

Y9 had the opportunity to visit the Barbican to watch the London Symphony Orchestra

It was truly an exhilarating experience. We had an up-front view of the performers who played various instruments amidst skilled violinists, cellists and several other performers playing various instruments. We listened to a selection of short pieces from famous songs which felt undeniably surreal as it was played live by an orchestra.

Alongside the beautiful collection of songs that were played, we had the opportunity to learn about the composition of the music from popular movies and the similarities between them. We learnt how the music affects the atmosphere of the scene, when film music was in its initial stages, dialogues in films were not really used and therefore the mood heavily relied on the music being played.

To really show us how music affected the mood we had a special guest come in, the conductor of 'Moominpappa at Sea', a whimsical yet melancholic stop motion movie. We watched a pivotal scene. (A storm hits the boat and just when all hope is lost and we are convinced the characters would drown, the boat begins to hover and eventually they fly among the clouds, as if it were simply mist over the sea.) Without any music, to be honest, not even the charming art style of the character design could bring any real tension into the scene. It felt empty. Then we watched it with the orchestra playing the backing live. It brought drama and excitement to the scene.

One of the most interesting performances was when they began by playing many well-known movie sound tracks and showed how by separating certain layers of the score you could transform them into various other movie themes. It was really fascinating to hear it done.

Our visit to the Barbican gave us in-depth knowledge of film music and how layers are cleverly incorporated into it. Watching the orchestra live at work was truly one of the most compelling experiences we've had!

Alisha & Lorelai (9B)

