

The Argenteuil Domain:
a place steeped in history,
between national heritage
and a radiant musical future





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History of the Domain

The Argenteuil Domain, located on the outskirts of Brussels, immediately evokes important chapters of our shared memory. A place of peace, inspiration, and contemplation, it forms a green enclave where culture and nature frequently meet.

Origins and first owners

The estate was assembled by Ferdinand de Meeûs between **1833 and 1836**. He built the Château d'Argenteuil (today home to the European School Brussels–Argenteuil). It then passed to his daughter Henriette (1838–1907), and later to the de Meeûs–Martini family. In **1937 and 1938**, two royal decrees allowed the Counts de Meeûs and their descendants to add “d'Argenteuil” to their family name.

William Tuck

From **1929** onwards, part of the estate was purchased by William Hallam Tuck, an American businessman. He built a country house there—known as Bellevue Castle or Tuck Castle—designed by New York architect William Delano.

In **1949**, William Tuck sold the estate to the Belgian State, which entrusted its management to the SNCB (Belgian National Railway Company).



King Leopold III and Princess Lilian

In **1951**, Prince Charles of Belgium declined the offer to reside on the estate. It was then used to host distinguished guests, including during the 1958 World Expo. In **1961**, King Leopold III and Princess Lilian moved into Argenteuil with their children and remained there until the Princess's death in 2002. The royal couple welcomed numerous prominent figures there, and the Princess Lilian Cardiology Foundation also held its colloquia on the estate.



Jean-Marie Delwart

In **2003**, the estate was put up for sale by the Federal Public Service Finance. In **2004**, industrialist and businessman Jean-Marie Delwart—an avid lover of culture and nature—purchased the estate. He devoted himself to preserving and further developing it. Jean-Marie Delwart passed away in March 2025.

Sale of the Argenteuil Domain

Before his death, Jean-Marie Delwart had begun discussions with the Music Chapel regarding the future of the estate. He had expressed his wish to transfer ownership to a project bringing together music and nature—a wish shared by his children.

In **October 2025**, an agreement was reached between the heirs of Jean-Marie Delwart and the holding company SPDG, which acquired the SA Domaine d'Argenteuil. The agreement provides for the estate to be made available to the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel. On this historic site, a new artistic and educational sanctuary will emerge for outstanding young Belgian and international musicians.



The Argenteuil Domain in figures

The estate's natural area covers **136 hectares** (approximately one-third grasslands and two-thirds woodland). It forms an ecological corridor at the edge of the Sonian Forest. Part of the estate is designated as Natura 2000 and serves as an ecological link between the forests of Brussels, Flanders, and Wallonia.

The available built surface offers extensive possibilities for artist residencies: nearly **4,400 m²** in the main building and around **1,500 m²** across the outbuildings, stables, and garages.

Initial operational assessments allow for the creation of numerous new private living spaces, as well as shared communal areas:

- 19 fully equipped rooms for Artists in residence
- Communal spaces including a kitchen, dining room, lounge with library, listening and viewing room, and relaxation area

The main building may also accommodate work, performance, and reception spaces:

- 3 rehearsal rooms for study or masterclasses
- 2 large salons (102 m² and 130 m²), suitable for concerts (including chamber orchestra performances) as well as receptions or dinners for 60–80 guests
- An exceptional dining room of about 50 m²

Finally, the layout of workspaces will allow 14 staff members of the Music Chapel to work there under optimal conditions, significantly improving their working environment, as the historic site was never designed for such intensive use.

