



The Forum of Amateur Arts has recently bought a very interesting book about the artistic activities of the French:

"Les amateurs. Enquête sur les activités artistiques des Français. Olivier Donnat, Ministère de la culture, DAG, département des études et de la prospective, Paris, 1996 » (ISBN 2-909717-23-2)

We translated a few tables and graphs to give you an idea of the artistic activities of the French: How many of the French play a musical instrument? How many of them belong to a theatre group? Is there a connection between the artistic activities and the social backgrounds? Do parents have an influence on the choice of the activities of their children?

The results of a national inquiry, made by the Department of Studies and Prospectives of the Ministry of Culture, give you an answer to all these questions. Artistic activities have known an important development since 1970 amongst the children and the young people: at this moment almost half of the French have practised music, theatre, writing,... during their lifetime.

A few results with some brief conclusions...

THE ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES OF THE FRENCH

The artistic amateur activities

Have practiced as part of their leisure the following artistic activities during...	On 100 French of 15 and older	
	their lifetime	the last 12 months
Playing the guitar	8	2
Playing the piano	11	3
Playing the recorder	6	1
Playing another musical instrument	10	3
Singing in a group, a choir, a brass band	13	3
Practising amateur theatre	8	1
Dancing	11	2
Writing a diary	10	3
Writing poems, a novel, ...	8	4
Painting	9	4
Sculpting	2	1
Drawing	13	7
Have practised one of those artistic activities	47	22

Age of the discovery of the artistic activities (*)

Percentage having practised during their lifetime the following activities	Discovered the activities in the years			
	1980/1990	1970	1960	Before 1960
Guitar	34	43	18	5
Piano	19	16	13	52
Flute	48	32	17	3
Other instrument	33	18	12	37
Singing	27	18	14	41
Theatre	39	22	10	29
Dancing	56	15	10	18
Diary	39	35	11	14
Poems, novels	41	28	13	18
Drawing	31	30	14	25
Painting	49	14	13	24

(*) Sculpture is not included in this table because of the very low number of amateur artists in this field

JUVENILE ACTIVITIES THAT MAINLY CONCERN THE YOUNGER GENERATIONS

Generations and artistic activities

On 100 persons of every age-block		Have practised at least one artistic activity		
		During their lifetime	But nothing during the last 12 months	During the last 12 months
15-19 years	Born between 1975-79	62	18	44
20-24	Born between 1970-74	61	28	33
25-34	Born between 1960-69	53	33	20
35-44	Born between 1950-59	41	24	17
45-54	Born between 1940-49	45	26	19
55-64	Born between 1930-39	39	21	18
65 and more	Born before 1930	41	23	18
All the French of 15 and more		47	25	22

Conclusion: *The artistic amateur activities concern in the first place young people: 44% of the 15-19 years old have practised at least one activity during the running year; against 1/3 of the 20-24 years old; and about 20% of the elderly people.*

Accumulation of activities and age

On 100 persons of every age-block	Have practised at least two artistic activities	
	During their lifetime	At this moment
15-19 years	68(*)	51
20-24	68	41
25-34	62	36
35-44	57	35
45-54	63	38
55-64	52	34
65 and more	50	33
All the amateur artists of 15 and more	47	22

(*) read also: on 100 French of 15-19 years old having practised during their lifetime at least one artistic activity, 68% has practised at least two activities.

Conclusion: the combination of activities is the highest amongst de group of 15-19 years: only 1/3 of this amateur group, whether they are active or not, has only practised one speciality. Within de group of 65 and more this is 50%. The reason why is that nowadays children benefit of the large diversification of the supply of cultural services, and they discover with success several activities at an early age. The French, born before the war, maintain generally an exclusive place with the only activity they practice.

Generation and artistic schooling

On 100 persons of every age-block	During childhood or adolescence			
	Have learned to play an instrument at school	Have attended a music school or conservatory	Have attended a dancing school	Have received private lessons
15-24 years	54	15	19	12
25-34	57	15	14	8
35-54	19	8	6	6
55 and more	10	8	4	13

Conclusion: the proportion of the French attending a music school or a conservatory is two times higher among the -35 years old and five times higher when you compare the numbers of the young generation (15-24) and the people of 55 and more that attended a dancing school.

THE ACCESS CONDITIONS TO THE ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES

Comparisons between the amateurs and the visitors of concerts, art galleries and professional theatre

	Percentage having during the last 12 months...	
	Made amateur music	Visited a professional concert
Proportion of graduates of higher education	31	46
Proportion of inhabitants of the region of Paris	17	30
	Made amateur painting	Visited an art gallery
Proportion of graduates of higher education	32	40
Proportion of inhabitants of the region of Paris	20	26
	Practised amateur theatre	Assisted an professional playing
Proportion of graduates of higher education	37	46
Proportion of inhabitants of the region of Paris	21	38

Conclusion: higher educated people and inhabitants of the region of Paris are less numerous amongst amateurs. The largest group frequents professional events and art galleries.

Artistic activities of men and women

	On 100 French of 15 and older of every group	
	Have practised at least one artistic amateur activity during...	
	His/her lifetime	The last 12 months
Men	42	19
Women	52	24

Conclusion: women are far more numerous than men in investing in artistic activities.

Artistic activities and social environment

	On 100 French of 15 and older of every group	
	Have practised at least one artistic amateur activity during...	
	His/her lifetime	The last 12 months
Farmer	41	21
Craftsman/trader	46	21
Executives and higher intellectual professions	63	29
Intermediate profession	49	23
Employee	44	20
Labourer	39	17
Non-active	49	24

Conclusion: The engagement of the artistic activities is the strongest amongst the executives and the higher intellectual professions.

Artistic activities and category of commune

On 100 French of 15 and older of every group

	<i>Have practised at least one artistic amateur activity during...</i>	
	His/her lifetime	The last 12 months
Rural municipality	43	20
Municipality of 10.000 to 20.000 inhabitants	43	21
Municipality of 20.000 to 100.000 inhabitants	47	20
Municipality with more than 100.000 inhabitants	50	22
Suburbs of Paris	53	23
Centre of Paris	62	28

Conclusion: There is a very small difference between the rural municipality and the suburbs of Paris (20% to 23%) In de centre of Paris the number is higher: this is due to the profile of the people: more highly educated.

The importance of celibacy at adult age

	<i>Have practised at least one artistic amateur activity during...</i>	
	His/her lifetime	The last 12 months
Married	46	16
Cohabitants	56	20
Divorced	52	25
Singles	59	33

Conclusion: the level of engagement amongst the singles is superior to the one of individuals living as a couple, married or divorced.

Influence of the parents (music)

	<i>% of children having practised an artistic activity in de following fields, of which the parents(*) ...</i>	
	Are musicians	Are not musicians
Music	42	17
Theatre	7	4
Dance	17	13
Writing	5	4
Plastic arts	10	7

(*) 42% of the children of which the parents are amateur musicians make music, against 17% of the children of which the parents are not amateur musicians.

Influence of the parents (theatre)

	<i>% of children having practised an artistic activity in de following fields, of which the parents ...</i>	
	Practise theatre	Do not practise theatre
Music	41	24
Theatre	18	3
Dance	18	13
Writing	3	2
Plastic arts	11	8

Influence of the parents (dance)

	% of children having practised an artistic activity in de following fields, of which the parents ...	
	Are dancers	Are not dancers
Music	39	24
Theatre	8	4
Dance	30	12
Writing	2	2
Plastic arts	15	7

Conclusion: whatever the field of activity is, the fact that the parents are amateur artists increases in a very significant way the chances of the children to become an amateur artist as well.

THE ACTIVITY OF THE AMATEUR ARTISTS

The age of starting an artistic activity

	On 100 active amateur artists of every field		
	<i>Have started...</i>		
	From the age of 25	Between 15 and 24	Before the age of 15
Music	19	19	62
Theatre	42	40	18
Dance	28	31	41
Writing	22	35	43
Plastic arts	23	30	47

Conclusion: A large majority of the amateur artists have started during childhood or when adolescent: almost half of them (47%) started before the age of 15, 3 out of 10 between 15 and 24 and a bit less than a quarter from the age of 25. Amongst the active amateurs the musicians have started sooner than the amateurs of the other fields; the actors are the largest group that starts from the age of 25.

The intensity

	On 100 amateur artists of every field	
	Practice at least once a week	Practice every day
Music	52	15
Theatre	34	5
Dance	54	3
Writing	48	18
Plastic Arts	27	5

Conclusions: The intensity of practice depends on the nature of the activities (writing <> painting). Almost half of the amateur artists indulge their activity at least once a week. Practising every day however is exceptional, except for writing and music.