

Press Release

The Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel is expanding its activities to the Argenteuil Domain to create an international music campus in nature.

The Périer-D'leteren family purchases the Argenteuil Domain and makes it available to the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel, a pioneer in the transmission of musical excellence, with one clear ambition: to strengthen the international reach of Belgian musical know-how



Brussels, 21 November 2025

The Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel, a foundation of public interest, announces the expansion of its activities onto the Argenteuil Domain in order to create a campus of excellence centred around music, culture and nature. The Périer-D'leteren family has reached an agreement with the heirs of Jean-Marie Delwart to purchase the SA Domaine d'Argenteuil, with the intention of making the Domain available to the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel, whose historic site is located on the adjacent grounds.

The Argenteuil Domain is a former royal domain with a rich patrimonial and natural heritage. The Belgian state sold it in 2004 to businessman Jean-Marie Delwart. A lover of culture and nature, he committed himself to preserving and developing the Domain. Before his death in March 2025, Jean-Marie Delwart had already begun

discussions with the Music Chapel regarding the Domain's future, expressing his wish to transfer it to a project that would unite music and nature, a wish that has remained close to the hearts of his children.

For the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel, this project marks a decisive step in developing an "international music campus," unique in Europe, and strengthening the institution's position among the world's leading centres for musical excellence. With 136 hectares of nature, a large part of which is protected as Natura 2000, the Argenteuil Domain is an exceptional natural site bordering the Sonian Forest. It will allow the Music Chapel to offer its 70 Artists in residence from around the world an even deeper level of concentration, "far from the bustle of the city," in keeping with Queen Elisabeth's original vision.

A wealth of possibilities

Access to the Argenteuil Domain will allow the Music Chapel to double its residential capacity for Artists in residence, strengthen its training programme and expand its international reach. The Domain will also offer more living space for Artists in residence; a more intensive programme of masterclasses, courses and collaborations; and increased interdisciplinarity among the six existing sections (violin, piano, cello, voice, viola and chamber music).

The expansion will also make it possible to develop new projects that are currently difficult to realise due to limited space: hosting Composers in residence and other artistic disciplines such as dance or literature; scientific research into the impact of music; contributions to peace; and the necessary renewed perspective on the Living World. It will also improve working conditions for the Music Chapel team. This evolution fits within the gradual development of the Music Chapel since its founding in 1939.

A first exploratory phase

During a three-year test phase, the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel will assess the modalities of hosting Artists and Masters in residence, the planning of training and artistic activities, and operational costs. The Domain will be officially made available on 1 January 2026, followed by limited renovation works. In September 2026, the first Artists in residence will arrive to live on the Argenteuil Domain; artistic activities and training will also begin at that time. After evaluating the test phase in 2028, a decision will be made regarding the long-term operation of the Argenteuil Domain, based on an ambitious architectural and ecological redevelopment project to be developed during the test period.



A mosaic of perspectives



**Her Majesty Queen Paola,
Honorary President, Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel**

“My greatest wish has always been that the excellence of the Music Chapel helps young talent to give the best of themselves and to build an international musical elite that transcends cultures and borders. The expansion of the Music Chapel to the Argenteuil Domain is a historic opportunity in the service of music as a universal language.”

**Olivier Périer,
CEO, SPDG**



“The Périer-D’leteren family has chosen to acquire the Argenteuil Domain and, in doing so, to strengthen the capabilities of the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel, support the training of musical excellence and contribute to Belgium’s international reputation. We will further develop this historic Domain so that it remains functional in the future and evolves technologically, ecologically and socially in line with tomorrow’s needs. The natural area, part of which is classified as Natura 2000, will also be managed with long-term protection of the region’s flora and fauna in mind.”



**Michel Delbaere,
Chairman, Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel**

“The Argenteuil project aligns with the 2025–2030 strategic vision of the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel: it accelerates the development of an international music campus, strengthens the transmission of artistic excellence and the sense of belonging within the Music Chapel community, all within an environment that consciously addresses our ecological impact.”

**Grégor Chapelle,
CEO, Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel**



“Our world needs music. Live music in particular, music that emerges from mutual support and collaboration. The expansion of the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel to the ‘Argenteuil Music Domain’ is an exceptional opportunity for our community of Artists in residence. Companionship, focus, concerts and... living in the heart of nature will create ideal conditions to work together and turn this place into an oasis of beauty and connection. If you too believe in this ideal of peace and the transmission of musical excellence to future generations, please contact us. The challenge is only beginning, but together, we will be stronger!”



**Anne-Lise Parotte,
Artistic Director, Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel**

“The Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel can now look forward to a new phase in its artistic development: creating a ‘Music Centre’ and becoming a reference point in Europe. A unique place where musical training, residencies, artistic research, incubation and performance all revolve around one project: supporting musical encounters, creations and the artists who bring them to life, while further strengthening the Music Chapel’s international reputation.”

**Bernard Focroulle,
Chairman of the Artistic Committee,
Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel**



“The Music Chapel has everything to gain from forming a true artistic community. We think of young Artists, Masters, coaches and alumni, whose numbers and reputation continue to grow. This artistic community could come together once or twice a year around an interdisciplinary theme, which would strengthen interdisciplinary ties and the institution’s standing.”



**Tanguy Stuckens,
President of the Provincial College of Walloon Brabant**

“The Province of Walloon Brabant has supported the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel for many years in its mission of musical excellence and openness to the public. The expansion to the Argenteuil Domain is a wonderful opportunity to reinvigorate the intrinsic link between culture and nature, and the benefits of their combination.

The Provincial College is committed to ensuring coordination between all public and private actors involved in managing the Domain’s natural areas. The aim is to promote coherent management that respects the ecological, heritage and cultural values of the site. In line with our policy of ecological network development and the preservation of Brabant’s forests, we will collaborate in drawing up a management and development plan for the natural areas of the site, in consultation with the buyers, Natagora, the Sonian Forest Foundation, the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel and the other public authorities involved.”

HRH Princess Esmeralda of Belgium

“When we lived here, my father, King Leopold III, turned the Argenteuil Domain into a special place to protect the nature he loved so much. Today, I am confident that the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel will carry on this legacy. Offering young, talented artists the chance to flourish in this green environment full of family memories, close to the Music Chapel my grandmother created, moves me deeply.”





Bart Vande Voorde – Media Relations Manager

bvandevoorde@musicchapel.org | 0478 280 561

Interviews possible on request

Press visit arrangements available on request from January 2026 onwards

© M. F. Photography

The Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel is an international Center of Musical Excellence whose mission is to offer the next generation of talented musicians one of the best training programmes in the world. From an oasis of calm, nature and concentration, it offers artists residencies characterised by learning in dialogue with experienced Masters and rising stars, as well as numerous concert opportunities and shared stages with the world's greatest performers. This advanced training is aimed at emerging talents in piano, violin, viola, cello, chamber music and voice.

The Music Chapel develops a tailor-made path for each musician, respecting their artistic individuality, and enabling them to strive for the title of Queen Elisabeth Associate Artist.

Through meeting and exchange spaces and numerous initiatives, it also encourages Artists-in-Residence to develop individual and collective entrepreneurial skills in service of tomorrow's world. Conscious of the societal role that music and culture can play in caring for Life, the Music Chapel positions itself as an organisation committed to respecting planetary boundaries. Its activity is part of a continuous dynamic of evaluating its practices and artistic reflections.

The Music Chapel thrives through an important network of artists: 70 Artists-in-Residence of more than 20 nationalities, 9 Masters-in-Residence, numerous Guest Masters and a community of more than 550 Alumni. Thanks to its many partnerships in Belgium and worldwide, it offers its Artists-in-Residence the chance to create, perform and practise live music, and works to make classical music accessible to every audience, both within and beyond its walls.

Its House, an architectural gem with protected status, opens its doors to everyone during a season of nearly 100 public concerts. The Music Chapel shares its exceptional heritage through guided tours and also hosts private events on request.

For more information: <https://musicchapel.org/>



SPDG s.a. “Sustainable Profitable Development & Growth” is the holding company of the Périer-D’Ieteren family.

SPDG manages its long-standing shareholding in the family Group and, following its partial strategic divestment from D’Ieteren Group, will intensify its investments in operational activities linked to sustainable development, such as energy transition, infrastructure, transport and the circular economy.

Building on our experience of exceptional value creation within the D’Ieteren Group, SPDG will continue a highly structured search for strong operational teams and companies active in such sectors, to foster a better economy.

For this, our team will leverage its combined expertise in listed assets, operational activities, impact investments, venture capital and philanthropy across structural macro-trends.

Looking to the future, SPDG will build an entrepreneurial portfolio of controlled holdings, inspired by our multi-generational family values: courage, curiosity, fairness, entrepreneurship and sustainability.

The Périer-D’Ieteren Foundation, meanwhile, supports heritage conservation, education, research and social initiatives through its philanthropic activities.

For more information: <https://www.spdg.be/home/>

The Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel thanks all its structural partners, who enable it to fully accomplish its artistic and pedagogical mission.



=
**Belfius
PRIVATE**



A sincere thank you to our MuCH Friend, MuCH Patron, MuCH Sponsor, to the major legacy donors, and to all our benefactors who, in their generosity, prefer to remain anonymous.