



AMICALEMENT VÔTRE

The bimesterial newsletter of the Amicale of the Staff of the Council of Europe

The background of the cover is a warm, golden sunset over a city skyline. In the foreground, two hands are raised, palms up, with the sun shining through the fingers. Several white doves are flying in the sky around the hands.

2024

N° 1 // JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2024

CONTENT :

03

Edito of
Denis Huber

04

225 solidarity
boxes

05

St Nicholas of
the children of
the ukrainian
school

06

Knicketing and
crocheting club

07

ChessClub

09

Arts Club

11

ASCE

14

Champion of
the world

15

New queer
community

Film Festival
LUX

16

Writing online
workshops

17

Festival littéraire
amoureux

18

PROGRAM
Festival littéraire
amoureux



Happy New Year 2024!

January is the month of wishes and good resolutions (easier to make than to keep!). It is also the time to look at what has been accomplished, or not accomplished, over the past year.

Rereading my message from January 2023, I realize that the three wishes I expressed there are more relevant than ever.

First of all, peace. The end of the war in Ukraine, first of all. The end of the fighting, the bombings, the destruction, the war crimes committed by the Russian army. The reward for the heroic resistance of the Ukrainian people, symbolized by its president, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, and the return of the country to its internationally recognized borders. But also peace everywhere else in the world, and as a priority reconciliation

between Israelis and Palestinians, after the horror of the terrorist acts of October 7 and the relentless repression that followed.

A new impetus for the Council of Europe was my second wish. The Reykjavik Summit in May 2023 was a success: it gave a new political momentum and a renewed strategic framework to our Organization. The support of our member States materialized during the adoption of the program and budget for 2024-2025, which for the first time in 17 years offers the Council of Europe a real increase in its resources, both financial and human. Enough to celebrate with dignity the 75th anniversary of our Organization, next May!

My third wish was a beneficial year for all of us. Like every year, 2023 had its share of joys and disappointments, hopes and disillusiones, reasons for hope and sources of worry. It will be the same in 2024. Everything will not be black or white, we will move - as usual - between light gray and dark gray. Can I just wish you love

and health, the only two things that really matter?

I would not like to end without paying tribute to our Secretary General, Marija Marija Pejčinović Burić whose mandate ends in September and who has decided not to seek a second one. She will leave an important mark in the history of the Council of Europe, due to the circumstances of her mandate but also the way in which she exercised it, like Catherine Lalumière thirty years before her. The Amicale is proud to have Her as Honorary President, and we wish her the best for the months, but also the years to come!

Denis Huber



225 SOLIDARITY BOXES !

From 27 November to 15 December 2023, the Amicale du Personnel of the Council of Europe collected 225 solidarity boxes!

A success for the second edition. The boxes were given to 3 associations which fight against precariousness (la Cloche Grand Est, les Petites Roues and Horizon Amitié).

On Wednesday 20 December, members of the different associations came to collect the solidarity boxes prepared with care by the Council of Europe's staff. The boxes were all distributed during each association's solidarity New Year's Eve.

Thanks to all those who rallied for this great solidarity operation!



THE ST NICHOLAS OF THE CHILDREN OF THE UKRAINIAN SCHOOL



On December 17, 2023, the European Association "Ukrainian School in Strasbourg" organized a traditional concert on Saint Nicholas at the Pavillon Joséphine in the Orangerie Park in Strasbourg. It is symbolic that Ukraine has been celebrating this year's favourite children's holiday and the Day of the Armed Forces of Ukraine on the same day, December 6.

Thanks to the joint efforts and support of Strasbourg City Hall, in particular Ms. Véronique Bertolle, deputy mayor of Strasbourg in charge of European and international relations, and Mr. Guillaume Libsig, deputy mayor of

Strasbourg in charge of public life, of the Council of Europe Association and the Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the Council of Europe, the association was able to introduce children and guests to Ukrainian traditions and the rich culture of this country.

Around sixty students from a Ukrainian school, who had been preparing for several months, were impatiently awaiting the concert and the visit of Saint Nicholas. The day's program was full of activities, including a concert given by the students, the distribution of gifts to all the children and a buffet. The event, which aimed to offer a celebration

for children in Ukrainian traditions, was free and brought together around 300 people.

Parents and the public would like to express their sincere gratitude to the teachers of the association, in particular Lilia Kobi, Olena Zagrebelna, Irina Duvarra, Mila Kobryn and Lyudmila Haselmann for their work and preparation of children. The school is very grateful to Ms. Fekete Olga, music teacher, for the musical accompaniment, as well as to all the parents and volunteers who helped organize the concert last Sunday.



The "Ukrainian School of Strasbourg" Association has been offering Ukrainian language, history, music, drawing and dance lessons to children since 2010. It organizes these extracurricular activities on Wednesdays, Saturdays and during school holidays.

We welcome all children who wish to join our school.

KNITTING AND CROCHETING CLUB



After a successful participation in Amicale's Christmas market with a charity sales stand from 27 November to 15 December 2023 which resulted in the collection of the significant sum of 2,988 euros for the Association Pirita Children (Asociatia Pirita Children | Facebook), Amicale's Knitting & Crocheting Club resumed its activities on 9 January 2024.

We still have a few places available for motivated new members who would be willing to share their experience and techniques with fellow knitters and who would like to knit products for charity sales.

If you are interested, please contact Sophie KURT (sophie.kurt@coe.int).



CHESS CLUB



AT THE START OF THE YEAR 2024, THE CHESS CLUB EXTENDS ITS BESTS WHISHES TO ALL COUNCIL STAFF MEMBERS.

THIS SECTION, WHICH INCLUDES 41 MEMBERS SPREAD ACCROSS DIFFERENTS BUILDINGS OF THE ORGANISATION, OFFERS ITS PARTICIPANTS DIFFERENTS ACTIVITIES.

FREE MATCHES

The Chess Club offers its members the opportunity to meet at the Bar des Parlementaires in order to play great games. But those who wish are free to agree on another location, to satisfy their passion for chess, the most important thing being being able to meet to compete



BEGINNERS/MEDIUM LESSONS

For its second year of existence, the Chess Club also offers lessons for beginner/intermediate level players.



At the rate of 9 lessons per term, these take place at the Palais, on Tuesdays, between noon and two.

Since Tuesday January 9, 2024, the courses, taught by a speaker from the Strasbourg Chess Circle, have resumed their cruising speed in order to cover the 1st trimester.

9 members are registered and regularly attend this teaching which is intended to be both exciting and enriching. Classes will also continue during the 2nd trimester (April – May – June) and 4th trimester (October – November – December). Those who would like to participate can register with the Chess Club by contacting **Thierry LAJOIE – contact:**

thierry.rosaria@outlook.fr or 06 17 42 09 63

INTRAMURAL TOURNAMENT

Since Monday September 18, 2023, 12 members of the Chess Club have participated in an intramural tournament, during which each player must

play 11 games. Of the 66 games in this tournament, there are now only 8 left to reach its conclusion. To close this beautiful journey, a celebration will be organized to which the 12 participants will be invited and rewarded.

This activity having been a great success, a second tournament (similar to the first in its operation) will take place at the end of March and beginning of April. The date for registrations will be communicated to Chess Club members, at the end of February – beginning of March.



SIMULTANEOUS

Building on this great experience that we had last year, that is to say on Tuesday April 4, 2023, the Chess Club plans to once again offer agents who wish (member or not of the Chess Club) to participate in a simultaneous against Mr. ROOS (International Master of the Strasbourg Chess Circle). This event, which should take place around the middle of the year (May or June), would take place like last year, between noon and two at the Parliamentarian Bar of the Palais de l'Europe.



INTER-CLUB MEETINGS

In the near future (towards the end of 2024) and in order to follow up on the two internal tournaments, an inter-club meeting project is being studied. The partnership that the Chess Club maintains with the Cercle d'Echecs de Strasbourg will greatly contribute to this. It could be a tournament including other administrative entities (Parliament / Strasbourg City Hall / ARTE / Eurocorps). A team made up of the best players in the Chess Club would then be formed to compete against the other Clubs.

ARTS CLUB

EXHIBITIONS

YEAR 2024 OPENS FOR THE ARTS CLUB WITH FOUR NEW EXHIBITIONS, CURRENTLY ON DISPLAY IN THE PALAIS AND AGORA UNTIL END OF JANUARY:



Inner Heart Flames
Katja Bednarik-Sudec (Slovenia) combines different techniques (photography, painting, transparent fabric, epoxy resina...) in her artwork exploring with sensuality the role and essence of women and motherhood.

Daydreams
Anne-Lise Mary (France) with her artistic embroideries accompanies you towards a visual and emotional experience by developing a universe imbued with energy through the use of graphic and lively forms directly inspired by contemporary art.



Interruptions
Duncan Butt-Jovonen (UK/Finland) explores in his paintings the distinction between humans and animals through surreal, humorous and disturbing scenes with a kitsch undertone, overlaid by monochrome lines complementing, masking and encoding these scenes and jolting the eye of the viewer.

Emotive journey - it's all in our hearts
Alisa Teletovic (Bosnia-Herzegovina) presents in her paintings the artist's thoughts and emotions, landscapes of a soul and an emotional journey through life.



Femmes - Vie - Liberté

Melyca Chaban, explores in her illustration-style paintings the themes of women, life and freedom.

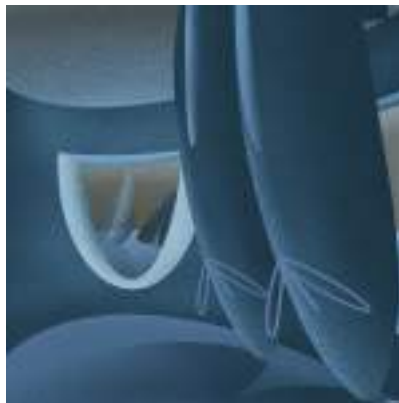


Emulsion Lift

Thomas Dusch (France) presents his photographic work which uses emulsion transfer onto Fine Art Paper to highlight the specific character of each subject.

Anima

The paintings of **Katarina Termacic** (France) revolve around the soul, the breath of life that connects us and makes us a part of everything and are also inspired by a novel of Wouajdi Mouwad; the artist's diptychs tell a story which changes when inverting the panels.



Topospoloso

Marco Vallario in his digital graphic works starts from the fake/authentic binomial and focuses on the extraction of a single frame from a memory, a dream, a precise point where the naked eye becomes aware of the time that has been and will never be again.

In the meantime, a new call for artists' applications has been launched and the Arts Club looks forward to the forthcoming selection. In the course of 2023, the Arts Club hosted a total of 33 exhibitions, i.e. 17 painting, calligraphy or illustration exhibitions, 9 photography exhibitions, 3 sculpture exhibitions, and 4 different crafts exhibitions (textile art,

embroidery, jewelry, glass design...). While around one third of the artists came from France, the rest of them were from a variety of European countries (Germany, Portugal, Lithuania, Bulgaria, North Macedonia, Belgium/Netherlands, Armenia, Croatia, Poland, Italy, Czech Republic, Serbia, Montenegro), and a few of them were from extra-European

countries (Japan, Colombia, Indonesia, Australia). In addition to these exhibitions, the Arts Club also organised the Staff exhibition in the Summer, which was accompanied by a charity sale to the profit of the Support Action Ukraine Association.

NEWS FROM ASCE

We would like to wish you all a happy and fit 2024!
Staying active is good for well-being and fights against stress!



The **Cardio Fitness** section of the ASCE is strong and active, come and work stress off and have a good time with our stability ball toning and stretching classes Wednesday and Thursday lunch time.

Didier

Guichard, a pluridisciplinary artist choreographer, offers **Zumba and Modern Jazz** classes at the Bastion, Council of Europe, on a Monday and Thursday lunchtime. There are still places available! The Zumba and Modern Jazz classes on a Monday are run on a pay-as-you go basis, although the Modern Jazz class does require a certain degree of continuity. Each class is €10, to be paid to Didier at the beginning of the class. It is also possible to sign up to the Thursday Zumba class on a term basis. If you are interested in participating in one of these classes or for more information, please **contact Brenda Parry**.

Classes are bilingual. For more information please see: <https://www.amicale-coe.eu/en/70-zumba-modern-jazz/> or contact Brenda Parry.

The **Scottish Country Dancing** group of the ASCE meets on Monday evenings in a dance room near the Orangerie. We had some very enthusiastic beginners this year who have made excellent progress. Scottish Country Dancing is a great way to keep fit and to meet new people! There are many Scottish Country Dancing events which take place nearby, and also throughout the world. Some of the more advanced dancers in our group regularly take part in events in Karlsruhe, Freiburg and even further afield. If anyone would like to join the group, we will be arranging some free trial lessons for beginners in September. For any further information, please contact Strasbourg Scottish Country Dancers at strasbourgscottishdancers@gmail.com.



ASCE

Vinyasa Yoga section:

vinyasa yoga classes continue on Mondays and Tuesdays during the lunch break, with an outside teacher (Anaïs). They are very varied and popular with participants.

ASCE **Hatha Yoga** section: Come along for a trial session of Hatha Yoga and practise some gentle postures. Well-being and relaxation guaranteed! Classes are given by a teacher from the French Federation and take place every Tuesday from 12.15pm to 1.30pm in room 1 of the Bastion.

The
ASCE **Pilates and
Energym and Stretching**

section offers five classes a week at the Palais de l'Europe. New members joined the classes in September 2023. The classes are taught by Christine Firtion, a state-qualified teacher and holder of the Leaderfit' Pilates international certification. DG Dance section of the ASCE



ASCE

The **Football Section** of the

ASCE includes a female and a male team, that currently have 26 and 45 members, respectively, but there is always room for more! If you are interested in kicking the ball around on the pitch once or twice per week, having the occasional bit of food and drink in the "third half" after the physical exertion and participating in various social activities, don't hesitate to get in touch, so you can join our trainings to see what it is like! The year 2024 promises to be a lively and exciting one as the CoE inter-departmental football tournament taking place and various other activities, even abroad, are in the pipeline. Want to know more? You find our contact details on the ASCE/ Amicale website.



Table Tennis of the ASCE Fun and healthy section which is entirely **free of charge**!! A table will soon be available at the Agora building!!!

The **Volleyball section** of the ASCE is always looking for new members, for more information contact:
Nicolas.Ramade@echr.coe.int

The **Self Defence section** of the ASCE would like to wish a Happy New Year to all and may the gods of sport be very kind with you this new year.

“The Self-Defence section has started again after almost one month of winter break, with new energy and lots of good resolutions. Based on both traditional ju-jitsu (Goshin Jutsu, i.e. Self Defence par la Technique) and on modern Brazilian ju-jitsu (no-gi BJJ), it aims at increasing your stamina, force and flexibility, but above anything else your skills and capacity to responding in an efficient and decisive manner to an aggression.

This year the membership is predominantly (72%) feminine and the trainings are very focused on the most effective techniques which can disable a bigger, stronger opponent without requiring overwhelming force. The planning is flexible and the structure of techniques (strikes, throws, sweeps, chokes, locks...) depends on the level and desire of participants.

Three (non-remunerated) external and one internal instructor will expose you to a large array of techniques to help your endeavour to become more effective and self-assured in face of unforeseen circumstances.

So see you on the mat to try it out. Oss!



CHAMPION OF THE WORLD

CELEBRATING A COLLEAGUE



Words of Grégory Lefebvre :

"On site at the beginning of December the temperatures were around 32 degrees with high humidity, the water was 29 degrees and the competitions were held without neoprene wetsuits.

During this grand final I placed myself at the forefront to win the title of world champion in my category in the 5 km in 1 hour 14 minutes, being 13th overall.

The next day on the two kilometers the tactics will be the same and I won the title of world open water swimming champion in my category in 27 minutes and an 11th place overall.



Allow me to introduce you to our colleague Grégory Lefebvre, a member of the Amicale and of the Staff Committee, but above all a double world champion in open water swimming at the Phuket - Thailand championships which took place in December 2023.

Selected for the grand final of the world open water swimming championships in Thailand, Grégory LEFEBVRE did double duty by becoming world champion over 5 km in 1 h 14 min and over 2 km in 27 min the following day.

The previous year he finished bronze medallist at the European aquathlon championships in Bilbao.

NEW YEAR, NEW QUEER COMMUNITY

2024 ACTIVITIES FOR THE EQUALITY IN DIVERSITY GROUP!

With the new year, new activities await. The LGBTQIA+ section of the Amicale will continue to organise bimonthly afterwork drinks to network and connect among friends and colleagues. Moreover, we plan to continue having “cercles de parole” to discuss, reflect on, and celebrate questions around gender and orientation.

Other activities include participating to LGBTQIA+ friendly events in Strasbourg,

take various kinds of classes (from queer-informed self-defense to voguing), watching films and discussing, and much more!

The section is intended to be a safe space for connection and support and is open to all queer and questioning members of the Amicale. Allies (cisgender, heterosexual colleagues) are welcome to join our mailing list and join open events too!

To be added to the mailing list please write to lgbt.staff@coe.int. We are looking forward to meeting you!



FILM FESTIVAL

The European Parliament hosts a film festival.

The LUX Audience Award is an annual event that celebrates European cinema, presenting films that explore diversity, cultural perspectives and societal issues.

This year the European Parliament organized screenings with representatives of the Lux audience award 2024 films on the following days:

Tuesday January 16, 2024, Cinema Cosmos in Strasbourg, 7:30 p.m.,

followed by a Q&A session with co-writer Johannes Duncker and director Ilker Çatak

Tuesday February 6, 2024, LOW H-1.4 of the European Parliament, 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday February 7, 2024, Cinéma Star (St Exupéry - 18, rue du 22 Novembre), 8:00 p.m.

For more information, please visit www.luxaward.eu and follow the news on Instagram Facebook, X,



FREE THE WRITER WITHIN!

WRITING ONLINE WORKSHOPS

The write-a-story Committee has planned a slate of workshops to help you develop your writing. And this year they have something special to offer!

All their workshops will be offered online, making it more convenient than ever to attend and participate. You can have individual workshops ("Fairy Tales and Writing in English") led by Bohumila Ottova. This workshop unifies the source of inspiration writing a fairy tale can lead to, while teaching you how to write a story, send it to a competition and get published.

The cost of this workshop is 7,50€. You can register on our workshop registration page.

You can also attend an entire series of 10 workshops or choose to attend some session of it. This ten-part series is entitled, "Steering the Craft" and is based on Ursula K. Le Guin's seminal book on writing, *Steering the Craft: A Twenty-First Century Guide to Sailing the Sea of Story*.

Steering the Craft is designed for writers looking to enhance their storytelling skills. Drawing from her own vast experience as a writer, Le Guin provides valuable insights and practical advice on various aspects of the craft. Through a series of well-structured chapters, each deliberately designed for use in a workshop setting, *Steering the Craft* encourages writers to explore and refine their writing abilities.

If you wish to have a look at the workshops please click here :

[Workshops 2024 – Strasbourg Write A Story Competition \(sxb-write-a-story.org\)](http://sxb-write-a-story.org)



Ces pages d'amour

Festival littéraire
amoureux

Du 9 au 19

fevrier

2024



<http://cespagesdamour-book1.e-monsite.com>

© Maria Ballassova

PROGRAM 2024 CES PAGES D'AMOUR

The 10th edition of the "Ces pages d'amour" festival will be held from 9 to 19 February 2024, with literary encounters, concerts, poetry and music sharing, writing games, a book club... Enjoy!

Wednesday 31 January AVANT-PREMIERE

19 00 - 20 30 : Meet **Mabrouk RACHEDI** to discuss his novel « Tous les mots qu'on ne s'est pas dits » (selected for the edition 2024-2025 du Prix européen du roman d'amour)

Alliance française, 12 rue des Pontonniers

Friday 9 February PRELIMINAIRES

12 30 - 13 30 : **Readings in love in European languages**

Come and enjoy (and share) a selection of readings (extracts from novels, poems, songs) in different European languages!

Inscription by mail to amicale@coe.int

Palais de l'Europe – Bar des Parlementaires

19 00 - 20 30 : **Pierre Large tastings: les pépites du Rioja**

Benjamin KIFFEL heads south and invites you to discover new nuggets from Rioja, Spain's wine land of excellence.

Booking : Les Dégustations de La Pierre Large : les pépites du Rioja II | Facebook

Galerie La Pierre Large, 25 rue des Veaux

19 00 - 20 30 : **Concert rock - TRIBOC**

Take to the skies in this three-seater and revisit rock'n'roll hotspots, from Paris to Seattle, via London and New York.

Rock Shop Café

26 rue de l'Industrie - Illkirch

Saturday 10 February L'AMOUR RAUQUE

17 00 - 18 00 : Meet avec **Fabrice MIDAL** to discuss de his essai « **La théorie du bourgeois** »
Librairie Kléber (salle Blanche)

19 47 - 21 30 : **Concert rock - TRIBOC**

Take to the skies in this three-seater and revisit rock'n'roll hotspots, from Paris to Seattle, via London and New York.

The People Strasbourg 12 rue Sainte Madeleine

Sunday 11 February DELIRES ET DELICES

11 00 – 13 00 : **Brunch amoureux**

Presentation of original short stories written by four hands (CADAVESKY group).
Musical entertainment.

inscription by mail to association.book1@gmail.com

Aeden Place 4 rue des Aveugles

14 30 - 17 00 : **Lisons, partageons l'amour**

A special session of **TMS Strasbourg's** not-to-be-missed book club, devoted to the literature of love.
inscription recommanded on **TMS'** site

Bar « Le Perestroïka » - 2 rue Thiergarten

Monday 12 February
AMOURS ETOILEES

18 30 - 19 30 : French lovers

Love song in French, with **HUBER Bros** and theirs
« guest stars »

Alliance française, 12 rue des Pontonniers

19 00 - 21 00 : « Etoile mon amour »

Poetical and musical readings, with Cécile BIEHLER,
Juliette MOUQUET, Nourit MASSON-SEKINE, Michel
FUCHS, Valère KALETKA and Eva HERBERT.

**The People Strasbourg 12 rue Sainte
Madeleine**

Tuesday 13 February
PRELIMINAIRES

17 00 - 18 00 : Mots d'amour

Readings of original love poems created by students
from the Faculty of Languages.

**Bibliothèque des Langues de l'Unistra - Patio 22
rue René Descartes**

Wednesday 14 February
SAINT-VALENTIN

12 00 : Prix européen du roman d'amour

3e édition (2024-2025) – Official Communication of
the selected novels

Palais de l'Europe

**17 00 - 18h00 : Meet Aurélien BENOILID about his
novel « Ce qui fait briller les étoiles »**

Librairie Kléber (salle Blanche)

**19h00 - 20h30 : Concert readings based on Assia
DJEBAR her novel « Les nuits de Strasbourg »**

Alliance française 12 rue des Pontonniers

19 00 - 20 : Show « Mono-Love »

A revival of "One-woman show" of **Houaria
KAIDARI .**

Espace Diapason

14 rue Jean Holweig - Vendenheim

Thursday 15 February
AMOURS SOLITAIRES

19h00 - 20h : Spectacle « Mono-Love »

Reprise du « one woman show » de **Houaria
KAIDARI.**

Espace Diapason

14 rue Jean Holweig – Vendenheim

Saturday 17 February
AMOURS MULTIFACETTES

**17 00 - 18 00 : Meeting+ exhibition of Speedy
GRAPHITO**

A pioneering artist, recognised as one of the pioneers
of the Street Art movement in France.

Librairie Kléber (salle Blanche)

**17 00 - 1830 : « Deux voix, deux pays, une histoire
d'amour »**

Musical readings of extracts from "Retour de la
préfecture" (**Jessica Biermann Grunstein**, L'Arche
éditeur) with **Hélène LACOSTE** (voice) and **Edj
LAWSON** (saxophone)

Booking recommended"

amoureuxauban.Stras@gmail.com

You can continue the evening with a meal on site:
book online <https://les-culottes.fr> or by phone **03
88 68 13 05**

Restaurant « **Les culottées** » **15 quai des pêcheurs**

**20 30 - 22 00 : Spectacle Show impro special Saint-
Valentin**

booking required resa-marceau@holtzheim.fr

Espace Marceau place de la Fontaine - Holtzheim

Sunday 18 February
VERS ET AGAPES

11 00 - 13 00 : Poetical Aperitif

Meeting of the **A.P.R.O.** (Assemblée de Performance et de Résistance Onirique) of poets, on the theme "By heart".

Kiosque du Parc des Contades

Monday 19 February
PROLONGATIONS

17 00 - 18 00 : Meet **Guiseppe MANUNTA** about his graphic novel « **Une table pour deux** »

Librairie Kléber (salle Blanche)

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