

Community music is a growing field in German-speaking countries. Music is used as a tool to bring people from different backgrounds and with different stories together and to enable creative, collaborative processes on an equal footing. No musical knowledge is required. At the same time, the music is also an expression of the community that participates in the program. In the process, the social process is given equal importance to the musical process. Community music creates a space in which democratic values can be experienced, negotiated, and shaped. This is necessary because democracy, diversity, discussion, empathy, and tolerance of ambivalence must be learned and cultivated. Our work is based on the conviction that “everyone is an artist.”

What does a community music program look like? What values underlie this field of work? What methods are used? These questions are addressed in the interactive presentation by the Paper Lantern Collective. The collective's community musicians, Matt Robinson and Marleen Kiesel, are currently working in Chemnitz, European Capital of Culture 2025, where they are establishing a diverse community music program that regularly reaches hundreds of people. These are low-threshold, regular, free music offerings for various target groups. The goal is to build trust through these offerings, get to know each other on an equal footing, and embark on creative processes together that are negotiated within the group.