

## **The International Yehudi Menuhin Foundation – A voice through the arts**

On 9<sup>th</sup> February 2026, the International Yehudi Menuhin Foundation celebrated the final event of its European project GREEN TALES at the Instituto Cervantés in Brussels in presence of all partners involved as well as keynote speaker and representatives of the European and international Institutions.

The GREEN TALES project led by the Foundation is an example on how the practice of the arts represents a vital step to empower children towards building a future where humanity lives in harmony with the natural world. Green Tales is a pioneering project dedicated to developing illustrated children's tales in the form of animated movies. These tales centered on the four elements: earth, air, water, fire, created by children in primary classes across four countries based at the four cardinal points of Europe (Iceland, Germany, Spain and Turkey), are brought to life with the expertise of artists, storytellers, illustrators and sound/music producers. While boosting European diversity and talent, this project broadens networks and disseminates results within educational and environmental spheres, providing original artistic tools to enhance the respect for nature and green awareness.

At the occasion of the Green Tales final event, we had the great pleasure of welcoming Lodovico Folin Calabi, Unesco Representative to the EU, who gave an inspiring speech about learning as a transformative force for cultures and communities. As he rightly underlined, "arts education is not a luxury for peaceful times, it is an urgent necessity in turbulent times. When democracy is under pressure, cultural education fosters critical thinking and civic engagement. When communities are divided, it builds bridges and fosters critical solidarity".

With these words, our keynote speaker followed the path of Yehudi Menuhin, who was himself a cultural diplomat of the highest order, for through music and his universal renown, he was able to convince decision-makers and heads of state of the importance of an education based on the values promoted by the arts: inclusion, respect for diversity, intercultural dialogue

and co-creation. A tireless advocate for peace and understanding between people, he did not hesitate to engage on all fronts, always defending the weakest or more threatened.

One of the most prestigious violinists of the 20th century, a humanist and visionary, Yehudi Menuhin had a dream: to give a voice to those who have none. He created the International Yehudi Menuhin Foundation (IYMF) in 1991 in Brussels to concretize this humanist dream, and over thirty years, the Foundation initiated socio-artistic projects in the field of education, social inclusion and artistic creation to follow his path and vision: encouraging art and creativity in education and personal development for a more open, inclusive, and harmonious society.

Over the years, the International Yehudi Menuhin Foundation has used artistic expression such as music, dance, visual arts,... as a tool for meetings among world cultures and has produced a European brand of high-level multicultural concerts touring in Europe, presenting stage concepts that involve various artistic forms in an innovative way, where classical and traditional music merge together to deliver a message of intercultural dialogue on stage.

Through its multicultural projects and artistic co-creations, the Foundation has brought together musicians from diverse cultures and musical expressions who have become Ambassadors of the values championed by Yehudi Menuhin.

In 1993, the International Yehudi Menuhin Foundation established an artistic education network entitled the MUS-E® programme, which today involves 13 countries in Europe and beyond. More than 800 artists from all disciplines and all cultures work regularly in over 500 primary schools in collaboration with 4600 teachers and reach over 60,000 children a year through their art. The aim of the MUS-E® programme is to foster social inclusion of all children through the practice of the arts at school, while developing creativity and wellbeing in the classroom, contributing to a more inclusive education. In 2026, this programme exists in 11 countries of Europe: Belgium, Cyprus, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Kosovo, Liechtenstein, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, plus Israel and Brazil.

Through projects such as INSIDE, the Foundation also aims to promote the inclusion of populations more exposed to the risk of social exclusion, using artistic practice as a lever for resilience and self-confidence, whether in asylum centres for refugees, juvenile detention centres or with teenagers in neighborhoods at risk of social exclusion.

The Foundation's artistic, educational and cultural actions are unique in their development and are mutually enriched by daily practice from artists in schools, their multicultural experiences, the on-stage celebrations of the richness of cultures and reflections on cultural diversity which compose the European mosaic, especially at a time when the principle of diversity and the acceptance of multiple identities seem to be fragilized.

The International Yehudi Menuhin Foundation brings together artists, children, teachers, project leaders, partners and cultural experts who share the vision and ethics of the great humanist violinist Yehudi Menuhin who once said: *"we live in a period of time when change is required for survival. Growing controversy and confrontation must be abandoned in favour of complementarity, solidarity and reciprocity"*.

The Foundation is actively supported by a group of convinced stakeholders and sponsors, who truly believe in the values promoted by Yehudi Menuhin.