

How live music is more exciting than recorded music

Essay by Annabelle Schulz

Music is beautiful. It is varied, with diverse styles that speak to the heart in different ways. Take a look at Beethoven's Symphony no. 7 where beauty flows through the soft, mysterious rhythm that then explodes into passionate cries, and falling into almost mournful laments in the end. Rondo Alla Turca also begins softly, but instead ends happy and light-hearted. Strauss' Blue Danube makes one's spirit light, imagining a leisurely day of rest on the river, while Scott Joplin's Entertainer enlivens the spirit, making it dance. I remember as a kid sitting on one of my parents' knees, "riding" my horse to the song of the William Tell overture finale. The many genres of music—folk, dance, jazz, country, pop, and classical—express joy, mourning and celebration of the heart of man.

Until relatively recently, to hear music cost money, time and effort. One had to save money for a ticket, travel to the venue and put on one's best clothes. However, today, music is just a click away from the listener, instantly downloaded to a personal device. Because of this, I believe music is underappreciated and taken for granted because it is so easy to get.

I wonder if our culture knows what it is like to anticipate the upcoming symphony after a long week, to hang on every word sung by the soloist or to be stirred by the deep notes resounding from the cello. With music so effortlessly available, do we know what it is like to relive the concert of yesterday so that it might fill our souls for weeks to come?

Recorded music may seem the same as live music, but the experience is very different to the listener. It is to encounter an atmosphere of sounds, not just of the musicians, but of the audience's responses and the venue's reverberations. One is drawn into the mystery and beauty of the piece with the community, sharing an emotional experience, unique to each audience member.