

Streaming deal and DJ dollars

A round up of the arts and culture stories creating a buzz in France

1. Streaming payback

Video streaming platforms, such as Netflix, Amazon Prime or Disney+, will have to pay 20 to 25% of their turnover made in France to the financing of the French cinema and audiovisual industry, A decree, the subject of negotiations for months, and known as Smad (*services de médias audiovisuels à la demande* or

to facilitate family estate planning. The buyers of the artists' back catalogues can then monetise the songs through streaming, public performance rights and licensing for film and TV.

French DJ and producer David Guetta has become one of the youngest artists to cash in on soaring value of music rights, persuading Warner Music to stump up more than \$100m for his catalogue of music and, unusually, a share of future earnings.

4. Gainsbourg at Deauville

CHARLOTTE Gainsbourg will chair the 47th edition of the American Film Festival of Deauville (Calvados) which will be held from September 3 to 12, organisers have announced.

The New York-based actress, singer and director will take over the role from Vanessa Paradis, who was president of the 46th festival.

The list of films to be showcased at the festival has yet to be revealed.

Gainsbourg is working on a new album and hopes to open her late father's Paris home to the public as soon as 'the end of the year, if possible'.



"audiovisual media services on demand") came into force on July 1.

In return, the platforms can now distribute films in France 12 months after their release – currently they must wait three years.

According to the Ministry of Culture, "a significant part of the contribution (three quarters in cinema, two thirds in audiovisual) will be directed towards independent production", with "diversity clauses" to benefit projects with small budgets or more niche genres.

2. Legendary publishers bought

Publishing group Madrigall, the parent company of Gallimard, has announced that it was buying the prestigious independent publisher Editions de Minuit.

"Irene Lindon, president of Editions de Minuit, and Antoine Gallimard, president of Madrigall, have concluded an agreement sealing the affiliation of Editions de Minuit to Madrigall on 1 January 2022," the two companies announced in a joint statement.

Minuit's first publication was *Le Silence de la mer* by Resistance fighter Vercors.

It has also famously published works by Marguerite Duras, Claude Simon, and Nobel Prize winner Samuel Beckett.

Today, its flagship authors are Laurent Mauvignier, Tanguy Viel, Jean Echenoz, Eric Chevillard and Jean-Philippe Toussaint. A star of French literature, Marie NDiaye, discovered by Minuit, has been with Madrigall since 2005.

3. DJ Guetta hits the jackpot

Some successful musicians are selling their back catalogue for many reasons: to make up for the dearth of touring revenue due to Covid halting live concerts; or



5. De La Fontaine fables newly interpreted

July marked the 400th anniversary of the birth of French poet and fabulist Jean de La Fontaine. To celebrate, the Château de Vascoeuil (pictured) in the Eure, has invited a collective of 17 artists from countries around the world to exhibit works inspired by his famous Fables.

The chateau will exhibit works produced by the Libellule collective and Contemporary Renaissance until October 24. More of the works will be on display in Château-Thierry in the Aisne – La Fontaine's birthplace.



Next generation of hikers turns to micro-adventures en plein air

Walking holidays are hugely popular in France but so too are *randonnée* escapes for city dwellers seeking a little countryside tranquillity, says **Jane Hanks**

#trending

With thousands of pathways across the whole of the country, walking and hiking has always been a popular pastime in France. Since Covid-19 and confinement a new generation of younger hikers is taking to the country lanes, escaping the enclosed spaces of the city.

The Fédération Française de la Randonnée Pédestre, FFRandonnée, estimates there are around 18 million regular walkers in France. There is a huge choice of places to walk with footpaths criss-crossing the country, both at commune and national level, in the mountains, along the rivers, by the coast, in the plains and valleys.

There are circuits ranging from those for the occasional walker who fancies a short stroll to the most demanding for sports lovers who want a challenge.

FFRandonnée looks after 206,000 kms of paths, many of them labelled Grand Randonnée with the familiar white and red striped sign postings or the Grande Randonnées de Pays with yellow and red marks along the way.

A 2016 survey by Atout France, the official agency which promotes France as a tourist destination, found that walking was the most popular activity for the French on holiday. 21 million holidays were based around walking, up 25% in comparison to 2007.

Now, walking is becoming a popular pastime for city dwellers wanting a change of scene on their days off.

31-year-old Clément Lhommeau moved to Paris from the Vendée for work ten years ago and missed walking in the countryside. Like many in big towns he does not have a car so he set out to discover walking opportunities he could reach by train or metro:

"I found it was possible to access different kinds of landscape within 15 or 30 minutes by train from central Paris. There are forests, fields, national parks, rivers and the chalky cliffs of the Seine all close-by. I launched my finds on the website *helloways.com* in 2018, and it has developed amazingly quickly.

"It is now my full-time job and we are a team of three. We propose walks around eight cities in France and two in Belgium. Publishers Gallimard approached us to write a book and we have recently published one outlining 40 different walks within easy reach of the capital using public transport."

The biggest leap in numbers was in May last year when the first confinement ended and people could go within 100kms of their home: "Over 2 million



Helloways walkers strolling around Rambouillet forest and, top, Fontainebleau

people have looked up our walks since we began. People can join our club for €39.90 a month which gives access to the whole catalogue of our walks. Covid-19 introduced people to the benefits of local tourism with extraordinary experiences not far from your front door. You do not have to travel to the other side of the world to have an adventure."

This is the philosophy behind microadventures, a term coined around ten years ago by British adventurer and author, Alastair Humphreys. He describes it "as an adventure that is short, simple, local, cheap – yet still fun, exciting, challenging, refreshing and rewarding."

Clément Lhommeau says this trend is catching on in France and he includes "Micro-Aventures" on his site: for example, from Lyon there are five suggestions for hikes which take from two to seven days with and some taking you right up into the mountains.

"We are refreshing the way in which people see walking and giving it a new, trendier image related to slow-tourism, adventure and sustainable living. It is attracting younger people who see quiet walking at the weekend in fantastic surrounding as an antidote to weeks at work in front of screens where everything moves so fast.

"Each town we are linked up with so far has its own Facebook page, Rando&Co where you can join organised walks. That too is really popular because it is a way for people who are often isolated in towns to meet new friends."

“Walking is becoming a popular pastime for city dwellers wanting a change of scene

Image: Pixabay

Image: David Guetta/Facebook

Images: Yu Sugawara/Chateau de Vascoeuil/Facebook Hyacinthe Rigaud, Musée Camille

Photo: Helloways, Adrien Plaud, Inset: Helloways, Léna Perdrige