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МУЗИКА И ЗНАЧЕЊЕ

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## **The concept of creating musical amateurs in music culture teaching**

### **Summary**

With its content and activities, the subject of music culture in elementary education has a comprehensive effect on the development of an individual's cognitive, emotional, creative, and primarily aesthetic aspects. An essential prerequisite for the amateur practice of music is the development of aesthetic taste, opinion, ideals, and musical intelligence, which allows the individuals to understand and evaluate the quality of the music they are listening to or should perform. The paper aims to present an approach to music culture teaching through which future music amateurs are formed. Understanding the aspects of organizing the teaching process of listening to music, teachers gain insight into how they can enable students to love artistic music and the music of their own nation and other nations and understand it. In this way, new generations are created who enjoy participating actively or passively in the artistic life of their surroundings, which motivates and encourages the social community to organize, enjoy and participate in musical life.

**Keywords:** amateur, music culture, methods, teaching

### **Introduction**

Playing music without a well-spent time will not encourage students to practice music (Regelski, 2007). Regelski's thought encouraged us to focus on clarifying what skills should be developed in the musical culture class so that the student could successfully engage in music outside of school and the school curriculum. In today's educational system, attention is focused on values that imply the demand for concrete results of the teaching process, that is, measurable outcomes and teaching materials of particular importance. Instead of relying solely on entrenched verbal discourse, teachers are tasked with finding ways to enable students to experience music. Hence the view that music education should focus on the education of amateurs and it should be the introduction of alternative ways to enable students to engage more in music (McCarthy, 2009). This raises the question of which directions and approaches in teaching enable the full development of an individual's potential for amateur music practice. However, before proceeding with the analysis and further improvement and design of a purposeful teaching process, it is necessary to clarify the meaning of the amateur and his activity. Direction of the teaching process will also depend on the perception of amateurs, their activities, how and in what way they perform them, what skills they possess and in which qualitative domain. The paper will therefore

be dedicated to clarifying the figure of the amateur in general conditions and musical context, based on which the direction of the teaching process will be shown in more detail, which will provide the student with a basis for amateur music practice.

### General concept of amateurs

It is common knowledge that the term amateur is used in many domains and activities, and the field of music is certainly no exception. Defining the characteristics of amateurs and their opposites, professionals, should begin with an analysis of their non-musical meaning. The word amateur is derived from the Latin word *amo* meaning love (*Srpsko-latinski i latinsko-srpski rečnik*, 2010: 567). As a link between the verbs to love, and the term amateur, there is an *amator*, that is, an admirer, one who loves (*Srpsko-latinski i latinsko-srpski rečnik*, 2010: 566), expressing a particular affection or liking for something. An amateur is, therefore, “one who pursues something, e.g. science, art, or skill, out of love, not professionally” (Vujaklija, 1996: 37). In various publications amateurism is defined not only from the point of view of preference (expressing affection or liking for something), but also from the point of view of activity, i.e., doing something as a hobby (Cambridge University Press, 2010; Merriam-Websters, 2014), and the presence of this type of activity defines it from the aspect of mere spiritual pleasure and leisure (HarperCollins, 2012), and not exclusively as a form of work. Thus, the love or liking a person expresses towards a specific activity represents a type of motivation as a critical starting point for engaging in an activity (Drummond, 1990). The basis from which one starts when defining an amateur can be opposite, with negative connotations, namely that an amateur is a person who does something badly, i.e., is not skilled in work or any other activity he is engaged in (Harper Collins, 2012; Merriam-Webster, 2014). The opposite of an amateur is a professional “who performs certain work as the permanent, basic occupation, i.e., the professional does something professionally as trade, vocation” (Vujaklija, 1996: 735). The etymological origin is found in the Latin language. It comes from the term *profiteor*, *profiteri*, which means to announce or publicly admit, to promise voluntarily (*Srpsko-latinski i latinsko-srpski rečnik*, 2010: 847). It is considered that the term professional grew out of the idea “that following a profession means following a calling” (Drummond, 1990: 3).

Author John Drummond (Drummond, 1990) presented the distinction between amateurism and professionalism through four categories, that is, four characteristics<sup>1</sup>: *literal meaning*, *attitude*, *standards* and *rewards*. The first category – the literal meaning describes amateurs based on the term’s origin – an amateur is

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<sup>1</sup> The author initially lists five categories in the paper. Given that the last category refers to sports and thus is not applicable in other areas, it will not be discussed in the paper.

motivated by love or liking for an activity, while a professional follows his vocation. The second category describes amateurs and professionals in terms of their attitude towards their activities. An amateur is defined through partial dedication and occasional dedication. At the same time, professionals are wholly dedicated and committed to their work and are obliged to maintain a constant quality of his performance. This category does not refer to a moment of performance of any kind but to the dedicated time and the quality that precedes it. The third category deals with standards. It explains the differences from the point of view of the skills that the two groups of people have here. On one hand, amateurs are characterized by incompetence, that is, relatively low qualifications and lack of experience. On the other hand, a professional is competent, relatively highly qualified and experienced. However, claiming that an amateur possesses no skills would be wrong. The degree and quality of the acquired skills depend on the individual. Within the framework of amateurism, additional categories could be created that would explain the different degrees of skills. However, professionals are expected to have the highest degree of skill and experience. The fourth category talks about rewards – final outcomes after certain activities are completed. The activities that amateurs are engaged in, have the function of leisure, and different types of recreation lead to their reward, personal satisfaction. In contrast, professionals engage in their work to support themselves, which means that the result is earnings.

Stebbins (Stebbins, 1992), through a fifteen-year research of amateurs and professionals, i.e. a total of eight studies, came to an interpersonal i.e. social and psychological definition of an amateur, which is presented through five different criteria: self-confidence, persistence, commitment, preparedness and self-perception.

Greater confidence is generally attributed to professionals compared to amateurs, where the level of confidence is significantly lower. This state of affairs is explained by the fact that amateurs, due to significantly less experience, often doubt their abilities, express them with a degree of shyness or fear, and can quickly lose control, which causes fear or tension to affect the quality of performance. However, it is important to emphasize that lack of self-confidence is characteristic of activities that include stage performance and is not present in other activities. If we exclude amateurism in the stage domain (musical-dramatic), regardless of the level of experience amateurs have, the presence of stage fright and fear of public performance is not so characteristic for the professionals. However, the characteristic by which professionals and amateurs differ is not the degree of experiencing or manifesting tension, but the ability to control internal feelings and experiences, thus preventing potential endangerment of the performance. This “superior control”, as Stebbins (1992) calls it, which is much more available to professionals, is achieved thanks to rich experience.

Another parameter for defining an amateur is persistence, that is, perseverance. A research conducted by Stebbins (Stebbins, 1992) showed that amateurs

and professionals find a reason to persevere. However, the results indicated that persistence differs from group to group, although it manifests almost equally among amateurs and professionals. The difference lies in the fact that amateurs are in a position to choose, i.e., they are not forced to accept specific projects that they do not like, while professionals are often forced for economic reasons to accept certain jobs that are not in line with personal aspirations and pursuance. This type of persistence is mainly present in the sphere of art.

Amateurs are very attached to the activities they engage in, that is, they appreciate their value highly, while professionals, in addition to attachment, strongly cherish continuous work (Stebbins, 1970). Amateurs need significantly more time to find an activity to which they will dedicate their free time. At the very beginning, in the phase of discovery, it is characteristic that they research and evaluate certain activities to arrive at the answers about the advantages, benefits and profits that can be provided to them. If they find the right balance between rewards and costs, the level of their commitment to a particular activity will begin to approach the level and values the professionals possess. Therefore, it can be concluded that novice amateurs are significantly less committed to continuous work than experienced amateurs and professionals (Stebbins, 1992).

When talking about an individual's readiness, it does not refer exclusively to the training or preparation of the individual to perform the activity in the best possible light. It implies discipline and all the necessary steps that the individuals continuously take until the moment when they need to perform and show their skills and knowledge. Compared with professionals who subordinate all other life obligations to their profession, the amateurs usually do the opposite, putting first the obligations and activities related to school, family, and social life, devoting the remaining time to the activities to which they devote themselves as amateurs. This often leads to a situation where there is very little time left for preparation after all the responsibilities are completed. One of the additional factors that can negatively affect preparedness is fatigue. The reason is that most activities of this kind (e.g. choir rehearsals) are organized in the late afternoon or, more often, in the evening. During the day, one loses energy and strength by performing certain duties, so naturally, in the evening, one is least able to fully devote oneself to recreational activities, despite the fact that they love what they choose to do in their free time. It is essential to highlight finances as a preliminary condition for preparedness, but high costs and savings on necessary equipment affect reduced preparedness.

During a fifteen-year study carried out by Stebbins (1992), the following conclusions followed: amateurs were rarely considered inferior to professionals. It should be emphasized that the amateurs respect the professionals, especially those distinguished and highly appreciated ones in their fields. However, amateurs believe that professionals have a larger fund of different materials they can rely on at any time and have more experience and skills in working with a more demand-

ing audience. Through interviewing amateurs, Stebbins also obtained data where amateurs in the initial stages of their careers were faced with the dilemma of how much time, education and training are necessary to reach a higher level of competence, which will release them from the status of amateurs. Despite the established opinion that amateurs are characterized by the motive of love for a particular activity, while for professionals, the main driving force was money and the desire for progress (Garber, 2001), as one type of proof of climbing the amateur's competence ladder is receiving monetary compensation. The moment when individuals begin to actively earn money from work that they do in their spare time, it can be said that they are no longer dilettantes (Finnegan, 1989).

Taking into consideration the definitions and criteria, it can be said that amateurs can be classified neither in the group of dilettantes, who devote themselves to activities with very little attention nor in professionals, who invest most of their time and energy in the activity they are engaged in. Amateurs are thus on the border between professionalism and modern i.e., serious leisure<sup>2</sup>. They are never accepted by professionals, nor can they get such a status. In this context, frustration often arises because they are unable to reach or meet high-performance standards due to a lack of time, experience, education, skills training and equipment.

Amateurs are often equated with the so-called hobbyists (Stebbins, 1992, 1996, 1998, 2007, 2013). But the difference lies precisely in the categories of different activities that these two groups of people engage in. It is characteristic for amateurs to move in circles of art, sports, entertainment and science (Stebbins, 2007), while hobbyists are more concerned with collecting, participating in activities such as hunting, bird watching, as well as playing games and playing sports. All these activities do not have their professional counterpart, that is, there are no people who professionally engage in such activities (Stebbins, 2013).

The benefits that serious leisure provides to amateurs, i.e., the (predominantly) personal and social rewards that are achieved, are opportunities for self-development, intellectual and spiritual enrichment, self-expression, self-renewal, a sense of achievement, self-image improvement, social interaction and belonging, and the physical (Stebbins, 2013) or spiritual product of engaging in some activity. By spiritual product, we primarily include musical art, where an individual, on the one hand, presents to the audience a vocal, instrumental or vocal-instrumental performance that is not visually noticeable, which means that it is not physically tangible. On the other hand, the individual as a listener comes into spiritual contact with music, based on which a perception, an emotional-aesthetic experience is created, which can also be marked as a spiritual product of coming into

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<sup>2</sup> Serious leisure is defined as an activity that is systematically repeated and sufficiently exciting and fulfilling for the individual. Motivation influences the individual who finds a career in a particular activity, thanks to which he can acquire and express his knowledge, skills and experience (Stebbins, 1992, 2007).



contact with music. Working on the various previously mentioned aspects enables individuals to experience self-satisfaction and personal fulfilment. Social rewards include social attractiveness, group accomplishment/achievement, and contribution to group maintenance and development. Social attraction means contacting other amateurs from the same field or clients. Group accomplishment/achievement refers to working together for the benefit of the whole group while contributing to group development, including a sense of helpfulness and altruism (Stebbins, 2007, 2013).

Engaging in a particular activity as a hobby, inevitably brings certain rewards but also costs (Stebbins, 2013). Costs do not have to mean financial expenses but personal failures each individual can experience. Studies (Arai & Pedlar, 1997; Stebbins, 1992, 1996, 1998) have shown that amateur activities represent a combination of costs (financial and spiritual) and personal pleasure. Despite certain expenses, personal experience and rewards prevail, and such a positive experience becomes dominant in amateur activities.

### **Amateurism in music**

The school subject music culture belongs to the group of subjects responsible for the aesthetic education of students. Its goal, according to the Curriculum (*Просветни планик* бр.15/2018; бр.5/2019; бр.11/2019), is to form aesthetic perception and musical taste, develop interest in music, create love for different genres and one's own and other people's traditions (Jeremić & Stanković, 2019), and to build aesthetic attitudes and criteria (Stojanović, 1996) for beauty in music.

Amateurism in music can refer to two different groups of specific activities. Namely, the first thought of musical amateurism is any activity that includes a specific vocal, instrumental or vocal-instrumental performance, that is, active music. However, it does not have to refer to music performance exclusively, but includes listening to music. Although this is not a direct form of playing music, it is nevertheless a form of auditory engagement, based on which the criteria for the aesthetic assessment of the value of an individual's musical example can be clearly identified. Music amateurism, therefore, can also mean the opposite way of engaging in music, which is in the form of a visitor to concerts, operas, ballets, and plays, then following and using certain media such as compact discs, records, and the group also includes following music sheets and books.

Based on the social rewards that amateurs reap, defined by the author Stebbins (Stebbins, 2007, 2013), music amateurs can be portrayed through the prism of: 1) social attractiveness, 2) group accomplishments/achievements, and 3) contribution to maintenance and development of the group. Social attraction would mean coming into contact with other amateurs from the same field, which is a common occurrence in music amateurism. One such example is numerous choir meetings, reviews, competitions and concerts where members of numerous ama-

teur ensembles come into contact with one another primarily gaining the opportunity to meet, create and expand a network of friendships and then share musical experiences. This social aspect of music enables an individual to connect the musical experience with positive interpersonal relationships, which even more strengthens not only the admiration factor (Regelski, 2007), but also enjoyment and hence the desire for amateur way to engage in music. This type of social attraction is also achieved through various conversations and discussions in which many experiences and knowledge are circulated and can represent a good incentive and motivation for the further pursuit of music. Group achievement is reflected in the results achieved by musical ensembles, and every kind of sense of help, altruism (Stebbins, 2013), effort and hard work invested to achieve high results contributes to maintaining the group and its positive development.

Regelski (2007) defines musical amateurs according to the following criteria: 1) time well spent, even when it implies a certain degree of effort (Regelski, 1996; 2007); 2) organization of time for engaging in amateur activities; 3) advancement and improvement following the advice of a musician – role model; 4) musical amateurism requires musical independence, individuality (Regelski, 2007). Music amateurs can also be presented through a dichotomous division into: 1) active music amateurs, who engage in musical performance, and 2) amateurs – fans who do not play music but enjoy and experience an emotional-aesthetic joy in contact with music.

### **The concept of creating music amateurs**

The school has the task of “educating people who will be able to get carried away by art, to receive from it an incentive for better action, to rejoice in it and to beautify life for themselves and others” (Požgaj, 1975: 145). When the role of the subject is defined in this way, we see that the goal, according to Požgaj (1975), coincides with the position of Regelski (2007). Namely, the critical factor for the development of musical amateurism is admiration. Children, and many future music amateurs, should be directed towards music from the beginning (Stojanović, 1996), starting from preschool institutions, with a particular emphasis in elementary school. One of the goals of the course is to bring students into contact with different musical content and to acquire auditory experience, based on which, over time, criteria for the aesthetic assessment of the value of a musical example will be created.

Following the objective of the course, it is necessary to organize the teaching process in such a way that it leads to the development of the quality of the individual, which will provide the conditions for later engagement in music. Regelski (Regelski, 2009) points out that the pivotal moment is encouraging the love of music among the students, is the one which leads to the fact that the students themselves will begin to make room for music in their free time, regardless of

whether they will put themselves in the role of active musicians, or enjoy music as a listener – an admirer. Such an approach will ensure the increase of number of music amateurs, who will serve from the social aspect as role models for future generations so that they will start to engage in music, too, which falls within the framework of the concept of good health (Regelski, 2009).

Constant nurturing and maintenance of admiration for music are critical foundations of amateur music practice (Regelski, 2007: 29). Admiring music repeatedly makes the daily life of an individual unimaginable without music. Any wrong pedagogic-methodical approach by the teacher or exerting any pressure on the child by parents and teachers can permanently extinguish enthusiasm and desire to practice music, i.e., the possibility of reaching dedicated amateurism.

As music amateurs are divided into performers and listeners, the task of Music Culture teachers is to constantly encourage enthusiasm, satisfaction and motivation for playing music in students, taking them through different levels of listening to music and musical literacy. Thus, the teachers should always ask whether the teaching process is organized in such a way as to encourage or hinder the enthusiasm of the students (Regelski, 2007).

### **Listening to music<sup>3</sup>**

The only area in which the aesthetic education of students is evident is the teaching area of listening to music (Rojko, 2012). This area, in correlation with other areas of the subject, has the most comprehensive impact on education, upbringing (Jeremić & Stanković, 2019), as well as the creation of conscious listeners, i.e., music amateurs – fans, who develop an awareness of aesthetic value and criteria for its recognition, in order to be able to recognize quality music, but also to enjoy it. In addition, it positively affects the individual's emotional, cognitive, psychophysical and moral development (Vidulin & Radica, 2017).

The importance of listening to music in the context of the creation of musical amateurs is reflected in students coming into contact with a rich range of musical means of expression, their awareness, and reaching emotional and cognitive realizations during listening. Teaching focused on these values will enable students to understand the meaning of music over time and how it functions, especially classical music, which will encourage and motivate them to love and admire it, as Regelski mentioned (Regelski, 2007), and want to participate in musical activities themselves. He also states that coming into contact with genre-diverse musical content encourages creative satisfaction in students, which significantly influences the decision-making about amateur music. Although listening to music is not an

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<sup>3</sup> Considering the complexity of listening to music and musical literacy, in the rest of the paper, only the factors of the influence of listening to music on the development of amateurs and the organization of the teaching process that ensures it will be considered.

activity in which the participants are physically engaged, as is the case with vocal music, instrumental and vocal-instrumental performance, it indeed represents an essential preparation for the creation of passive music amateurs, individuals who are enthusiasts, admirers and respecters of quality music. Stebbins (1992) states that listening to music is an amateur practice as itself and that concerning its performance listening to music is often a much more accessible practice in adulthood because it does not require a special playing technique. Also, new vistas of musical pleasure open up for students by coming into contact with musical media. This primarily means expanding the daily repertoire, coming into contact with music that the students only knew it had existed or had heard before but did not understand it, hence the resistance to classical music.

The link between listening to music in the musical culture class and musical amateurism is the criteria for assessing the aesthetic value and the continuous desire to practice music. The development of the previously mentioned two elements is affected precisely by the organization of the lesson, where listening to music leads to the acquisition of quality listening skills, which ensure quality knowledge of music (Vidulin et al., 2019).

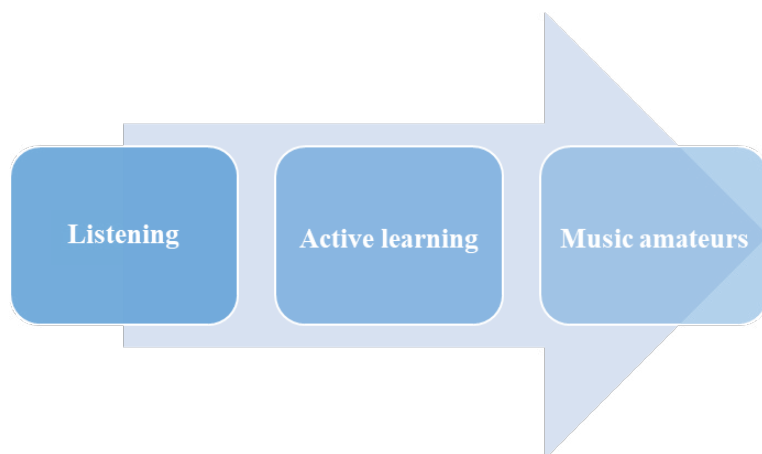
It is evident that human beings are affected by many sound stimuli every day, and musical examples can be found among them. Although students perceive the auditory signals of particular musical works daily, including in the music culture class, more than the realization of musical perception is needed to form criteria for evaluating the quality of the music of different eras and genres. Mentally registering an auditory signal does not mean at the same time that the student has become aware of it. If we are talking about mere perception, it is important to point out that students cannot deviate from the fundamental like/dislike and reach higher levels of understanding a musical example. Musical experience, or apperception, can only be achieved through active access to the music content being listened to. Thus, the conscious construction of criteria for the aesthetic assessment of a piece of music, i.e., “aesthetic shaping”, as the author Stojanović (1996: 7) calls it, is possible thanks to an active attitude towards music.

The tasks of aesthetic education of students refer to the development of the ability to perceive, experience, value and realize the beautiful, as stated by Rojko (Rojko, 2012). Namely, with an active approach, the students, with their intellectual efforts, construct “their mental representations of a certain body of knowledge, they create them, build them (or rebuild them, create them anew) using their previous knowledge and thinking about their mental functioning and regulating it” (Pešikan, 2010: 161). While listening to music, the students, with their mental effort, create representations not only of a specific system of knowledge but also of different emotions and moods, aesthetic experiences and mental representations, thus repeatedly complementing, upgrading and qualitatively improving the current emotional-aesthetic experiences, as well as all previous auditory experiences. A quality upgrade would not be possible if the foundation did not

exist beforehand. The student's auditory experience thus represents a whole series of layers of experiences that constantly influence each other and make each subsequent auditory experience qualitatively better, richer in experience and clearer. Thus, music becomes clear to the individual as an abstract phenomenon, and precisely because they understand its quality, they can understand the criteria for the aesthetic evaluation of musical examples and successfully apply them.

The essential condition for reaching mental representations and layered building of emotional-aesthetic experience is the mental activation of students (Živković, 2023). Mentally activating students during the learning process, i.e., listening to music, implies a conscious, thought-based approach to the material through which previous experiences are connected to new experiences (Waters, 2006; according to Živković, 2023).

**Graph 1.** The concept of creating musical amateurs in music culture teaching.



The root of the creation of music amateurs – admirers, lies deep in listening to music, which would not give favourable results if the teaching approach was not directed towards active teaching (Graph 1). This type of teaching includes all activities and approaches that enable students to access musical material actively, i.e., conscious perception of the musical context to perceive it, i.e., experiencing it emotionally – aesthetically. The experienced work represents a consciously built basis on which the teacher can continuously develop the students' ability for aesthetic evaluation. The future attitude of individuals towards classical music, as well as other genres, is directly conditioned by the way the listening session is organized, which significantly influences the perceptual experiences and the understanding of the reproduced example (Živković, 2023). This way of reaching passive music amateurs can also be presented graphically, where the basic starting point in teaching is listening to music, which is accomplished through active learning.

## Conclusion

The analysis of the term amateur led to the conclusion that amateur activity borders amateurism and serious leisure. Nevertheless, despite its very complex nature, it can be reduced to amateur performers and listeners in music culture teaching. The creation of musical amateurs – admirers, who enjoy and experience the work emotionally and aesthetically is preceded by a carefully planned, complex teaching process, the basis of which is listening to music, as an evident form of aesthetic education. However, listening is not sufficient in itself, nor is it purposeful if it is not taken into account that it is part of the whole experience. At the base of the emotional-aesthetic experience is active learning, i.e., mental activation of students, thanks to which their mental representations are developed. Without a rich living experience and a complex system of emotional-aesthetic layers created under the influence of the music of different eras and genres, quality criteria for assessing the aesthetic value of a piece of music cannot be created. By making children aware of the sound experience, the opportunity to reach a high-quality level of understanding of music through music listening lessons is achieved, which will result in a continuous desire to come into contact with music of equal quality, which directly creates the conditions for the creation of music amateurs.

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### КОНЦЕПТ СТВАРАЊА МУЗИЧКИХ АМАТЕРА У НАСТАВИ МУЗИЧКЕ КУЛТУРЕ

Предмет Музичка култура у основној општеобразовној школи својим садржајем и активностима свестрано утиче на развијање когнитивних, емоционалних, креативних, а нарочито естетских аспеката појединца. Квалитетно вођен наставни процес има задатак да развија код ученика љубав према музици, с циљем да их мотивише и подстиче на даље, аматерско бављење музиком. Важна претпоставка за даље аматерско бављење музиком јесте развијање естетског укуса, мишљења, идеала и музичке интелигенције, што даје појединцу могућност да разуме и процени квалитет музичког дела које слуша или треба да изведе. Да би ученик могао да ужива у музици и добије жељу да се бави музиком и ван наставе, неопходно је да наставни процес буде пажљиво конципиран и да нуди разноврсне активности. Циљ рада јесте представити приступ у раду у настави Музичке културе, путем којег се испуњавају друштвени циљеви предмета, односно формирају будући музички аматери. Разумевањем аспеката организовања наставног процеса слушања музике, наставници стичу увид како на најбољи начин могу да омогуће ученицима не само да заволе уметничку музику и музику свог и других народа, већ да је разумеју. На тај начин стварају се нове генерације које с уживањем учествују активно или пасивно у уметничком животу своје околине, чиме се друштвена заједница изнова мотивише и подстиче да организује, учествује и ужива у музичком животу.

**Кључне речи:** музички аматери, Музичка култура, методе, настава