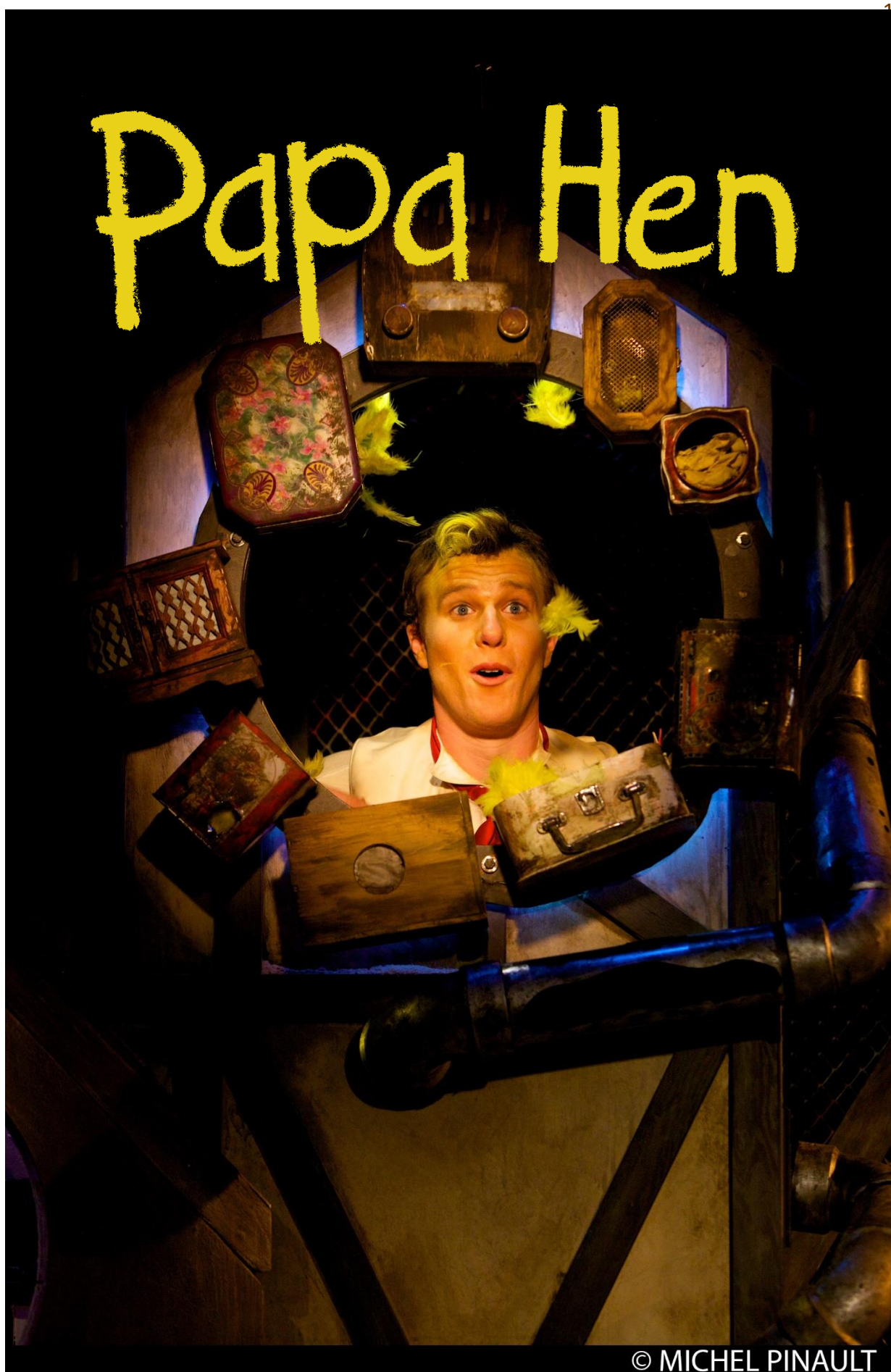


Papa Hen



© MICHEL PINAULT

Papa Hen

FOR TEACHERS

This study guide on *Papa Hen* is intended to help spark the curiosity of young audiences. In it you will find a brief overview of the show (including information on the various artists involved in the production), a short summary, as well as activities you can lead before and after attending a performance.

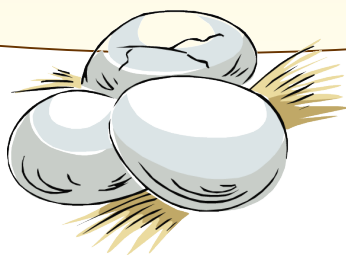


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TEAM

Written and directed by Jasmine Dubé
With Charles Dauphinais et Christophe Papadimitriou

Set & Costume Design Patrice Charbonneau-Brunelle
Props Alain Jenkins assisté de Mélina Lapointe
Lighting Design Luc Prairie
Music & Sound Design Christophe Papadimitriou
Assistant Director Élise Henry
Make-up and Hair Design Angelo Barsetti
Goatee Rachel Tremblay
Movement Consultant Suzanne Trépanier
Poster Design Patrice Charbonneau-Brunelle
Technical Director Gabriel Duquette
Set Building Acmé
Sewing Workshop Angela Rassenti

SUMMARY

Between his daily pick-ups and drop-offs at chick daycare and his job, between running errands and attending business meetings, Papa Hen does the best he can! Fortunately, Grandfather Hen is there to mark the passing of the hours and keep watch over the household. This great work by Jasmine Dubé, specifically geared to young children and carefully crafted, illustrates our daily routine with finesse and humor by capturing a day in the life of a father hen.

More than twenty years after creating *Little Monster*, Jasmine Dubé revisits the father-child relationship in the context of our high-tech and fast paced 21st century, where family life seems to be suffering from “jet lag”. *Papa Hen* is filled with humour and poetry. Music and acting intertwine, creating a clownish duet set in a scenic universe where love and kindness are passed down from generation to generation. This show is another example of Théâtre Bouches Décousues’ ongoing research on theatrical works for young children.

The play premiered at the 13th Festival Les Coups de Théâtre in Montreal, on November 18, 2014.





The chicken or the egg!

EXCERPT

Papa Hen tells a bedtime story to his little chicks. He draws an egg.

– *The egg.*

He draws a hen.

– *The hen.*

He draws an egg inside the hen.

– *The egg.*

Then a hen inside the egg.

– *The egg. The hen.*

Papa Hen looks at his drawing, confused. We hear the grandfather clock tick-tocking in the background. Papa Hen looks at Grandfather Hen. Then continues drawing.

– *The egg! The hen! (tick-toc) The egg? (tick-toc) Or the hen?... (tick-toc) Or the egg?*

Grandfather Hen rings 7:30 p.m.

Papa Hen finishes his story.

– *That's it. There you go! Bedtime!*

He puts his chicks to bed and pretends to be an ogre to make them laugh.



PLAYWRIGHT & DIRECTOR JASMINE DUBÉ



BIOGRAPHY

Co-founder in 1986 and current Artistic Director of *Théâtre Bouches Décousues*, a company which specializes in theatre for young audiences, **Jasmine Dubé** is a playwright, actor and director.

She worked with many theatre companies and has written for television (Radio-Canada, Télé-Québec and TVOntario). She is also a novelist. She published over 40 books and some of her works have been translated in English, Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, Greek and Innu-aimun. In 1996, Jasmine Dubé won the Arthur-Buies Award for her entire body of literary production. In 2010, the Jasmine-Dubé Library opened in Amqui, Quebec. In 2012, she received the Raymond-Plante Award for her outstanding work in children's literature.





PAPA HEN: **For the love of dads**

I love dads. I love to see them onstage with their kids. I like them to be gentle and caring. I'd rather see them with their hands busy in the kitchen rather than with their fists raised, as we often see on TV. In movies, I like it when they're cheerful. Or grumpy, depending, but always loving and good with their little ones.

By exploring the world of a papa hen and his chicks who attend a chick daycare, and working in collaboration with the performers, I sought to find a way of evoking poetry, humour and love without using words. I traded words for a non-verbal theatricality by placing the emphasis on the situation and the characters' inner feelings.

Going back to the basics of acting proved to be a real scenic writing exercise.

I chose a musician and an actor to perform this show because I wanted the acting and the music to connect, to enhance each other. The huge double bass reminds us of a human, and in this case, of a grandfather clock.

We pondered the question for some time of how to characterize the children, in this case, chicks. We were seeking a way to make them come alive and be believable. In the end, Papa Hen is the one who breathes life into them through his gestures. We are at the theatre, after all! And Papa Hen represents both a man and a rooster!

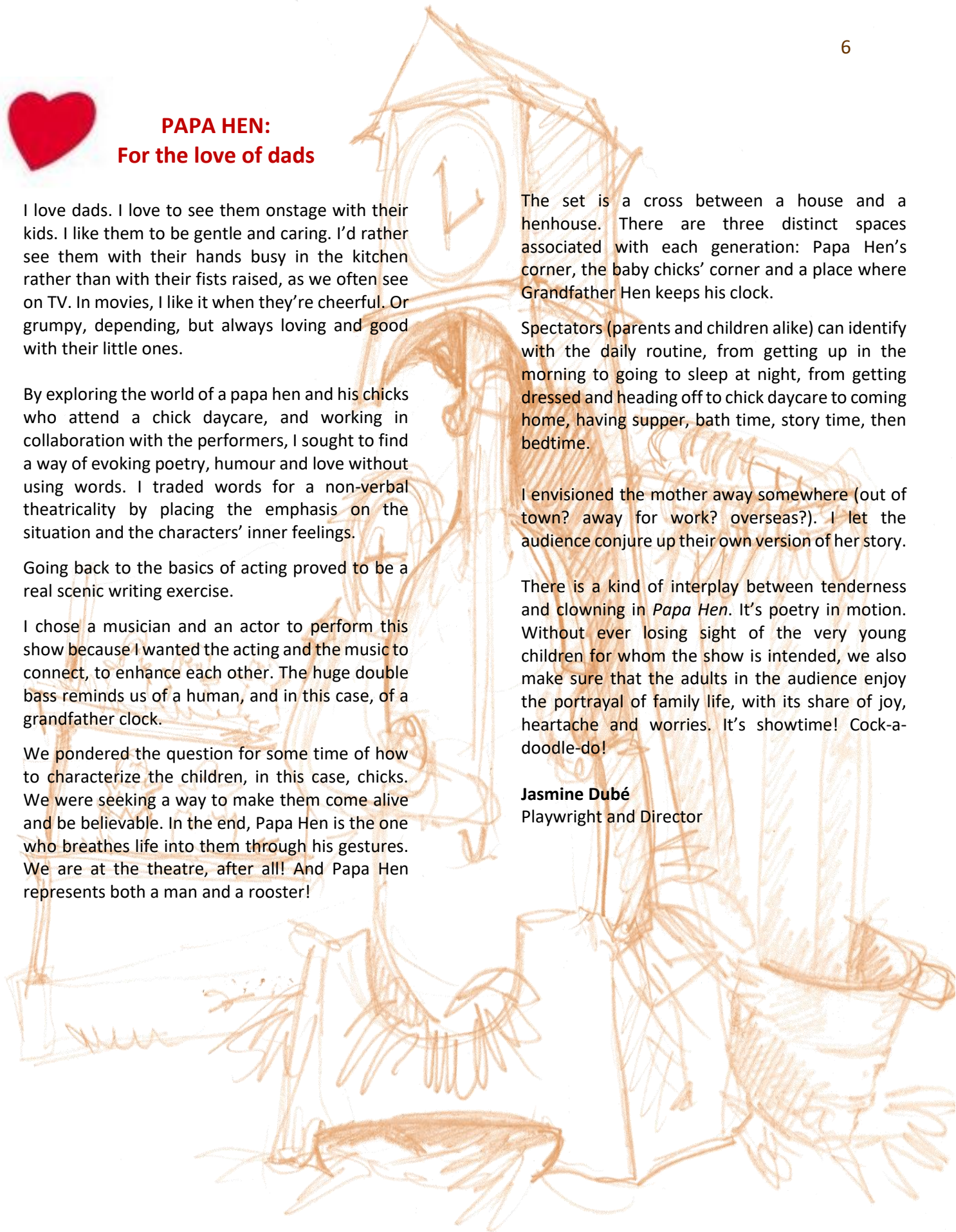
The set is a cross between a house and a henhouse. There are three distinct spaces associated with each generation: Papa Hen's corner, the baby chicks' corner and a place where Grandfather Hen keeps his clock.

Spectators (parents and children alike) can identify with the daily routine, from getting up in the morning to going to sleep at night, from getting dressed and heading off to chick daycare to coming home, having supper, bath time, story time, then bedtime.

I envisioned the mother away somewhere (out of town? away for work? overseas?). I let the audience conjure up their own version of her story.

There is a kind of interplay between tenderness and clowning in *Papa Hen*. It's poetry in motion. Without ever losing sight of the very young children for whom the show is intended, we also make sure that the adults in the audience enjoy the portrayal of family life, with its share of joy, heartache and worries. It's showtime! Cock-a-doodle-do!

Jasmine Dubé
Playwright and Director





TEAM

Performers

Charles Dauphinais: Ever since graduating from the National Theatre School in 2008, Charles has worked as an actor and stage director. He is cofounder and artistic director of the Théâtre Sans Domicile Fixe (SDF) company.



Christophe Papadimitriou: Christophe has worked as a professional musician since 1992, dividing his time between jazz, world music and accompanying pop artists. He has been very involved in the Montréal jazz scene and was President and a member of the Montréal OFF Jazz Festival programming committee from 2007 to 2011. Since 2008, he has also worked on several theatre projects, such as this one with Théâtre Bouches Décousues.

Designers

Although performers are in the limelight of any production, there is a whole team working behind the scenes. Designers work for many months developing and creating every aspect of a show.

SET & COSTUME DESIGN

Patrice Charbonneau-Brunelle: Since graduating from the National Theatre School of Canada in 2006, Patrice has designed the sets, costumes and props for many shows. His previous collaboration with Théâtre Bouches Décousues include designing *Ginkgo et la jardinière* and *Marguerite*. He also illustrated the printed edition of *Marguerite*, published by Dramaturges Éditeurs.



PROPS

Alain Jenkins: Alain is fascinated with objects and has worked on many film productions and American movies. He has helped create over 60 productions, including Céline Dion's show in Las Vegas, as well as shows by Cirque du Soleil and Franco Dragone.



LIGHTING DESIGN

Luc Prairie: Luc has worked in lighting design for theatre, opera and visual arts since 1974. He teaches in several different theatre schools.



MAKE-UP

Angelo Barsetti: Angelo's background is in visual arts. He worked in the dance and theatre fields for more than 20 years. Photography is increasingly becoming the focus of his work. He has collaborated with Théâtre Bouches Décousues on many productions.



ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Élise Henry: After graduating from the École de théâtre de Saint-Hyacinthe (theatre production: technical direction and stage management) in 2012, Élise has held a variety of positions, including that of stage manager.



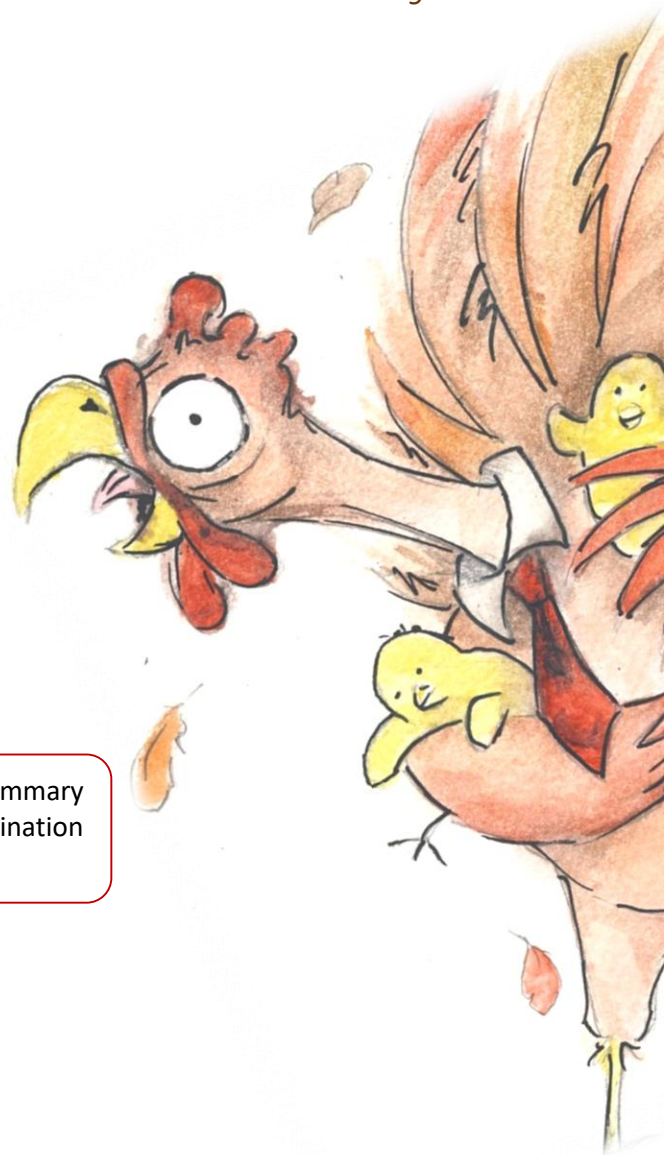
Many people are involved in producing a show before it is presented to the public: technical director, graphic designer, communications team, administration team, set building team...

BEFORE THE SHOW

The first thing we suggest you do is take a look at the poster on the cover of this study guide. The poster is the gateway to the show: it is evocative, brings up questions and sparks curiosity. It triggers your imagination.

You will find the names of the people involved in the show: the playwright and stage director, the design team, the performers and the producer.

Take some time to think about the characters shown on the poster. What do they make you think of? Look at the lettering, the choice of colours. These are clues to help you get into the spirit of the show. The title also offers a hint about what you are going to see.



Then, delve more deeply into the heart of the subject by reading the summary and the excerpt from the show. After reading these texts, let your imagination wander freely as you think about the characters, the story and the set.

Next, read the message from the playwright and stage director.

You can do a little more research by visiting the Théâtre Bouches Décousues website (in French):
www.theatrebouchesdecousues.com



Being a spectator

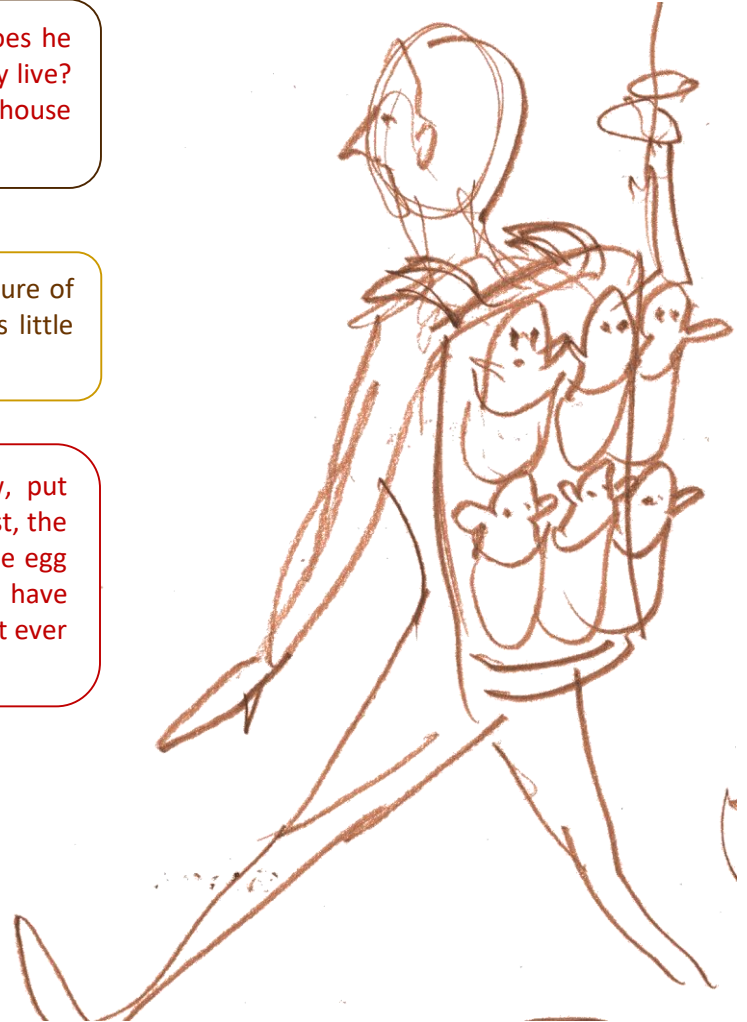
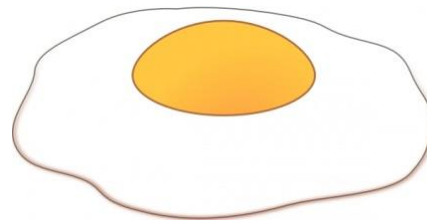
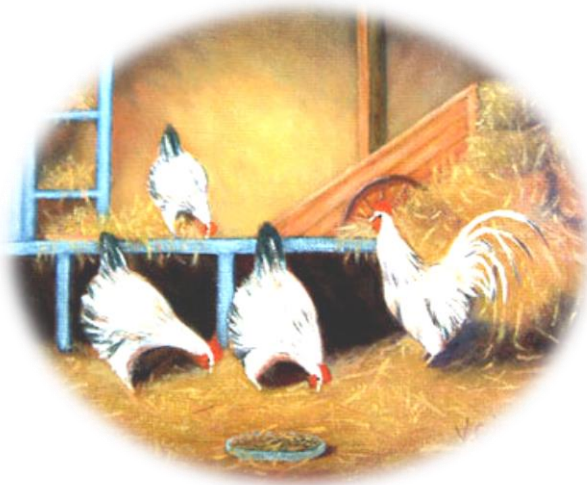
It's worthwhile remembering the following point: attending a live show is not the same as watching TV or any other type of screen. You can't turn up the volume or press "rewind". The artists on stage need to concentrate. We can hear them and they can hear us. Out of respect for both the performers and the other spectators, it is important to remain attentive. That way, you will be able to grasp all of the performance's nuances. Silence is key to hearing, seeing and being moved by small details in the show. We are free, of course, to react spontaneously to the show. We can laugh when it's funny, cry when it's sad, smile and, of course, clap at the end.

A few exercises to whet your appetite...

TRY TO IMAGINE... What does a papa hen look like? How does he walk? Can he talk? What do his kids look like? Where do they live? Where is the mama hen? And grandfather hen? What is their house like?

DRAW A PICTURE... Use your imagination to first draw a picture of Papa Hen and his family, and then one of Papa Hen and his little chicks' house.

THINK ABOUT... After reading the excerpt from the show, put yourself in Papa Hen's shoes and ask yourself which came first, the chicken or the egg? Did the chicken first lay an egg or did the egg come first and then a chicken come out of the egg? People have asked themselves this question for thousands of years without ever coming up with an answer...



PLAY A GAME, GET MOVING... Think about how a papa hen walks. Write different emotions and actions on small pieces of paper and put these in a hat. Taking turns, have each child pick one out of the hat and briefly act out how they think Papa Hen would do whatever is written on their paper: laugh, dance, run, jump, eat, talk on the phone, comfort a little chick, take a shower, sleep, make supper, leave for work, get angry, be happy, be shy, etc.

DO SOME RESEARCH... Look at some photographs or illustrations of hens, roosters and chicks. Examine a barnyard. Talk about how chickens live, what they eat. What does the expression "to be up with the chickens" mean?

AFTER THE SHOW



Compare what you thought going into the theatre with your perspective after seeing the show. Is it different from what you'd imagined?

This discussion enables the group to share their impressions and points of view about the show. Everyone will have their own interpretation and each one is equally valid.

Talk about the show's more technical aspects: what was the reaction to the scenography? The lighting? The music? The writing? The stage direction? The acting?

Questions :

- Where do the chicks sleep?
- What do they eat?
- Where is their mother?
- What is her name?
- Do you remember what happens when Papa Hen gives a bath to the chicks?
- Who is the character that plays the music? Where is he?
- What is the instrument that he plays called?
- Where does Papa Hen take the chicks after breakfast?
- What surprise does Papa Hen have for the chicks when they get home from chick daycare?
- Where does the egg that appears in the play come from? Do you remember its name?
- What do you think Papa Hen is making for supper for his kids?
- What do you think Papa Hen does after putting his chicks to bed?

Draw something from the show that caught your attention. Or write a letter or draw a picture that you can send to the artists involved in the production.

Go over the various **theatre trades**. Which aspects did the children pick up on?

What part of the show did you find the most moving? What was the funniest moment? The saddest?



Do you remember...

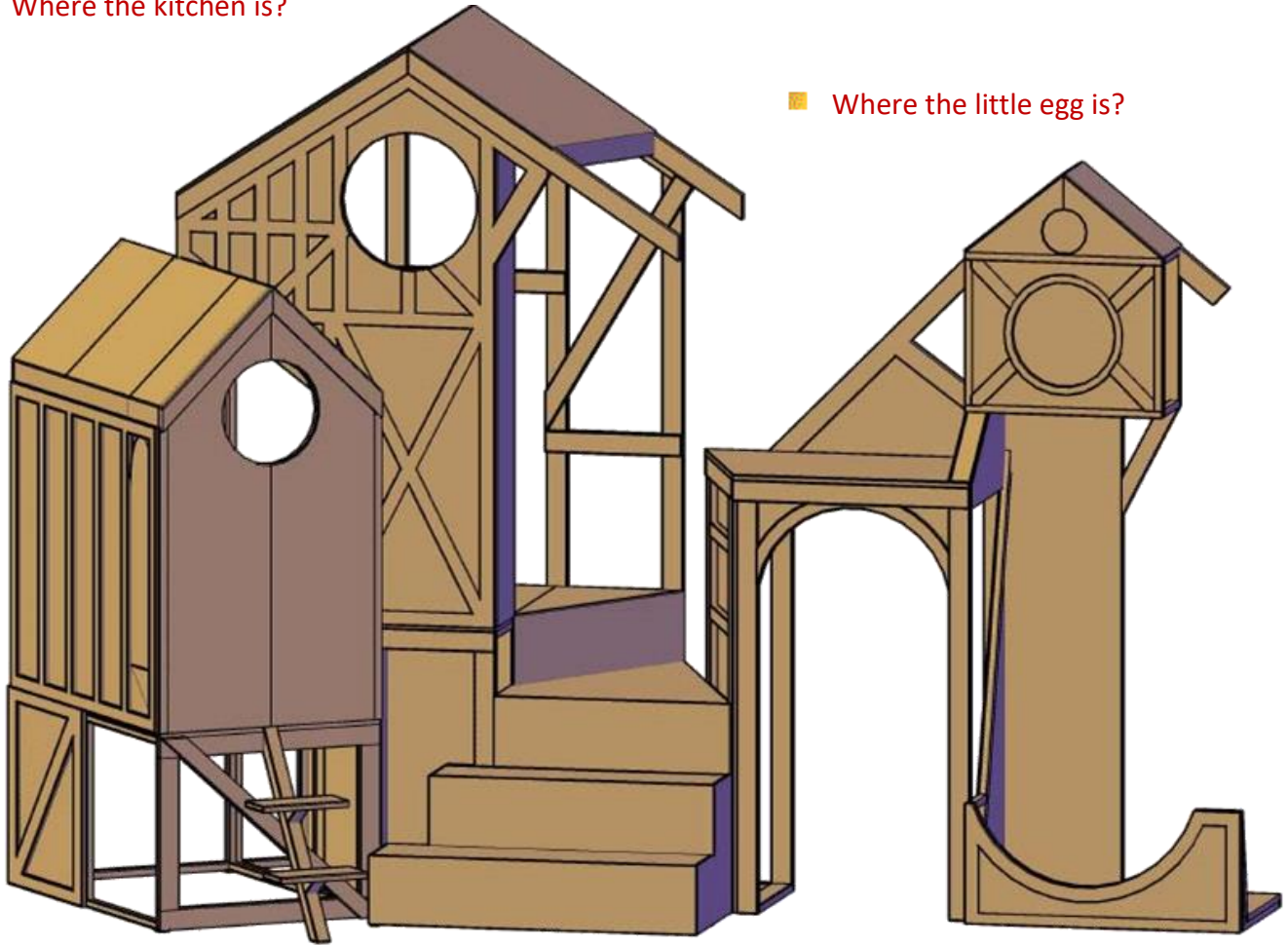


■ Where Grandfather Hen is?

■ Where Papa Hen's office or living room is?

■ Where the kitchen is?

■ Where the little egg is?



■ Where the entrance to the house is?

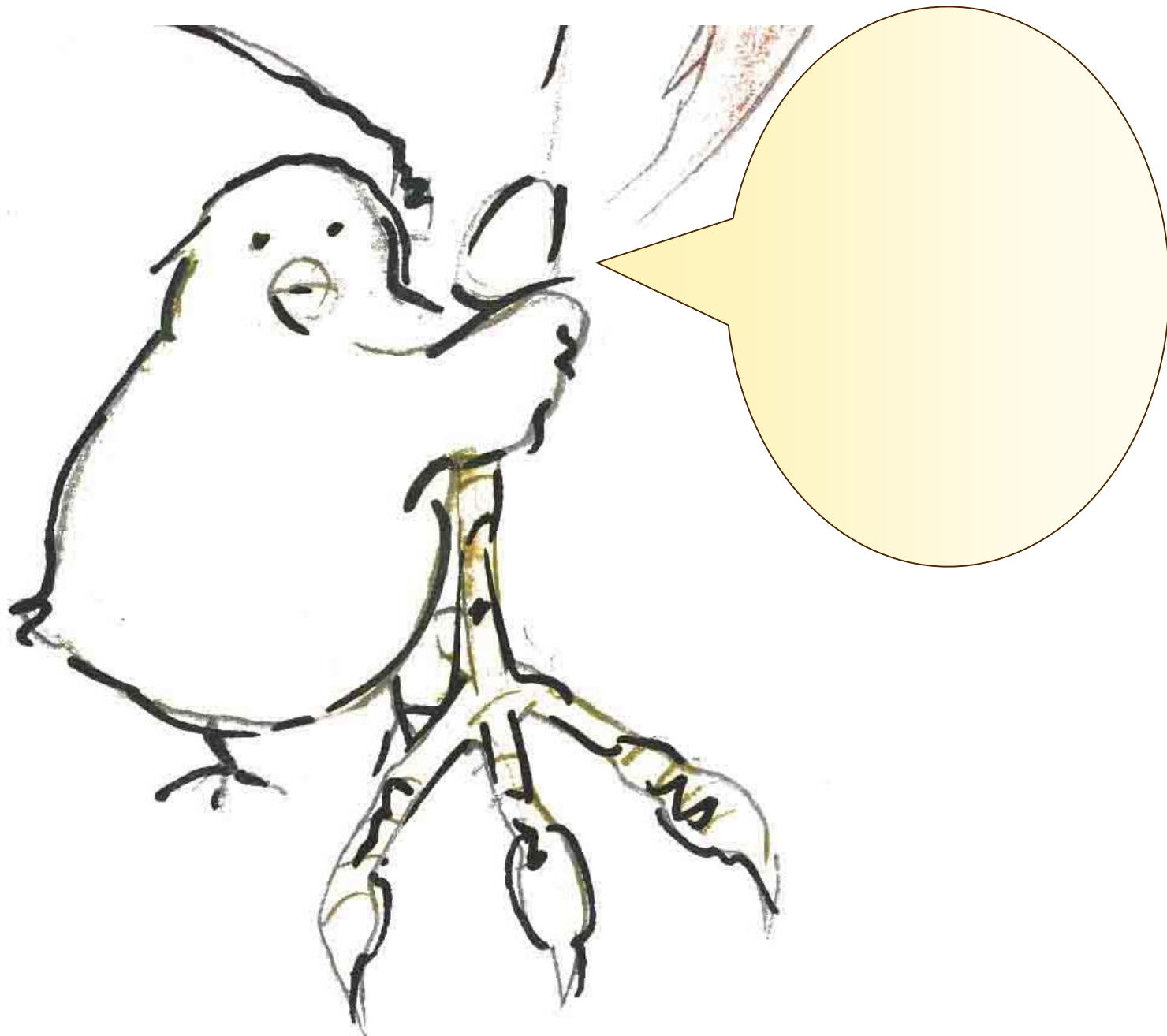
■ Where the chicks' bedroom is?

■ Where Papa Hen tells the story of the chicken or the egg?

■ Where does Papa Hen sleep?

■ Where is the bathroom?

Colour the drawing of the chick and write what it says in the speech bubble.





THÉÂTRE BOUCHES DÉCOUSUES

Active promoters of the concept that theatre for young audiences is autonomous, fully fledged theatre in its own right, that children are not only the audience of tomorrow but an audience of the here and now, ***Théâtre Bouches Décousues*** (TBD) conducts theatrical research and creates new plays that pose a tender, critical gaze on the world of children and that of their adults.

As an unending source of inspiration, relations between children and adults have been the cornerstone of the company's works since its founding back in 1986. Fundamentally, we believe that it is possible to broach any subject with children. The presence of children at the very heart of our activities is crucial for the artistic team, enabling them to stay connected to their public.

Based in Montreal, Canada, Théâtre Bouches Décousues has produced 26 shows that have attracted spectators in Quebec, Canada, Europe, the United States and Asia.

Papa Hen is the company's 22nd production.

Artistic Director: **Jasmine Dubé**

General Manager: **Marc Pache**

Administrative Coordinator: **Peggy Allen**

Communications and Marketing: **Alexandra Trussart**

Administration Officer: **Lucie Lahaye**

Technical Direction: **Gabriel Duquette and Charlotte Isis Gervais**

www.theatrebouchesdecousues.com (in French)

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