

How it works

Hands Agency

"The Comédie-Française troupe was founded in 1680, created through the fusion of two quite different companies. A healthy diversity that has resulted in this collective, whose motto "Simul et singulis", be together and be oneself, nourishes the art of each. A vibrant and life-giving body."

THE DOYENNE, CLAUDE MATHIEU

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Make no mistake, the Comédie-Française is above all about the collective. When the curtain rises, it is not so much the addition of individual talents that one applauds, but the Troupe itself...

Within this entity, however, several statuses exist for the actors who cohabit on stage without distinction. This particularity contributes to the singular nature of the Troupe, its dynamism, its renewal, and ultimately the immutable richness of the "House".

When an actor enters the Troupe, he or she is always hired by the general administrator and with the status of a *pensionnaire*, regardless of his or her background. Pensionnaires can be asked to become *sociétaires* after spending at least one year in the Troupe.

The older generation cultivates transmission. The young one makes us question ourselves, they contribute a lot with their multidisciplinary approach.

Éric Ruf

This is the spirit that drives Éric Ruf, the general administrator of the Comédie-Française, when he speaks of recruiting actors. Let us recall here that the Troupe is not the reflection of an acting style, but the meeting of actors capable of jumping from one repertoire, aesthetic or type of role to another.

After having spent at least one year in the Troupe, a pensionnaire of the Comédie-Française can acquire the status of *sociétaire*, which requires the Administrative Board (of which the general administrator is a member) to submit a proposal to the *sociétaires* during a general assembly. Once the proposal is ratified, the pensionnaire becomes a *sociétaire* of the *société des Comédiens-Français*, and this new status is approved by a decree issued by the Minister of Culture.

When leaving the Comédie-Française, a *sociétaire* with at least twenty years of seniority in the Troupe may be named as a *sociétaire honoraire* upon the recommendation of the general administrator and after validation by the Administrative Board. For actors, this title symbolises the recognition of their artistic career by their peers, and entitles them to occasionally perform in the Troupe.

Contrary to what might be imagined, the Doyen or Doyenne of the Comédie-Française Troupe is not the oldest actor, but the *sociétaire* who has been with it longest.

As an ex officio member of the administrative board of the Comédie-Française, he or she has a special role to play in upholding the values, principles and practices on which the Société des Comédiens-Français is founded and thus is a leader for the Troupe. When the general administrator is prevented from being present, on holiday or ill, the Doyen or Doyenne is responsible for the artistic direction of the institution.

The Troupe as of 1 January 2018

- **39** *sociétaires*
- **19** *pensionnaires*
- **22** *sociétaires honoraires*

Doyenne: Claude Mathieu

Since the 2010-2011 season, [an Academy](#) has been set up to enable nine young professionals "freshly" graduated from national theatre schools, six of whom are actors, to spend an immersive season within the institution.