

The Argenteuil Domain: new artistic and pedagogical perspectives for the Music Chapel

History of the Music Chapel

The Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel's mission is to offer a new generation of talented musicians one of the finest educations in the world. From an oasis of calm, nature, and focus, it provides artists with residencies characterized by a learning path in dialogue with experienced Masters and rising stars, as well as numerous performance opportunities and the chance to share the stage with the world's greatest artists.

The expansion to the Argenteuil Domain marks a significant turning point in the artistic and pedagogical history of the Music Chapel, forming a natural continuation of the key phases of its existence.

1939–2004: a center of excellence for young Belgian musicians

On the initiative of Queen Elisabeth and violinist Eugène Ysaÿe, the Music Chapel was created as a place of intensity and reflection, where a dozen mainly Belgian artists could find the time and focus to practice and deepen their art, far from the bustle of the world.

2004 to today: international expansion and concert season

Since 2004, under the impetus of Bernard de Launoit, the Music Chapel has broadened its horizons internationally by attracting world-renowned Masters in residence and welcoming young artists from all corners of the globe. With the opening of the “de Launoit Wing” in 2015, the Music Chapel took a decisive step forward through the addition of artist studios, masterclass spaces, and a concert hall for chamber music. This enabled the creation of a full concert season (200–300 concerts per year, on-site and in other venues) and positioned the Music Chapel as a top-tier institution. It currently hosts around 70 young Artists in Residence annually.

From 2026: expansion to the Argenteuil Domain

Thanks to this momentum, the Music Chapel can now embark on a new phase of artistic development, bringing together two legacies. By combining the Argenteuil Domain with its historic site, the Music Chapel will provide its Artists in residence with an environment that is both tranquil and stimulating.

This project aligns with the strategic vision of the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel: it accelerates the development of an “international music campus” — unique in Europe — and strengthens the institution's position among the world's leading centers of musical excellence.

Residencies and crossovers: doing more... and better, thanks to the Argenteuil Domain

The spaces at the Argenteuil Domain make it possible to combine living, creating, teaching, and sharing in an environment conducive to concentration and artistic development.

The potential development paths in the short, medium, and long term, enabled by the new infrastructure, are numerous:

- Hosting more artists simultaneously in residence
- Intensifying the training program and expanding pedagogical offerings
- Creating a preparatory program for young Belgian artists
- Developing joint projects with other international music centers to foster knowledge and expertise exchangers
- Establishing a composers' program, with attention to new creations and artistic research
- Opening residencies to other disciplines (dance, music theatre, interdisciplinary work) in collaboration with other cultural and artistic institutions
- Supporting scientific research on the impact of music
- Contributing to peace and a necessary renewed perspective on the Living

Additionally, the Argenteuil Domain will allow the Music Chapel to meet the increasing need for spaces for physical work essential to musicians' well-being:

- New physical activity spaces (sports, dance, yoga, etc.)
- Further development of a holistic approach to musical training, with attention to physical health and overall well-being



An initial exploratory phase + key milestones

During a three-year test phase, the Music Chapel will test the modalities for hosting Artists and Masters in residence, as well as the scheduling of pedagogical and artistic activities and operational costs. Following an evaluation of the test phase in 2028, a decision will be made regarding the long-term operation of the Argenteuil Domain.

- **1 January 2026**
the estate is made available to the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel and the test phase begins
- **January–August 2026**
preparation of living spaces, rehearsal rooms, offices, reception areas, etc.
- **September 2026**
arrival of the first Artists in residence who will stay at the Argenteuil Domain
- **2026-2028:**
artistic, pedagogical, and operational test period

