

2025

Fondation E.M.E



The Fondation EME — Where Music Touches Lives

Music warms hearts. It spreads joy. New friendships are formed and life-changing moments are created. Since 2009, we have been bringing music to places where it is too often missing: nursing homes, hospitals, reception centres, and specialized institutions. Our mission is to foster inclusion through the universal language of music, to bring people together, and help to grow trust where it is most needed. At a time with growing social inequality and limited access to culture and essential services, the Fondation EME works toward for a society in which everyone can participate in cultural life; a society where music inspires dignity, builds peace, and strengthens social bonds.

Leitmotif

Mieux vivre
ensemble
grâce à la
musique
2025

Under the patronage of Her Royal Highness, the Grand Duchess



Dominique
Hansen
President



Dear friends of the Fondation EME,

As 2025 comes to a close, we look back on a year rich in emotion and achievements. Our projects, events, and above all our human encounters have once again reminded us of music's extraordinary power to connect people, touch hearts, and enrich lives.

This year, we reached more than 17.500 beneficiaries through 800 activities across Luxembourg. Our ongoing programmes, concerts in hospitals, nursing homes, and facilities for people with specific needs, remained at the very heart of our mission.

We also carried out creative projects encouraging co-creations, such as Nikki Ninja x Switch for children supported by the Switch and X-Track, and Summer at CHNP, a project combining visual arts, exhibition, and songwriting with young people in child and adolescent psychiatry. Not to mention our All Together initiatives in Betzdorf, Consdorf, and Remich, which brought together older adults, local residents, and people with special needs.

We are especially proud of pOpera, our community opera. Fifty musicians from all over the world, now living in Luxembourg, developed their own story, learned new skills, and shared the stage with professional artists. This project, which continues throughout 2026, embodies our commitment to inclusion through

music. We look forward to the final performance on 23 April 2026 at 7:30 p.m. in the Grand Auditorium of the Philharmonie.

My heartfelt congratulations go to our dynamic and creative team, as well as to our talented artists whose dedication has made each project truly special. I also wish to thank my fellow Board members for their time, commitment, and valuable insights.

And of course, none of this would have been possible without the generosity of our private and institutional donors. Thanks to your support, we have been able to expand our programmes and bring music, joy, and hope to even more people. Thank you for believing in our mission and for helping us create lasting social impact.

With my warmest regards,

Dominique Hansen

President



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The **numbers** behind our commitment in 2025



The Fondation EME's programs operate at the intersection of social engagement and artistic excellence. They enrich the cultural life of care facilities and restore dignity to people who are too often overlooked in everyday life.



OUR PROJECTS

Every year, Fondation EME brings moments of joy and humanity to people across Luxembourg.

Behind every project are encounters, emotions, and rediscovered smiles. Our work reaches those who need it most: older people whose days are brightened by a simple melody; patients who find renewed strength through music; people with special needs who discover new ways to express themselves. It also includes young people in distress who regain hope and confidence, as well as socially disadvantaged individuals to whom we offer moments of connection, dignity and respite.

In 2025, the Fondation EME organised 800 events, reaching more than 17.500 people across the country. Each of these events tells its own story — of eyes that light up, a voice that dares to sing again, and a new bond being formed.

Since raising awareness is also central to our mission, we regularly produce podcasts that spark reflection and invite audiences to explore social and human issues in greater depth.

As of 2026, Fondation EME will present its five programmes areas and two flagship projects each season. We have reshaped the structure and presentation of our programmes to make them clearer and more accessible for our partners. Rest assured: our activities and the people we serve stay the same, only the way we present them continues to grow.

Discover the programmes that shaped our year



02 **PROGRAMMES** of the Fondation EME





CONCERTS **EME**

At Fondation EME, music is far more than an art form, it creates closeness, joy, and connection. Imagine a nursing home where faces light up at the first notes of a violin. Or a children's home filled with music, laughter, and applause. This is the spirit of the EME Concerts.

EME Concerts embody one core mission: bringing music to where it has the greatest impact - nursing homes, hospitals, children's homes, and facilities for people with special needs.

Each year, professional musicians travel across Luxembourg to reach those who have limited access to live performances. Several times each month, they carry their instruments into care and support facilities, transforming everyday spaces into stages for joy.

For nearly an hour, a unique moment is created, a space for calm, a shared experience and uplift. These concerts are more than performances; they are genuine encounters. A hand tapping to the rhythm, eyes shining with emotion, shared laughter. These simple gestures remind us that when music reaches places it seldom does, it can comfort, connect, and spark profound joy.

Key numbers for the 2025 Concerts EME programme:

480 concerts
by 140 musicians
for 10.000 participants





ENSEMBLE AU **CONCERT**

Enjoy a moment of togetherness and connection at the Philharmonie Luxembourg.

The Fondation EME organises special evenings at the Philharmonie for groups from a wide range of institutions and organisations. We offer guided tours as well as concert tickets for groups.

If you would like to experience a magical evening of music, please contact us by email at contact@fondation-eme.lu



BRIDGES

Bridges is a programme that provides refugees of all ages living in various accommodation centres across Luxembourg with free music lessons and musical instruments.

By supplying the resources needed to learn and make music, Bridges fosters safe, welcoming spaces where refugees can express themselves and connect with others. The program helps uncover musical talent, offers participants the opportunity to perform with the Orchestre de la Place de l'Europe, and shows how music can build bridges across cultures and communities.



The programme is built around two main pillars:

01 A musical instrumental fund: The instruments provided by Fondation EME form part of a comprehensive programme that includes music lessons, workshops, and masterclasses for refugees of all ages. All activities and instruments are provided free of charge. Refugees who already own an instrument are equally welcome to join.

02 Joining Luxembourg's largest amateur orchestra: As a next step, participants in the Bridges programme are gradually introduced to the Orchestre de la Place de l'Europe (OPE), a classical orchestra that brings together amateur musicians from all walks of life. By joining the orchestra, refugee musicians have the opportunity to showcase their talent, perform in prestigious venues, and inspire audiences to embrace diversity and openness.

Through the Bridges programme, the Fondation EME offers refugees living in Luxembourg a powerful means of artistic expression, social connection, and inclusion. By fostering a positive environment in which participants can learn, create, and rebuild, Bridges helps restore a sense of belonging and community.





REHEARSING UNTIL BEDTIME

Interview with TANJA SCHMITT

by Saskia Müller-Bastian

How do people become involved with the Fondation EME?

Often, it is the foundation itself that reaches out to organisations, or institutions contact the foundation directly. And sometimes, it all comes down to chance — as in the case of Tanja Schmitt.

Tanja Schmitt is a nursing assistant at the Seniorie Ste Zithe Contern, where she cares for elderly residents with physical impairments or dementia. *“I’ve been following the Fondation EME on Facebook for a long time because I think their work is wonderful. When I saw that colleagues and residents from Consdorf were taking part in the All Together project, I immediately went to our management and we asked whether there were still places available.”*

There were, and so Tanja Schmitt and six residents from the Contern care home became part of the inclusive choirs of *All Together Miselerland & Mëllerdall*. From that moment on, songs echoed through hallways and rooms, be it traditional Luxembourg folk songs, gospel music from Togo and Nigeria, or French melodies.

“During rehearsals with Robert Bodja, I recorded the songs on my phone,” she recalls. “I used those recordings during the week to continue practicing with the group. Even during evening bedtime routines, they would ask to rehearse and wanted to know how to pronounce the English lyrics and the words from the song from Togo.” While some participants in the project choir struggled with the unfamiliar languages, Tanja Schmitt observed the opposite with her group in



Contern: *“They loved the melodies and said the new languages challenged them and gave them something to think about.”*

Tanja Schmitt had been singing in the nursing home long before All Together. *“I never learned to read music, but it has always been important to me. People here know me as someone who hums all the time and starts singing with others. All it takes is one comment from a resident, and suddenly we’re singing together.”* The Fondation EME project gave this shared experience an entirely new dimension.

“Going out, being part of something, and feeling appreciated — that makes a great difference, and they still talk about it today.”

Even the rehearsals were eagerly anticipated by the residents. The final concert at the Trifolion in Echternach was the highlight, to which families were, of course, invited. Buses brought other residents from Contern and Consdorf to the concert as a surprise for the singers.

“When we came on stage and people from my group recognised familiar faces in the audience, they had tears in their eyes. Knowing that so many people came to support them, that the management was there, and that even the director personally pushed a wheelchair into the hall — that recognition meant the world to them.”

The impact continues to this day. The director gave each participant a USB drive with a recording of the concert, so they can relive the moment whenever they want. Even now, the singers from Contern are often approached by other

residents who saw them on stage. *“Some residents later regretted not taking part because they didn’t dare at the time. Now they regularly ask me when we’ll be doing a project like this again — and they’re determined not to miss it this time.”*

The All Together project was launched to mark the 15th anniversary of Fondation EME. When asked whether she had felt nervous before the performance, a participant in the Kinnekswiss concert in summer 2024 says in the project video: *“When you’re as old as I am, you don’t get nervous on stage anymore — there’s not much that can happen. And I also want to tell you that I am 95 years old and immensely proud to have been part of this. I’ve experienced a lot in my life, but this was truly unique.”*

Inspired by reactions like these, and by the lasting impact witnessed by Tanja Schmitt at *All Together Miselerland & Mölledall*, the All Together initiative will continue in 2026. And the residents of Contern are already looking forward to the next edition.





ARRAIAL

Arraial is a traditional festival full of colour, music, and celebration, deeply rooted in Portuguese culture.

An Arraial takes place outdoors, often in streets, squares, or historic neighborhoods, decorated with garlands, lanterns, colourful ribbons, and banners. Residents set out tables, chairs, and grills — everyone joins in, just like at a large village festival.

The term Arraial perfectly captures our programme, which invites everyone to come together around shared musical activities. Under the Arraial banner, we join our offerings for collective music-making and cultural experiences.

Our Main Goals:

- 01** Celebrate diversity in all its forms through shared music-making.
- 02** Create opportunities for artistic expression and personal development.
- 03** Ensure equal access to culture and music by removing social and financial barriers.
- 04** Promote inclusion by creating a space where every voice is valued and heard.

05 Inspire and educate by encouraging new and fresh perspectives.

06 Forge lasting connections and foster mutual understanding through the power of music.

Key Figures for 2025:

As part of the Arraial programme:

60 workshops or performances
by 22 artists
for 600 participant

Participating Artists:

Claire Thill, Daliah Kentges, Catherine Kontz, Céline Bernard, Rahel Jankowski, Marc Thein, Ken Nnganyadi, Marko Mladenović, Jill Christophe, Robert Bodja, Annie Saulier, Hazael Ouedraogo Pawentaore, John Wolter, Komi Doussiema, Sri Nassu Bowe, Nicolas Billaux, Brian Ca, Douglas Becker, Yaz Sané, Mike Sheridan, Piera Jović, Rachel Quarmby



Arraial



“THAT’S WHERE THE MAGIC HAPPENS”

Interview with CATHERINE KONTZ

by Saskia Müller-Bastian

*Between theater, music, and soundscapes, Apoplexie at rainy days immerses the audience in a mysterious, poetic, and sensory world. Created in collaboration with Fondation EME and designed specifically for audiences with visual impairments, the performance is open to all and offers a captivating “mind cinema” experience. We spoke with **Catherine Kontz** about the project she programmed for the rainy days festival.*

You performed *Apoplexie* in Luxembourg several months ago, and this year it returns in collaboration with Fondation EME. What is different this time?

Catherine Kontz: Last year, most of the audience at the Kasemattentheater could see. This time, we are deliberately focusing on other sensory experiences. We are even discussing whether to use masks so sighted attendees can focus more on the sounds and experience the performance in a situation similar to that of visually impaired spectators. Without visual anchors, sighted people often struggle to concentrate or get tired. But *Apoplexie* draws the audience into the story through sound.

Actress Rahel Jankowski delivers the text, while Céline Bernard acts as Foley artist, creating all the live sound effects, normally she works in film production. Cars, rain, traffic accidents with lightning and thunder, all these sounds are generated live from a table full of objects. Some are truly unexpected: for example, she uses a hot water bottle to



mimic squealing tires, and it sounds convincingly real. I provide musical support with the piano and small bells, often percussively playing directly on the strings of the piano. This brings the story to life, and the audience feels the energy in the room, nothing is pre-recorded.

What is the audience's experience like?

Whether with masks or not, the audience cannot see us, we are behind a curtain. Last year, people came on stage afterward to see how the sounds were created. Some said they would have preferred to watch us. But if you do that, you forget the story and are no longer immersed in it, because what we do sometimes looks really bizarre and is physically very demanding.

You have to engage with it fully. The “rain” isn’t real, it’s small objects hitting a surface. But if you accept these sounds as rain, then it becomes rain, that’s where the magic happens. Of course, you could play a recording of the text with field recordings of real rain and traffic, but that would be an entirely different experience. In addition to sound effects, *Apoplexie* also includes musical motifs on the piano. But Foley — live sound-making — is the core of the experience.

As artistic director of rainy days, as well as composer and performer, how did designing the project for visually impaired audiences influence your compositional process? Is that how the “magic” emerged?

Catherine Kontz: The text was written by Claire Thill, who envisioned the “mind cinema” format. I work a lot with Foley, and for me, sound is inherently musical. But for *Apoplexie*, I deliberately avoided melodic or harmonic thinking and focused on individual sounds. In doing so, I discovered entirely new piano techniques, for example, slightly dampening the piano lid and rubbing it produces rain-like sounds.

As a performer, the challenge is to work together in sync. The illusion breaks if the timing isn’t precise. For instance, when the character gets into a car, and Céline creates the key-turning sound while I simulate the engine with a small organ fan, the sequence must be exact. Magic requires structure; otherwise, the audience disengages. Once, we forgot to open the car door, then it couldn’t be closed again! (laughs) Details matter.

Has collaborating with the Fondation EME influenced the project?

Catherine Kontz: Significantly. The Fondation EME organises so many inclusive projects and brings music to people who might never visit the Philharmonie, allowing us to work with specific groups in a targeted way. It’s wonderful to have that support embedded in an institution like the Philharmonie.



In England, where I live, there is lots of outreach, but often only because of project funding requirements, even if the musicians aren't trained for it. That can be frustrating and doesn't always serve the art. In Luxembourg, projects don't have to include outreach, the expertise is organised separately and brought in as needed, allowing projects to be supported with real knowledge and experience.

2025 marked the second year the Fondation EME has been involved in a rainy days project.

Catherine Kontz: Exactly. My goal is to have at least one project each year at rainy days in collaboration with the Fondation EME. New music can be socially and politically powerful, it often moves people more directly than words. Two years ago, we collaborated with an organisation for dementia patients and their families, creating shared positive experiences in contrast to everyday challenges. This year's festival also includes works addressing inclusion, such as pieces on invisible disabilities and others exploring depression.

Contemporary music is often thought to attract a small, niche audience. Does this make working with people with impairments easier or harder?

Catherine Kontz: Both. People may be less open-minded at first, but new music is ideal because, as the name suggests, it is new and therefore adaptable. It can be tailored to specific needs. Contemporary music is extremely diverse, you

need to know which type fits each project. Composers want people to listen to their work. They have something to say. Contemporary means dealing with today's issues, and works are created out of conviction. Financially, it's tough; you really have to want it. Some write about the environment, some link music with discourse, others explore how music can help people. It's challenging, but rewarding.

What role do participation and inclusion play in contemporary music today?

Catherine Kontz: Gender balance has improved; there are more female composers, many with families. Yet the scene is still not as diverse as it could be. As festival director, I receive many emails from older white men, they seem to be the most proactive. Women often need encouragement to apply. Curators must actively create diverse programmes to avoid one-dimensional results.

Accessibility is also progressing. In England, there are many "relaxed performances," succeed even amid chaos, because both performers and audiences come prepared. Projects designed for specific groups are vital; they signal that people's needs are considered, and different ways of experiencing music are thoughtfully included.



HORIZON

In recent years, children have grown up in a world overshadowed by crises: the pandemic, war across the world, energy insecurity, and economic uncertainty. A pervasive sense of unease has emerged, affecting their daily lives, well-being, and outlook for the future.

The 2022 OKAJU report describes a “*generation shaped by global crises*,” carrying an invisible, and often heavy, burden in schools, hospitals, or care facilities.

In response, the Fondation EME holds a simple belief: that music and art can bring light in life’s darker moments.

They can soothe, boost self-esteem, spark curiosity, offer a moment to breathe, and even bring joy, especially in places where these experiences have become rare.

This philosophy inspired to **HORIZON**, a programme designed for the most vulnerable children: those in hospitals, refugees, children with special needs, or those living in unstable environments.

HORIZON aims to provide more than just a musical moment. It seeks to open **new horizons**:

- **A horizon of expression** — to process emotions.

- **A horizon of creativity** — to redefine oneself.

- **A horizon of hope** — to embrace the future with renewed confidence.

Our projects, specially tailored concerts, creative workshops, multisensory experiences, and regular hospital events, all share the same goal: to enhance children’s well-being through art and to give them a brief escape from the crises and challenges around them.

Thanks to the support of the **André Losch Fondation**, Fondation EME can continue to offer these valuable moments, allowing children to feel seen, appreciated, carefree — and simply like children again.

Numbers for the 2025 Horizon Programme:

200 activities
by 23 artists
for 1,500 children

Participating Artists:

Klankennest, English Touring Opera, Maz, Patrick Miranda, Nikki Ninja, Aifric Ni Chaoimh, Pedro Gonzalez, Marta Pinto, Marc Folschette, David Laplant, Claudia Urhausen, Brave, Larissa Bouquet, Frin Wolter, Vincent Gailly, Cathy Heidt, Boris Benazdia, Dadofonic, Fann Attiki, Christine Kristmann, Hy-Huu Dang, Katharina Kramer





MUSIC AND ART CAN SAVE LIVES

Interview with Maz Univerze & Pleasing

by Saskia Müller-Bastian

Techno, folk, death metal, hip hop, and emo – an unexpected mix emerges when a group of young people at the CHNP Rehabilitation Clinic spends a month exploring their creative energy with three artists.

In the EME project Summer@CHNP, Thomas Faber and Patrick Miranda, also known as Maz Univerze and Pleasing, wrote and produced songs with the adolescents, while artist Marta Pinto collaborated with them on an exhibition. Speaking with Thomas and Patrick, it becomes clear that the unexpected outcomes are part of the excitement, even though they have been long-time collaborators with EME.

“This summer, one young participant, a huge death metal fan, ended up writing an amazing death metal song himself,” Patrick recalls. “It was hilarious to see the faces of the doctors and hospital staff when they heard it for the first time. They didn’t expect that at all.”

Thomas remembers another moment vividly: *“Two participants realised during the sessions that they had different interests — one liked writing lyrics, the other preferred singing. When they suggested collaborating on a song that reflected both of them, I felt it was a truly powerful moment. It’s wonderful to witness friendships forming and trust growing, allowing them to create together.”*

For Patrick, self-help is a key aspect of the project. *“Not in the sense of having to change or improve, but of finding something that helps you.”* The team supports the participants in expressing their thoughts and emotions through creativity.



Summer@CHNP unfolds in phases. The first focuses on the basics – what notes and chords are, how to structure a text – and on brainstorming ideas. In the second phase, participants rotate through different stations: writing and recording demos with Thomas, music production with Patrick, and, for the first time this year, visual arts with Marta. After exploring all stations, participants specialise in one area. By the end, all the pieces come together, showcasing their work in an exhibition in the fall.

The way the project is designed shows that Thomas and Patrick are not just there to develop creative ideas. A major goal is to show participants that artistic work involves more than creativity: it requires structure, prioritization, focused effort, and decision-making. *“It’s important for them to know when something is finished and doesn’t need to be changed,”* Thomas explains. *“And if perfectionism kicks in or moods run low, we provide emotional support as well as technical guidance.”*

Participants choose their own topics, often very personal. *“We build trust by sharing our own stories,”* Patrick says. *“When we’re open, it’s easier for them to open up too.”* Thomas adds: *“We show ourselves as we are, flaws and all.”* At times, mild swearing is allowed, as long as no one is offended. *“We’re not authority figures telling them what to do. They’ve had enough of that in their lives.”*

Despite the relaxed approach, there is another side to the project *“I wouldn’t use the word ‘burdensome,’ but it has a*

certain severity,” Thomas notes. The topics often touch on existential issues, and the constant presence of clinic staff reminds everyone of the setting. Still, the work matters: *“It brings colour and direction to their daily lives,”* Patrick observes. Having a tangible final product is crucial. *“They see the result and think: I made this, it’s mine, and maybe I can do it again. Without that, the feeling of accomplishment would fade more quickly,”* Thomas explains. *“Being able to listen to or view the outcome again brings that feeling back.”*

Both Thomas and Patrick advocate for more projects like Summer@CHNP in psychiatric rehabilitation settings. *“And not just there — there are many places where everyday life can be gray,”* Patrick says. Thomas adds, *“I don’t want to sound dramatic, but music and art save lives, and we’re not saying that to be ‘deep,’ we know it from experience.”*



POPERA

The libretto for the **grand 2026 pOpera** was created through collaborative workshops that brought together refugees, longtime residents, and newer members of the local community. Singing workshops prepared participants for a shared artistic adventure, as pOpera unites the voices of contemporary Luxembourg in a collaborative creative process.

Key numbers for the 2025 pOpera

01.06.2022 – 24.04.2026

200 participants

300 workshops, encounters,

performances, creative sessions,

shared meals, and more

Join the pOpera performances on April 23 at 7:30 and April 24 at 10:00 for highschoools.

Participating Artists:

*Paulo Lameiro, Tim Wollmann, Antoine Pohu,
Ivan Boumans, Pierre Nimax, Stephany Ortega,
Nicolas Billaux, Ezgi Göktürk, Amit Dhuri,
Anisha Bondy, Mariana Pinto de Souza,
Leny Gruber*





pOpera - LEARNING TO BE TOGETHER

Interview with
Paulo Lameiro
& Chloé Tournikian

by Saskia Müller-Bastian

Co-creating an opera with professionals and non-professionals coming from all backgrounds, speaking more than ten different languages, many of them never having performed on a stage before. Sounds like a huge challenge?

It is. But Paulo Lameiro and a small artistic team, together with Fondation EME, gladly accepted it. In **April 2026**, everyone will be able to see the results of three years of dedicated work when **pOpera** is performed at the **Philharmonie's Grand Auditorium**.

This year's pOpera is part of a larger, ongoing project. What was its starting point, and which goal does it move towards?

Paulo Lameiro: Before I talk about the actual pOpera project, I have to mention its prelude: In 2022, I was invited by the Fondation EME to create a project in a prison with inmates – Let it out – which was supposed to end in an opera. After a wonderful first project phase, elections in Luxembourg brought the project to a halt, and we didn't get to perform the opera as planned.

Then we started wondering: how can we keep this idea alive? We turned to another community in Luxembourg: newcomers arriving from around the world.

When conceiving pOpera, we decided to plan the project over three years. The first milestone was to meet this community and spend time with them, to get to know them and learn. Which languages do they speak? How old are they? What are their personalities like? What kinds of dreams, what kinds of



problems do they have? And what can the Fondation EME create with this community? The second milestone was to learn how to create together – let's not forget, in the end, we want to get an opera on stage! So, during the second year, we invited a librettist, a composer, and a stage director to bring together a small opera and experience the different tasks and processes involved.

And in all this, our aim was also to bring these two very different worlds closer together: newcomers and opera. On one hand, we are talking about, let's say, the highest level of classical music in high society in the middle of Europe, and on the other, people from all over the world who most probably have never sung an opera on stage before or co-created one.

So, to give a short answer to your question: three years, three moments. Be together. Learn to create together. Learn to perform together.

Chloé, maybe you can add from the point of view of the Fondation EME: What do you hope to achieve with pOpera?

Chloé Tournikian: The Fondation EME was created precisely for this kind of project: to bring people together through music and through the arts, that's our mission. And to show that music is powerful, that it has the power to break down borders that may separate us. As Paulo said, we are performing with people who don't speak the same language, who don't share the same culture, way of life, or background.

Music helps people to overcome these barriers, and the goal of pOpera is to show this to everybody, participants and audience alike.

How does the Fondation EME make this kind of project possible?

Chloé: For pOpera, the EME team is mostly involved in project management – coordinating and making things work between the artists, the participants, the partner institutions, and also the Philharmonie, which is very important in this project, as we are planning to perform on the big stage of the Grand Auditorium in April.

A huge part of our work for pOpera is also looking for participants. We started with nothing, only the artistic team and the project idea. We didn't have anyone to start with, and now we are looking at around 100 participants on stage for the final performance. We have been working really hard on that.

During the preparations for pOpera, the participants welcome you into their lives and worlds, sharing, as you mentioned, their problems and their dreams. However, by going into a certain situation, you tend to influence and change it. Paulo, as part of the artistic team, how do you reflect on your own role within pOpera?

Paulo: When we talk about participatory art, we usually think



of what we might call disadvantaged communities – inmates, refugees, or people with disabilities for example. And we think that music builds a bridge between these communities and “us”, the ones with all the knowledge to help others.

But nowadays, and especially in my projects, we don’t create something for a particular community. We create something with them, and we are all at the same level while doing that. And pOpera is open to everyone, not only a specific community. Everyone in Luxembourg is invited to participate, it’s a project for all of us.

If we only worked and sang with refugees, they would only talk about themselves. It would be a spiral of the same questions, the same doubts, the same problems. But I think what they really need is to be accepted in Europe, to have a home, freedom, and peace. And we – meaning “*professional artists*”, sponsors, the audience of the Philharmonie – we share these same needs. We need to learn together. And maybe, as Chloé said, music is the most powerful tool to help us to be together and to get to know each other.

It’s interesting that when you say “professional artists,” you use air quotes. How do you make sure all of you are actually on equal footing, to make it a true co-creation? And how do you make sure the opera’s audience also understands this?

Paulo: That is the million-dollar question, because it is the keystone of the whole project. We need to counter the risk

of us “*professional artists*” thinking that “*ordinary people*” will somehow benefit from us offering them a big project with a powerful artistic language. Or worse, we could be tempted to use the lives, emotions, and drama of others to create something for ourselves, for our own enjoyment.

It is not easy to truly co-create and engage as peers. That is why the first phases of the project are crucial: just being together, drinking coffee, singing together, dancing together, visiting centers, inviting people to our rehearsals, inviting them to concerts, and showing them the life of an opera singer or an orchestra.

And we need to think about the audience. We don’t want to consider them as just spectators, we want them to become protagonists in the opera as well. Ideally, everyone recognises part of their own story in the opera, and this is how we turn the public into part of the opera’s community.

Chloé, is this what Paulo just described specific to pOpera?

Chloé: It has been the goal of all EME projects for many years now. Because of the global situation, Luxembourg is becoming increasingly multicultural. So it is essential to develop projects that bring people together, no matter their background. We want to live and cooperate as a community.



Paulo, how long have you been working with EME, and is there something special about EME compared to other institutions?

Paulo: I first got in touch with EME while doing concerts for babies at the Philharmonie. When they learned that I also worked on participatory opera projects with communities, we started collaborating four years ago, with the prison project Let it out.

What is special about the Fondation EME is its place in Luxembourg's society. It works right at the center of the artistic and cultural scene. I was impressed by the wide range of people EME projects include. I used to work with more specialised institutions, focusing either on prisons, or hospitals, or elderly communities. But EME involves everyone.

Most importantly, EME understands classical music deeply, because it is so closely linked with the Philharmonie. That makes communication easy — they speak the same musical language. And that is a privilege, because it allows us to develop projects that range from rap to opera, always with the same vision of building community through music.

We have talked about the advantages of co-creating and working on equal terms. But I imagine there are also difficulties and problems that arise. Could you tell us a little about those challenges and how you approach them?

Paulo: Working with professional artists at the highest level

of music and non-professionals is definitely a challenge. Opera composers, conductors, and stage directors are used to working in a very strict and specific way. But when we open our process to a large community with non-professionals, we need to accept different ways of building things. The challenge is to find a way to achieve a high artistic level that satisfies everyone, while also creating a peaceful and respectful environment.

And the multitude of languages can also be challenging. A new language is not only new words; it is a new way of thinking. That is also why language is so powerful, and we use this power in our project. For example, in our second pOpera project, we included a poem in Arabic, and everyone — even the audience — learned one word in Arabic. That is how we build community.

What feedback have you received from pOpera participants?

Chloé: For example, last summer a new participant arrived from Turkey. At first, he didn't want to speak or share his story. But during the workshop he felt more and more confident, and by the end he said: *"Now I know I can be included in society. I've made friends. I've met people who will help me."* That kind of feedback is so rewarding. It shows that this is not only an artistic project, but also something that impacts lives.



And if someone reads this and thinks: I want to be part of this, or I know someone who should be – what can they do?

Chloé: They can just contact us and join. We are always looking for new participants.

Paulo: We still have participants from the very beginning three years ago, professionals and non-professionals, but we also integrate new people all the time — newcomers or Luxembourg locals, young people, retired people.

And there have been many beautiful encounters, for example: a retired doctor from Luxembourg became close to a newcomer with health problems. They built trust, and the doctor began to support and help them. That is one of the outcomes of this project: trust and real community. Opera is just the platform; the real impact is the friendships and connections it creates.

So really, anyone can come, no matter the age, language, or skills?

Paulo: Yes, even with no experience or a bad voice. Everyone is welcome!

Chloé: Even if someone doesn't want to be on stage, we can find roles backstage. It is really open to anyone who wants to take part in this beautiful project.

And for those who want to see the results, which day should they mark in their calendars?

Chloé: The performance at the Philharmonie's Grand Auditorium is on April 23rd!



03 PROGRAMS FOR 2026



Beyond the programmes already launched in 2025, we are planning the following new projects:

We need to find each other



03.01 Lullabies

LULLABIES

Lullabies brings together the elderly, young children, and professional musicians to create new lullabies inspired by stories, memories, and shared musical play. In workshops led by a composer and a musician, participants invent melodies, words, and sounds that are then transformed into complete songs. These new lullabies are performed and recorded by professional artists, creating a unique musical collection for families and communities. Lullabies celebrates the connection between generations and cultures, and the comfort and joy that singing together can bring.

03.02 Streetbands

STREETBANDS MUSIC FOR EVERYONE, EVERYWHERE!

This new initiative invites communities across the country to create their own streetbands. In collaboration with local community bands and ensembles, we offer workshops open to all — from experienced musicians to absolute beginners. Guided by a percussionist, a musician, and a composer, participants prepare prepare and perform a march in the streets. The result is a festive, inclusive moment that celebrates the unifying power of music at the heart of our village communities.



04 GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE





The Fondation EME relies on the generosity of the public to fund its activities, which take place throughout Luxembourg in collaboration with local and international artists, as well as various social institutions.

Funding comes primarily from donations and bequests from individuals and organisations. All activities are free for participants, except for certain concerts where institutions contribute €150.

In return for this trust, Fondation EME manages its resources with care and transparency, ensuring optimal use of funds and monitoring administrative costs.

Financial management is based on a clear division of responsibilities, ensuring effective control of transactions and assets. The Board of Directors, responsible for ongoing governance and delegated to the General Coordinator, oversees financial reporting and liquidity. These reports provide an accurate and analytical overview of the activities during the fiscal year.

In line with best practices in governance, the Board has established clear rules regarding signature authority, dual signatories, and expenditure thresholds.

The Fondation EME is a non-profit foundation, and all donations are tax-deductible in Luxembourg. As a member of the association Don en Confiance, Fondation EME adheres to its Code of Conduct.

05 MEET THE TEAM





The Fondation EME is driven by a dedicated and motivated team, working on musical projects and concerts to enrich the daily lives of older adults, people with disabilities, and socially disadvantaged individuals.

05.01 The Board of Directors

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

The members of the Board volunteer their time, expertise, and support to the Fondation EME.

DOMINIQUE HANSEN

President

STEPHAN GEHMACHER

Vice President

MEMBERS:

WILLY DE JONG

NADINE ERPELDING

DAVID GALASSI

ANNE GOEDERT

MYRIAM SCHMIT

ANNE WOLTER





SARAH BERGDOLL

General Coordinator

At the creative heart of Fondation EME, Sarah brings ideas to life. She develops projects, coordinates communications, and shapes the strategic direction of the foundation. Imaginative, structured, and deeply committed to the foundation's growth, she connects ideas, people, and opportunities every day.

SARA LEHMANN

Assistant

Sara oversees administrative tasks and supports the foundation's ongoing activities. After several years of engagement in the social and nonprofit sector, she has found at Fondation EME a professional environment where she can put her vision of lived solidarity into practice.

HELOÏSE DAPRILE

Communications Assistant

Héloïse is the newest member of the team, responsible for communications. She moves seamlessly between editorial work, social media, and the podcast Dive in with (e)me. Present at all foundation events, she is always ready to capture special moments and impressions with her camera, sharing them with a wide audience.





THE ARTISTS

Leticia Acurcio – Vocals, Guitar, Ukulele /
 Angela Aguilera – Electric Bass, Keyboard, Viola /
 Dino Ajdarpasic – Trombone / Omid Amouddin
 – Harmonium / Animyou Dream Workshops –
 Animation Studio / Aurélie Anslot – Cello /
 Jean-Marc Apap – Viola / Robi Arend – Saxophone
 / Ralf Bach – Piano / Nicole Bausch – Rap /
 Pol Belardi – Piano, Guitar / Boris Benazdia – Cello
 / Jean Bermes – Vocals / Sylvie Beytham-Ory –
 Storytelling / Nicolas Billaux – English Horn, Oboe/
 Robert Bodja – Djembe / Liesbeth Bodyn – Vocals
 / Anisha Bondy – Direction / Ivan Boumans –
 Composition / Jack Bowley – Guitar /
 Nora Braun – Cello / Brave – Percussion /
 Pedro Bray – Guitar, Vocals / Fränz Breger –
 Saxophone / Sarah Briganti – Piano / Pierre
 Brouant – Piano / Sylvia Camarda – Dance,
 Choreography / Pedro Cardoso – Guitar /
 Sara Carneiro – Vocals / Gregório Carvalho –
 Guitar / Irène Chatzisavas – Violin /
 Benoît Chaudré – Piano, Violin / Emmanuel
 Chaussade – Clarinet / Andrii Chugai – Violin /
 Bartolomiej Ciaston – Violin / Pierre Cocq-Amann
 – Saxophone / Julie Colin – Vocals /

Philippe Conter – Storytelling / Martine Conzemius
 – Clowning / Jill Crovisier – Dance /
 Julien Cuvelier – Saxophone / Priscila Da Costa –
 Vocals / Aurélie d'Incau – Visual Arts /
 Olivier Dartevelle – Clarinet / Lieselotte De
 Saedeleer – Flute / Philippe Dechêne – Guitar /
 Amit Dhuri – Percussion / Boris Dinev – Percussion
 / Diogo Dos Santos Canais – Dance /
 Josip Dragnić – Guitar / Claudia Duschner –
 Vocals / Anastassia Eletskaia – Flute /
 Tatiana Eletskaia – Cimbalom / Thibault Engel –
 Piano / English Touring Opera – Opera /
 Amber Fasquelle – Vocals / Juliette Ferreira –
 Flute / Mike Floris – Guitar / Marc Folschette –
 Dance / David Galassi – Rap / Malou Garoufalo
 – Clarinet / Vincent Gérin – Cello / Lilian Genn
 – Music Education / Pedro Gonzalez – Percussion
 / Ezgi Götürk – Piano / Sébastien Grébille – Violin
 / Gayané Grigoryan – Violin / Lara Grogan – Vocals
 / Romain Gross – Clarinet / Miguel Grusselle –
 Guitar / Daniel Grusselle – Bandoneon, Accordion
 / David Hall – Trumpet / Sacha Hanlet – Music
 Production / Lux Hemmer – Percussion /
 Hany Heshmat – Guitar / Pit Heyard – Choir
 Direction / Josh Island – Vocals / Beatriz Jimenez
 – Cello / Diane Juchem – Vocals / Olja Kaiser –
 Harp / Nadine Kauffmann – Saxophone /
 Monique Kellen – Euphonium / Attila Keresztesi –
 Violin / Stephan Kinsch – Trumpet /

Chantal Kirsch – Vocals / Ahed Kiwan – Violin
 / Laurent Kohn – Guitar / Marcel Kombia –
 Percussion / Boawéssé Kombia – Guitar, Bass /
 Katharina Kramer – Dance / Paulo Lameiro –
 Musicology / David Laplant – Videography /
 Nelly LiPuma – Vocals / Thomas Lloyd – Digital
 Graffiti / Oscar Loof – Guitar, Percussion /
 Mariaclara Ludovici – Vocals / Susana Magalhaes
 – Violin / Jean-Jacques Mailliet – Violin /
 Thierry Majerus – Clarinet / Lucie Majerus –
 Design / Jonas Malfliet – Accordion /
 Dimitri Maslennikow – Cello / Maz Univerze –
 Rap / Karin Melchert – Vocals / Danny Menesez
 – Guitar / Amèle Metlini – Violin / Joël Metz –
 Saxophone / Lionel Michon – Guitar /
 Darko Milowich – Violin / Maria Miteva – Flute
 / Viviane Moreaux – Accordion / Achal Murthy
 – Bass / Sri Nassu Bowe – Guitar, Percussion /
 Gregory Ney – Saxophone / Aifric Ni Chaoimh –
 Dance / Véronique Nosbaum – Vocals /
 Oke – Vocals / Stephany Ortega – Vocals /
 Annemie Osborne – Cello / Bruno Panetta –
 Guitar / Lou Pescatore – Cello / Albena Petrovic –
 Piano / Jeannot Pirrotte – Percussion /
 Sarah Pirrotte – Piano / Sébastien Plata – Clarinet
 / Pleasing – Vocals / Antoine Puhu – Text /
 Yves Popow – Percussion / Nadja Prange – Organ,
 Piano, Vocals / Jessica Quintus – Saxophone /
 Arina Rasheva – Piano / Sigrid Reisenberger –



Music Education / **Constantin Riccardi** – Violin /
Julie Ries – Saxophone / **Pauline Rouet-Chabaux** – Oboe / **Luca Sales** – Piano /
Jean-Nico Schambourg – Vocals /
Lynn Scheidweiler – Decoration /
Elisabeth Schilling – Dance / **Mambo Schinki** – Electronic Organ / **Serge Schonckert** – Vocals /
Julie Schroell – Videography / **Laurène Schuller** – Violin / **Pascal Schumacher** – Composition, Percussion / **Benedikt Schweigstill** – Accordion /
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Anne Simon – Direction / **Annick Sinner** – Puppet Theater / **Chris Sinner** – Piano / **Iurii Skobel** – Dance / **Tania Soubry** – Dance / **Mariana Souza** – Dance, Vocals / **Jenny Spielmann** – Vocals /
Jules Stella – Violin / **Alena Sukharukava** – Percussion / **Taipan** – Rap / **Maria Terova** – Vocals /
The X – Vocals / **Yann Thein** – Saxophone /
François Theis – Piano / **Christiane Thibold-Feinen** – Vocals / **Tohid Tohidi** – Vocals / **Alla Tolkacheva** – Mandolin / **Luka Tonnar** – Rap, Production /
Serge Tonnar – Vocals / **Svetlana Toukalevskaya** – Piano / **Milla Trausch** – Theater Education /
Cosy Turmes – Piano / **Claudia Urhausen** – Dance / **Georges Urwald** – Piano / **Marie Urwald** – Flute / **Rebecca Van Bogaert** – Flute, Mandolin /
Renata Van Der Vyver – Viola / **Julia Vicic** – Viola / **Raju Vidali** – Cello / **Pit Vinandy** – Guitar, Vocals / **Virginie Vinti** – Vocals, Guitar, African Ngoni,

Piano / **Martine Wallenborn** – Music Mediation / **Gast Waltzing** – Composition / **Simone Weber** – Clarinet / **Sabine Weyer** – Piano / **Tim Wollmann** – Composition / **Sarah Wolter** – Vocals / **Frin Wolter** – Accordion / **Mélina Zéléniuc** – Saxophone / **Zero Point Five** – Vocals / ...

IN MEMORIAM

The year 2025 was overshadowed by very sad news: our dear friend and singer **Theresia Birngruber** passed away much too early. Theresia was not only an extraordinary choir director and artistic leader of numerous Fondation EME projects, but also a radiant personality who enriched the lives of everyone she met. With her unique voice and joyful laugh, she brought joy to those around her. Through her warmth and dedication, she fostered connections and left behind cherished memories that endure.

Her spirit will live on forever within the Fondation EME.





**WE EXTEND
OUR HEARTFELT
GRATITUDE TO OUR
LOYAL PARTNERS,
WITHOUT WHOM
OUR 2025 PROJECTS
COULD NOT HAVE
BEEN REALISED**

André Losch Fondation
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Philharmonie Luxembourg

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Ministère de la Santé
Rotary Club Esch Bassin Minier
Voyages Emile Weber

... and our many generous private donors.



SUPPORT OUR WORK

The Fondation EME does not receive any government funding. Our projects are made possible entirely through your donations! Your support is vital for the organisation and realisation of all our activities and programmes.

50€

provides a refugee with a ticket to a Philharmonie concert.

100€

allows a musician to give a 45-minute concert in a hospital.

200€

funds a music workshop in a facility for children with special needs.

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