

Year 12 and 13 Visit to 'Antigone' at the Barbican

On Tuesday 17th March AS and A2 students of Classical Civilisation visited the Barbican Centre with Mr McClelland and Ms Douek to see an updated version of 'Antigone', a play studied in Year 11 and Year 13 as part of the GCSE and A2 courses respectively. As Sabah Hussain, suggests in her review below, this updated version of the play was not to everyone's taste. (JM)

Put most simply, this production is Marmite. If you harbour a love for independent films, artsy culture and adaptations with surreal contemporary twists, you might appreciate Ivo Van Hone's interpretation of this haunting, touching Greek Tragedy about loyalty, legacy and mortal and immortal laws. Or like Marmite, 'Antigone' can also leave you with a confusing, uncomfortable feeling that will make you question all elements of the experience.

Oscar-winning French actress Juliette Binoche undoubtedly portrays abstract emotions of regret, joy, contempt and hubris with gripping conviction, her performance providing a commentary on the importance of family devotion that can be applied to modern society. The omnipresent Chorus and seamless transition from scene to scene gave this professional portrayal the pace and atmosphere it deserved.

Woodford GCSE and A-Level students may be slightly unnerved at the alternative pronunciations of character names, like 'Cree-on' rather than our beloved 'Cray-on', and 'Poly-nike-ees' instead of our familiar 'Polynices', and the peculiar moving cinematic backgrounds may have seemed bizarre at the time, but upon deeper reflection could have lent itself to philosophical undertones.

While this production might not have been exactly what Sophocles intended when composing his tragedy in the 5th Century BC, the millennia-old story of a male-female power struggle can certainly move audiences and bring Classical tragedy to the modern age.

By Sabah Hussain Yr13