

COMPAGNIE À VOL D'OISEAU PRESENTS

HEADING NORTH

A ONE CLOWNESS SHOW

**DIRECTED by
RAFAEL BIANCIOTTO**

**WITH
FRANSOISE SIMON**

SHOW FROM 10 YEARS OLD AND ABOVE



Heading North

A one clownness show by Compagnie À Vol d'Oiseau

Juliette Béquette sets off on the tracks of the past that constructed her and, in this show, with her feet on the ground and her head in the clouds, she unfurls a universe in which her impatience calms down. She invents a world at the limits of a childhood hidden in a story that remained without words for a very long time.



Acting: Franoise Simon

Direction: Rafael Bianciotto

Accessories: Mona Bausson

Puppetry & Costume Assistant: Martha Romero

A show for all from 10 years up

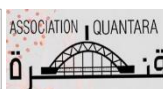
Duration: 70 minutes

Trailer: <https://youtu.be/0oitlvfNjGk>

Teaser trailer: <https://youtu.be/tD5xgc6g-DA>

Pictures: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/ttebrBoCvHkkEbyd8>

Creation 2022-2023





The show

"Imagine, you have a rendez-vous with... life, let's say. And you miss it!"

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Yes, life is an important "rendez-vous", not to be missed! And childhood wounds are sometimes significant and long to heal. But if you succeed in transcending them in the imaginary and in artistic creation, they forge a determination to live, and become the starting point for a fabulous trip towards one-self, the world and freedom.

And, truthfully, growing up is not a rest cure! There are disappointments, joys, desires, fears, sufferings... But this show is about reconciliation.

When the clown appeared in my training as actor, I froze with fear. Literally glued to my chair, it took me a long while before I could tell myself "Let's go!" And when, at last, I decided to try it, I could never stop doing it over and over again.

Out of sync ever since my arrival on earth, and in an environment that didn't welcome fantasy, I had found a way to assume my condition of black sheep amongst the white ones, and to reassure the little girl who panicked at not being seen, recognized, heard. This fear of existence that had always been mine was changing into a terrible desire to live, and to laugh about it!



**LET'S HIT THE ROAD,
HEADING NORTH!**

THEME

Juliette Béquette has chosen the "Great North" as the goal of her travel. During her journey, she frees herself of childhood traumas to move on towards virgin territory yet unexplored, a land that belongs to no one!

Constantly fighting against the deadly and contrary forces that push her adrift and pull her back to her starting point, she braves her own ice floe and finally finds her country.

Juliette talks and tells of events she had to understand to go forward. Every word is a victory on the past, every step is a step won over immobility. Decisive encounters with William (S), Samuel (B), Giovanna (M), Lassaad (S), Hélène (B), Rafael (B) and many others also marked her life path.

Leaving her native Belgium and its "Pays Noir" where she dreamt of open spaces and whiteness, she moves towards the white snows and the northern lights and proposes that the spectator signs a peace treaty with him/herself.



*Crossing the ice floe is not an easy thing!
Quite a challenge for a clowne...*

THE CREATIVE PROCESS

Writing is a constant back and forth trip between the computer and the stage. As the improvisations with director Rafael Bianciotto progress, we think things over, film and view the results, write... and hop, back to the stage. We're going forward, the Great North is not too far, a dramaturgy appears, and the text gradually gains consistency.

Sound: music is an acting partner, either to create an event in the present or to bring elements of the past back to the character for the clowne to play with. No sound scape, but significant and evocative ambiances.

Set and accessories: like when we leave on a trip, we take one big suitcase, quite a few accessories to support the acting and, little by little, in connection with the purpose of the show, we abandon them and keep only what's essential to Juliette's trip to her Great North. We keep a sleigh, a rather small pack sack for camping, a few road maps, a lighter and one or two little things for reassurance.

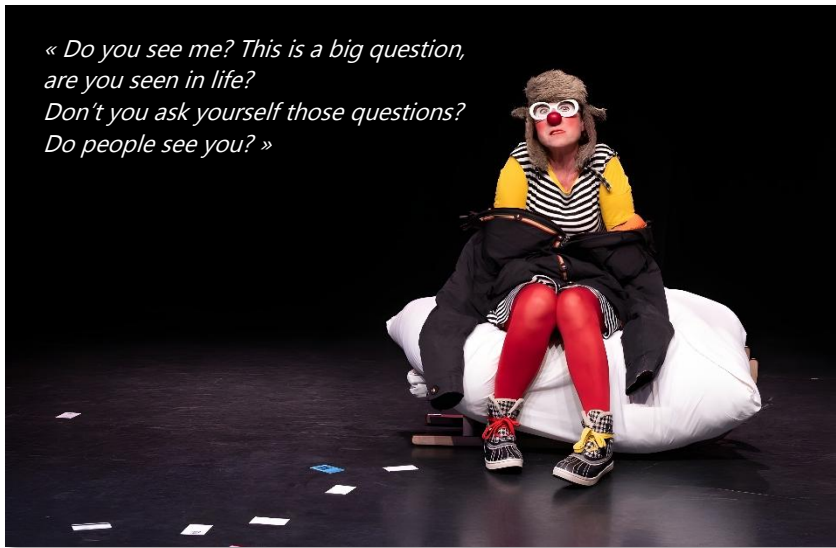
The costume shows the colours of Belgium, black, yellow, red! We leave, but we don't deny!

The lights will go from the blackness of night and slag heaps, to the whiteness and glow of borealis colours.



EXCERPTS FROM THE TEXT

From her native land to her imaginary country, Juliette Béquette follows a long road inside of herself.



"I have lots of questions:
Why me?
Why me and not you?
Why the world?
Why does time go by?
Why did I land in Charleroi?
Why is it so difficult to leave Charleroi?
Why Françoise?"

*"You see the horizon? But after?
I'm sure that beyond this horizon, there's a future, something, a vast territory, white, where I'll be free ... And, defying the sea, the cold, severe weather, I set out to conquer the Great North."*

"I believed that when you grow older, you don't ache anymore... Well, it's not true, the older ones always hurt, but you don't see it because they cannot say it anymore."



"At the beginning, a country doesn't exist, you invent your country, you invent yourself, the Great North is a land that's long to conquer because it's not a fixed point, it moves all the time, continuously alive..."

"Here, I've made peace! I've reunited my inner Belgium! And today, I officially sign the peace treaty between my country and the world."

THE AUDIENCE LIKED...

A solo well done and crazy...

A huge bravo for this magnificent show. With a subtle equilibrium between depth and lightness. A concentrate of emotions.

Nice nice nice show, touching, funny and all of a trip! Thank you Juliette Béquette and bravo Fransoise!

An immense bravo and thanks for this show, a real emotion, so authentic.

Laughter but especially emotion; thank you for this excellent slice of life shared with generosity, joy and precision, we are with her until the end and everyone is included in her story...

Bravo also for all this creative passion that gives you wings... or rather a big sleigh to find your great North! I really liked it. It was funny and touching.

Magnificent show, it's so good to laugh!



All comments:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ToyOxCO5YGFzVrLpvpFuBAadrXwYmNLW/>

THE BIRTH OF A CLOWNE

Hello. My name is Juliette Béquette, béquetE2TE, because it rimes with Juliette, at least this is a certainty... it's a good start! But it hasn't always been like that!



February 28... midnight to... one second... Here I come... Where am I? Darn! In Belgium! On top of it, in Charleroi, and in the "Pays Noir", the only place on earth where my mother had sworn she would never live!!!

First flop at 2 and a half: I start school, much too early, I don't know yet there are things you shouldn't do. I run away, and they find me hidden in a closet in the corridor, terrorised and red with shame.

Second flop at 6 and a half: end of the first year of primary school, all the class is on an elevated stage to receive a prize; this is when I learn that everything has a price, you have to go shake hands with the jury! I'm the smallest, the first one, too small, the jury is on a lower level, I don't see it, I leave the stage, I don't know where to go, I'm lost and, once more, red with shame. And I disappear under the stage, the laughing stock of astounded parents and of my mother, horrified to see me definitely beyond her control.

After having met Mister, Mrs and Catherine "Dieu", I decided to leave my mother, Charleroi and its fumes, but not my Belgian soul. If you ask me, I speak Flemish with great pleasure.

And since, I'm travelling the inner and outer worlds, collecting flops and hops. I rise, ever higher, towards the North, climbing, yes, this, this suits me! It suits me fine!

The red of shame has left my face, but an indelible trace of pleasure has stayed on my nose. I could have continued as Fanfou, Annabelle, Max the explorer, Marie-France Drouot, Aglaé, Quince, Hum hum, Paulette Piaf...

But I am Juliette Béquette.



I wish to thank.... Françoise the shrimp, Annabelle, Max, Thierry, Philippe, Jean-Claude, Marie-France and Isabelle Drouot, all the Misses Lucie of the world, the jury, all the parents who so warmly applauded the disappearance of little Françoise, the people of Charleroi, my mother and my father who loved me and did all they could.... and all the others, especially Rafael my guardian angel, it's thanks to you if I am who I am, Juliette Béquette.

And thanks to Philippe Dorin (who agreed to let me borrow the name of one of the characters of Ils se marièrent et eurent beaucoup)





Artistic team

Fransoise Simon is Juliette Béquette

Actor, clowne, director and artistic director of Cie À Vol d'Oiseau since 2003, she associates creating theatre with an artistic teaching process based on movement, mask and clown. After professional stays in Belgium and Québec, she now lives in France (since 2002). She studied at the Conservatoire Royal, at the Lassaad International School of Theatre in Brussels (Jacques Lecoq), at Université du Québec à Montréal (Master on the relationship between voice and the pedagogy of J. Lecoq); trained with Radu Penciulescu, Philippe Gaulier, Raphaël Almosni, Vivian Gladwell, Rafael Bianciotto, Mario Gonzalès... Initiated to the theatres of Asia (Bali/Japan). Trained in singing (classical and traditional), trained in voice with Yva Barthélémy, the Roy Hart Theatre, Ludwig Flaszén... Has a passion for polyphonic songs of oral tradition with Giovanna Marini. She conducts her own projects within À Vol d'Oiseau, AT.L.A.S/Atelier... research group on contemporary dramatic writing; she acts in *Les Règles du savoir-vivre dans la société moderne*; *Bouge Plus !*; *Au Bois dormant & Vol plané* (young audiences); *Les Voyages désorganisés*, trio of street clowns; *Il n'y a pas de problème avec les femmes*, clown duo; *Clown Airlines Company & Manifestations et soupes poétiques* (ambulatory street clowns); directs the projects of the amateur group le Kroup. She conducts artistic projects with residents of disadvantaged areas within Paris district 20. Has regularly worked with Théâtre du Lin, Sirènes, Euphoric Mouvance, Cie Herve-Gil... Part time professor at Université du Québec à Montréal (1996-2000), at Université de Franche-Comté (2002-2013) and at the École de Comédie Musicale de Paris (since 2022); also directs quite a number of workshops and Masterclasses (clown, mask, voice) in France, Belgium, Québec, Russia, Hungary, Morocco, Tunisia, the Netherlands, Iceland.

Rafael Bianciotto is the director

Franco Argentinian actor and director. Studied in computer science (University of Buenos Aires) and trained in acting at **CELCIT** in Buenos Aires (1985-1989). Settled in Paris after having studied in Études Théâtrales (Sorbonne Nouvelle Paris III). Meets Mario Gonzalez with whom he discovers masks, clowns, and the Commedia dell'arte. He becomes his assistant at the Conservatory in Paris and for many productions in Sweden and Iceland. In New York, he directs Molière's *The Forced Marriage* and *The Precious Young Ladies* (The New York Mask and Clown Workshop Cie). In 1998, he founds Zefiro Theatre, directs Molière, Aristophanes and co-directs Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Mario Gonzalez (2023). In Reykjavik, he directs *Péchés Capitaux* based on Dante (2008), *Sokrates, Opéra Clown* (2015), *Hið ævintýri um missi*, clown solo (2022). He was "Scholar-in-Residence" and professor at Ramapo College and Bergen Community College in New Jersey (USA) in 2015. Directs internships (mask and clown) in France, Iceland and Sweden. He teaches at the École de Comédie Musicale in Paris (since 2022). He was the indispensable "outside eye" since 2019;

Mona Bausson is the prop woman

Make-up artist, painter, visual artist, as well as an actress, stilt walker, and clown (since 2016 under the direction of Fransoise Simon). With the Théâtre du Fil, whose banner is popular culture, she performs, applies make-up, and leads theatrical workshops in suburban areas and in prisons. She trained in film, photography, special effects, and artistic make-up. Works with Cie À Vol d'Oiseau and ACIDU (as actress and set and prop designer).

Martha Romero designed puppets and worked on costumes.

Trained in fashion design in Colombia, she moved to France in 1994. Continued her training at the École Lainé in Paris and at the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts et Techniques du Théâtre (ENSATT) in Lyon. Works as a costume designer and creator of masks and puppets with directors whose artistic worlds are highly diverse. She has since developed her style and distinctive approach through other productions, notably with Théâtre de la Licorne. She regularly works for the Comédie-Française. Curious and perfectionist, she continues to train in new techniques: hat-making, prosthetics, embroidery, leather masks, puppet construction, period hairstyling, stage jewelry, artificial flowers, and more.

À Vol d'Oiseau

The company

A theatre of words and images in which humour flirts with cruelty, equilibrium with chaos, comedy with tragedy...

Complete file

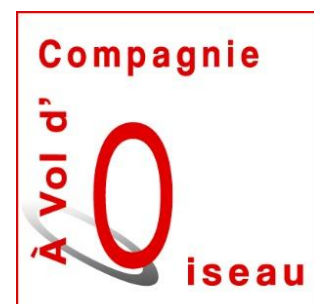
The company pursues *research, creation and training* around contemporary dramatic writings, the clown and voice. Founded in 2003 by Franoise Simon, it favours a theatre where the body of the actor serves today's theatre, shakes prejudices and convictions so as to encourage reflection. The company often plays on contrasts while using humour to talk about the tragic, and burlesque to unmask cruelty. It chooses autonomous stage forms that emphasize acting and the actor more than sophisticated technical means. Shows can therefore be programmed for a choice of venues (theatres, libraries, homes, etc.) and for varied audiences.

The company creates *shows* for theatres, the street and apartments; *clownish perambulations* are adapted to various places and events; *theatrical and poetical readings* happen in regular venues and in unusual places: streets, parks, gardens, museums, factories, cars, trucks, buses, apartments...

Along with its theatrical work, the Compagnie À Vol d'Oiseau has promoted *cultural activities* in district 20 of Paris to associate its public to its creative process away from the stage and to open spaces favourable to dialogues. The company works with and for children, youth and families. In partnership with local associations, social centres, schools, municipal services and libraries, it implements transversal and federative artistic projects so as to build links between residents, institutions, local artists and professionals. Through those continuous actions and with its partners, it puts cultural activities in perspective within the field of living arts (writing, theatre, song, and movement).

The company also proposes *artistic and pedagogical activities* related to its creations: it develops *training and awareness sessions* with and for libraries, schools, cultural centres, parent houses, theatre companies... to associate its public to its creative process. Since 2003, the company has worked in France, Hungary, Morocco, Tunisia, Belgium, the Netherlands and in various contexts (clowns in a hospital, projects for the learning of French, projects in business organisations...).

The Company was invited and supported by Bibliothèque Violette Leduc, Paris 11, ever since its founding (2002-2013); it has also worked in partnership with the Maison du Théâtre and the Théâtre du Lin of Amiens (2003-2007), the Théâtre Le Hublot of Colombes, the Centre Louis Lumière (Paris 20) in 2012, the Centre Paris Anim' Victoire Tinayre (Paris 13) in 2023, the Médiathèque Marguerite Duras (Paris 20) in 2015. It has had the support of the City of Paris (Contrat Ville), the city council of Paris 20, the Ligue de l'Enseignement, Paris-Habitat and Bibliocité.



Technical rider



Ideal Stage Size:

6 meters opening / 5 meters deep / 2.5 meters height

Technical needs:

- Black curtain for the back of the stage with central opening, and allowing for entrances and exits on the right and the left (width 3,5 m & height 2,5m)
- A small table behind the stage curtain
- Possibility of going dark

Lighting / see lights plan

- Front, back and side projectors + dimmers
- Top light in the center of the stage
- Black light
- Smoke machine

Sound System:

Sound broadcast by USB key / 2 amplified speakers.

Duration of setup: 4h / **Duration of packing up:** 1h

Dressing room & catering :

- A place with mirror and a water point near the venue at least 2hours before the start of the show
- A lockable space to store personal things during the show
- Bottles of water, tea, coffee, fruits, biscuits... will be appreciated

Touring cast and crew:

- 1 Performer & 1 Stage Manager
- Provide a stage manager, or a qualified person, on site to set up the lights





Created in Tunisia 2022 / in France 2023 / in Iceland (English version under the title 'Heading North') 2024

Artist residencies

- First phase of research at Zéfiro Théâtre (Rueil-Malmaison) / Autumn 2021
- Creation residency and public presentation of results at La Hérissonne (Mézières) / April 2022
- Public presentation of results in Hulsonniaux (Belgium) / April 2022
- Creation residency and public presentation of results in Espace Le Lieu (Gambais) / October 2022

Presentations

- Tour of Tunisia organised by the Association Qantara / Fall 2022
- Presentation in the Centre Des Arts Dramatiques et Scéniques of Béja during the Festival du Monologue 2022 / October 30, 2022
- Presentation in the Maison de la Culture Hassan Al-Zaghi Qurbah / October 31, 2022

Théâtre du Gouvernail (Paris) / January 15, 2023

10 performances at Théâtre du Gouvernail, Paris / Autumn 2023

Ferme-Théâtre Chapiteau in Lommoye (78) / October 8, 2023

Espace Culturel des Arts du Masque (Paris) / November 17, 2023

ACT ALONE Festival in Suðureyri (Iceland) / August 9, 2024

6 performances at Théâtre du Gouvernail, Paris / Autumn 2024

Petit Théâtre (Templeuve) / February 1, 2025

Théâtre Gérard Philippe (Meaux) / March, 2025

Théâtre Les Mares Plates (Normandie) / April 11,12,13, 2025

Temple Saint-Etienne (Mulhouse) / 16 mai 2026

Festival d'Avignon / du 3 au 25 juillet 2026 (La Factory / Chapelle des Antonins)





Contacts

"Hello, Juliette Béquette at your service, live from the Great North.
I invite you to make contact, we are waiting for your calls..."

Compagnie A Vol d'Oiseau

Maison de la Vie Associative et Citoyenne
18-20, rue Ramus / Boite 47
75020 Paris (France)

Communication & booking
Fransoise Siùn
+ 33 6 86 94 77 39
avoldoiseau@wanadoo.fr

<http://clownairlinescompany.blogspot.com/>
<https://www.facebook.com/compagnieavoldoiseau/>

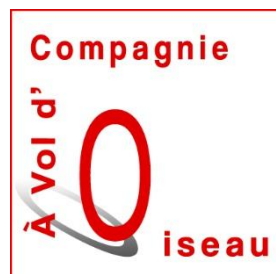


Photo credit: avdo, Guillaume Vejux, Jacky Vuillermoz, Séverine Hourdy, Marizibil Snæfríðar Sæmundardóttir
Poster: Lucas Rastoll / *Translation:* Hélène Beauchamp