged woman visiting her mother in hospital strikes up a relationship with a pathologist, in which their childhoods as well as their sexuality are mutually explored. The work is deftly scored for five cellos – raised on platforms and semi-covered in sheets, as if awaiting their own post-mortems. Actor Alessandra Faiella and soprano Laura Catrani produce hauntingly atmospheric performances, accompanied by ravishing cello playing, sensitively and alertly conducted by Pilar Bravo.

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Death stayed in the air for the next performance – it was a morgue. Still, Op.64's *Deeply* is equally a story of love. Therapist, Alina, falls for Pathologist, Lara, who feels their lives lost when she touches their bodies. These spirits are set in a striking set, in the five cellists raised above the action (the flowing material) suffered various tragedies due to their an unforgiving society. Whispering, resonant strings underline a sensitive and poetic narrative (in Italian with surtitles), a hopeful future for the lovers in what was the strongest performance of the evening.

Tête-à-Tête Festival, The Place

By Jan-Peter Westad

