

The Soul of Music

There is no easy answer to why I love music. Maybe it is because my entire family plays an instrument, or because I have been performing in musical productions for seven years. Maybe it is because I have grown up listening to music. Maybe it is because I have been playing piano and singing for years. Or maybe it is simply because there is nothing else in the world like music.

There is no possible way to explain how music can bring you to tears, or lift you to the sky, or sum up your anger with one simple chord progression. When your less music savvy friends find you sobbing with your headphones on, they give you a strange look when you say “The music is so pretty.” They don’t understand how five seconds of a quivering violin, a moaning cello, a delicate piano, or a floating voice can bring you to tears.

I used to be like everyone else. I listened to the popular artists like Katy Perry, Paramore, and Maroon 5. I still do, but it was only once I started doing theatre, playing piano, and exploring the world of soundtracks that I truly discovered how amazing music can be. It unites the world. We may not all speak the same language or look the same, but everyone can appreciate what my mother and I call “achingly beautiful” music.

How can it be that the manipulation of different frequencies, pieces of wood, metal, and string has created such a wonderful world? When you hear the term “high C” you don’t think 1046.50 Hz--you think of Christine from *The Phantom of the Opera*. You think of Für Elise when someone says “piano,” not pieces of wood, string, and ivory. Music is the universal language of the world.

I listen to “Empty Chairs at Empty Tables” from *Les Miserables*, or “Hallelujah” by Jeff Buckley, or “Buying the Space Farm” from *Star Trek Into Darkness* and I can barely keep myself from crying. It feels like the music squeezes my soul until I can hardly breathe.

I sit in the audience in awed silence as my school choir sings “Meadowlark” or the band plays their cover of “Undisclosed Desires” or the a capella group makes me cry with “See You Again.” I watch the videos my father takes of my best friend and her brother, my sister, and me making our own music with voice, piano, violin, bass, drums, and mandolin, and I can’t help grinning.

The ability of one or more people to make a sound like that is wonderful. The feeling of making music like that is indescribable.

I love music because it speaks for you when you can’t find the words.

I love music because it makes you laugh, sob, scream, and smile.

I love music because no matter how hard you try, it can’t be stopped.

There are so many reasons why I love music. I can’t tell you which one is the most impactful. I can only tell you that I can’t live without it.

Lost

I walked over to the only window in the room. It showed me whatever I wanted it to, because I lived in space where there was nothing to see but blackness and stars. Right now the window showed nothing but the outside. Then the image swirled and settled on a place I knew well, but did not want to see. My heart betrayed me.

The Elysian Fields formed before me, and farther than that the Isles of Blest. I easily spotted her sitting under a tree, laughing and talking with some of our old deceased friends. Her familiar brunette curls bounced as she laughed, her blue eyes sparkling.

I waved my hand and the window cracked, its power broken. I backed away towards the king-sized bed I kept in my study. I stopped for a moment when I saw the dusty and firm left side of the bed, undisturbed by a body. The icy hand that gripped my heart squeezed tighter. The right side was kept as neat as possibly while I tried to make the emptiness of the other side less prominent.

I laid down on top of the blankets on the right side and stretched my hand out to the cold left side. Tears fell from my eyes and rolled down my cheeks, splashing onto the comforter. I didn't bother with turning off the lights and left my hand on the bed where she would've been.

I could almost feel her.

Rebirth

“You believe in people having past lives and being reborn?”

Andrew nodded in answer to my question. “Yeah, I guess.”

“I’ve always admired that kind of stuff.” I thought about all the Greek myths I had read, especially those referring to the Underworld and what happens after we die. “What do you think it would be like if somebody proved that all of that stuff was real? Like, not just a myth, or a guess.”

“I don’t know,” Andrew said. “Our lives would probably be different. We would know what to expect after we die, but we wouldn’t know exactly what the afterlife would be like. But it would be good to know that there is something after this life, and good people might be rewarded with rich afterlives. I suppose we wouldn’t know what happened to other people, they might not make it to our individual versions of ‘heaven,’ so when we die we might never see some people again.” Andrew rubbed his chin, still deep in thought. “I think everyone would make the most of life, not knowing who would continue with them after death. We would do things we might not do, with the people we love, in case they aren’t a part of our afterlife.”

At those words I turned my head, and Andrew and I looked at each other.

“What kinds of things?” I whispered.

Andrew breathed out his next words. “Things like this.”

And then he kissed me.