



# PEAU D'ÂME

*LITTERAL TRANSCRIPTION: SOULSKIN*

ILLUMINATED PUPPETS  
FOR THE PUBLIC SPACE



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# FOREWORD

*Five characters wander heavily down the street, lost in their thoughts, their faces expressionless. They bear the weight of society's gaze on their shoulders. Yet, one can sense that deep within, a light is seeking to take control back... Will they manage to free themselves from their mask and finally express their own personalities and emotions?*

*"Peau d'Âme" (literal transcription: soulskin) could reveal our physical representation of souls...*

7:36 a.m., time for these five individuals to hit the road. The same road, always, every day. They walk together but don't know, nor talk to, each other, they follow but don't see each other. No surprises. Nothing there to disrupt their daily routine.

7:49 a.m., 122 steps to the next intersection. "Keep well to the right of the pavement" that's the rule. A well-oiled machine. A stop here... a glance to the right, one to the left... 7:59 am, setting off again. A sad daily routine. They seem gloomy, as if they had lost their spark. Yet deep down inside them, a small glimmer of light still flickers...

That day won't be like any other. For the 1<sup>st</sup> time, things won't go as usual. One of the characters quickens its pace, taking jerkier steps. They stumble, stagger, and rush forward. Enough is enough! One last loss of balance, then collapse. Silence...

Beneath this lifeless skin, something is stirring, tensing, bubbling; organic and visceral... A human form appears, disoriented, worn out, freed from the chains of life and the shackles of society. It must free the others from their cocoons, but realises that they are not ready yet.



# STORY AND STATEMENT OF INTENT



*Painting by Polish artist Tomasz Kopera, conveying the difficulty an individual may experience in breaking away from the group.*

Peau d'âme is the first creation by France Chapon-Hueso and Bastien Rolly as directors for the Compagnie des Quidams, following the departure of its founder Jean-Baptiste Duperray in 2023. With this show, we wish to preserve the constitutive elements of the company's identity: visual and poetic performances, the use of inflatable and luminous structures, metamorphoses... while bringing a new perspective to it.

Most of us play a role to fit into society, to be like others, to walk like others, to be one or the other. These giant figures move in unison, bending and imitating the other members of the group to better integrate... until they lose touch with their own personality. But inside them, a soul, like an invisible power that we have decided to establish as a principle of life that would take form, like an essential part of human anatomy.

This creation is like an invitation for the audience to reflect upon individuality, the strength of the group, and society's influence on our behaviour. It is through this collective journey towards liberation that each soul will reveal its genuine identity.



# PUPPETS CREATION



The giants are inflatable, flexible structures approximately 4 meters tall with a base diameter of about 1.8 meters. In relief, they have hair and noses. Their eyes, mouths, and cheekbone shadows are drawn directly onto the fabric. Without lighting, the shadows on their faces are invisible. All five puppets will be visually identical. For this creation, they will be manipulated from the inside by the actors, with heads directed using long ropes.

The aesthetic design of the puppets is inspired by ceramic statuettes. The aesthetic design of the puppets is inspired by ceramic statuettes (see the work of Alejandra Almuelle and Tanya Besedina opposite). Unlike the volumes of previous creations, which were always pristine white, we want to add more depth through a patinated, shaded finish and a slight pink tint. Aiming to resemble a doll skin.



The puppets will start covered with an “extra skin layer” made of various materials to represent how years, habits and society heavily weigh on these five characters. The audience will then be able to see shadows inside the puppets without knowing where they are coming from or what they are exactly.

In the course of the show, the actors will free them from this extra skin layer and their straitjackets, symbolising the various stages of becoming aware of their own emancipation. Although within their puppets, the actors will then be fully visible to the audience thanks to a transparent "porthole" placed at the front of the inflatable. The audience will then be able to witness the world that inhabits each puppet.

# PUPPETS CREATION

With Peau d'Âme, we intend to develop the actors' performance outside of their puppets in depth, carrying on the work initiated for the show TOTEMS, rewritten in 2022. To allow this, the actors will be able to exit and enter through an ingenious airlock system without deflating the puppet. The artists will be able to stand in front of them, create a connection, and engage in conversation.

The actors will also be able to remotely control the inflation and deflation of the volume, so as to bring it to life without its puppeteer inside. It will even be possible to make it vanish to the ground completely.





# LIGHTING



Peau d'Âme being a night-time show, particular attention will be paid to the lighting and illumination of the puppets and multiple light sources will be used to transport the audience into different worlds throughout the show.

Therefore, the puppets can be lit in a variety of ways, with the head and body receiving two separate light sources. In the head, this soft lighting will focus on facial expressions and highlight features whereas in the body, the lighting will create shadows when the puppet is dressed. Without its rags, this light source will highlight the artists' bodies, create intimacy, and bring the puppets to life. Other light sources from outside (spotlights controlled by the stage manager) will envelop the whole scene and create a setting that stimulates the imagination and transports the audience into the world of Peau d'Âme.



# MUSICAL AND SOUND UNIVERSE

The music will be an original soundtrack composed by the duo Sueño en la Fábrica, like most previous creations of the company. The desired atmosphere will highlight the emotional state of the characters and the dynamics of their movements. From electronic sounds to more refined natural atmospheres, the composition will evolve in perfect harmony with the journey of the five characters.

To sample some research tracks, [click here!](#)





# DETAILS AND CREATION SCHEDULE

Disciplines: light show in public space, puppetry

Duration: 10 to 15-minute parade, followed by a 30-minute fixed finale

Number of characters: 5

Number of people on tour: 7

Capacity: up to 1500 people depending on the version

Play area: 20x20m

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## **Residency :**

Between November 2024 and February 2025: 10 days of research residency // **Le Grand R, Etrez-Bresse-Vallons (01)**

April 2025: 3 days of writing residency // **Le LABO, Roanne (42)**

September 2025: 5 days of residency on the plateau // **Le CCOUAC, Montiers-sur-Saulx (55)**

January 2026: 5 days of residency on the set // **the city of Viriat (01)**

February 2026: 5 days of residency on the set // **le Sc'Art à B, Bonneville (74)**

March 2026: 5 days of residency on the plateau // **Ainterexpo, Bourg-en-Bresse (01)**

April 2026: 5 days of residency at the plateau // **Moulin de la Luzège, Neuvic (19)**

May 2026: 5 days of residency at the plateau // **Moulin de l'Etang, Billom (63)**

May 2026: 5 days of residency at the plateau // **Le Grand R, Etrez-Bresse-Vallons (01)**

## **Tour 2026 :**

- 20/06 : Augsburg (Germany) - option
- 3 & 4/07 : Notre-Dame-de-Monts (85)
- 28/11 : Guebwiller (68) - option
- 8/12 : Genas (69)
- 11/12 : Viriat (01)
- 12/12 : Oyonnax (01)
- 13/12 : Haironville (55)

# PRODUCTION PARTNERS

The partners of this new creation project:

- the city of Oyonnax (FR) - co-production and pre-purchase
- the CCOUAC - Centre for Open Creation in the Arts in the Countryside, Montiers-sur-Saulx (FR) - pre-purchase, financial support, and residential accommodation
- the Moulin de la Luzège (FR) - residential accommodation
- the city of Billom (FR) - residential accommodation, financial support
- Sc'Art à B, Bonneville (FR) - pre-purchase, residential accommodation
- the city of Viriat (FR) - pre-purchase, residential accommodation
- the LABO, Roanne (FR) - residency accommodation

Peau d'Âme is supported by the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Region.



# CAST OF THE SHOW

**Artistic direction, writing, and staging:** France Hueso Chapon, and Bastien Rolly

Since 2022, France and Bastien have been managing the artistic direction of the Quidams compan. **France** has been an all-round sportswoman since a very young age, but it is dance that has captured her heart. From teaching to performing on stage, via cabaret and various artistic disciplines, she reveals herself as a versatile choreographer. Since joining the company in 2000, France has taken on multiple roles, including stilt walker, actress, dancer, puppeteer and stage director. Finally, **Bastien** is a self-taught jack-of-all-trades: since 2008, he has been with Les Quidams, sometimes as an actor, sometimes as a stage manager, technician, set designer, and he also provides an external perspective on projects led by other companies.



**Puppet and costume design:** Géraldine Clément



Géraldine studied fashion design and did internships at fashion houses in Paris before working in the film industry. She quickly turned to theater, particularly street theater, collaborating notably with the Théâtre de la Toupine. She joined the Compagnie des Quidams in 2006 and has since been responsible for creating all the costumes and inflatable sculptures for the company's various productions.



# CAST OF THE SHOW

## **Musical composition:** Sueño en la Fábrica

Sueño en la Fábrica was created in France in 1992 when Alejandra Santander and Didier Boyat met. Together, they compose, arrange, and create the mixed and popular music of Sueño en la Fábrica. They participate in numerous projects at the crossroad of disciplines (dance, video projection, painting, theater, circus) and have been responsible for the music of most of the company's shows since Rêve d'Herbert in 1997.

More information at: [suenoenlafabrica.com](http://suenoenlafabrica.com)

**Performers:** Anne-Sophie Arnaud, Florian Hérin, Célia Lefevre, Julie Loyot, and Jules Neff



# CAST OF THE SHOW

**Technician:** Jean-Loup Buy



**The office dream team, composed of:**

**Production and distribution:** Maxime Nemcik

**Administration:** Benjamin Rollin

**Coordination and communication:** Claire Tellier

**Production Manager:** Fred Grand

# HISTORY OF THE COMPANY

Created in 1994 by Jean-Baptiste Duperray, the Compagnie des Quidams has created more than a dozen shows presented in over forty countries, from Europe to Australia, including Asia and South America. It brings together around forty artists and technicians from diverse backgrounds: theater, dance, music, and circus. In 2023, the artistic direction is handed over to France Chapon Hueso, Bastien Rolly, and Vincent Borel.

The Compagnie des Quidams is based in France in Étrez, a village in the north of Ain. Alongside its performing activities, it develops projects to raise awareness of Street Arts (public rehearsals, workshops, artistic practice workshops...) and provides an artist residency space, Le Grand R, which stays available to other companies.

## The company's work in video :



**TOTEMS** - 2016 (deambulatory)  
and 2022 (fixed show)



**Polynie** - 2022  
fixed show



**FierS à Cheval** - 2014  
deambulatory + fixed show



**Rêve d'Herbert** - 1998  
deambulatory + fixed show