

■ **Dec 16, 1770:** Likely birthdate of **Ludwig van Beethoven**. Born in Bonn to family of court musicians

Beethoven's birthplace



Father, **Johann van Beethoven**, is keen to promote his son as child prodigy like **Mozart**

■ **1778:** First public appearance, aged seven, in Cologne

■ **1783:** Under tuition of court organist **Christian Gottlob Neeffe**, Beethoven, aged 12, publishes first work – set of keyboard variations

■ **1784:** Beethoven appointed assistant court organist to Neeffe

Beethoven at age 15. Silhouette attributed to Nessen, 1786



■ **1787:** Travels to Vienna where he impresses Mozart who agrees to teach him, but returns to Bonn to care for his dying mother

■ **1792:** Returns to Vienna. Mozart is dead but he begins studying with **Joseph Haydn**

■ **1795:** Premieres either **First** or **Second Piano Concerto** in first public performance in Vienna

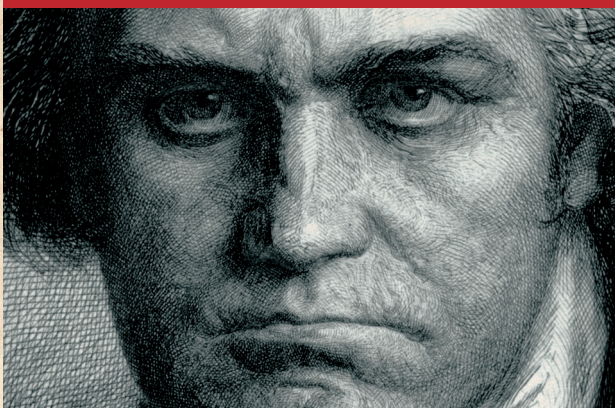
■ **1797:** Falls seriously ill with possible typhus – this may have led to onset of deafness

■ **1800:** **First Symphony** and **Septet** premiered at Beethoven's first benefit concert

■ **1801:** Falls in love with Countess **Giulietta Guicciardi**, to whom he dedicates Piano Sonata No. 14 – **Moonlight Sonata**



# LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN



Portrait of Beethoven in 1802

■ **1802:** Spends summer in quiet village of Heiligenstadt in hope that hearing will improve. Expresses despair over his increasing deafness in letter known as **Heiligenstadt Testament**

■ **1803:** Composes first and only oratorio, **Christ on the Mount of Olives**

■ **1804:** Completes **Third Symphony – Eroica**. Beethoven's republican principles are outraged when **Napoleon** proclaims himself Emperor of France – he strikes out dedication on title page

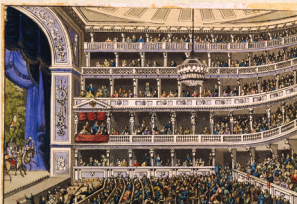


■ **1804:** Begins passionate correspondence with **Josephine Deym**, which ends after three years



■ **1805:** Composes Piano Sonata No 23, **Appassionata**

■ **1806:** Beethoven's only opera, **Leonore** (later renamed **Fidelio**) is unsuccessful, partly due to occupation of Vienna by French troops after Battle of Austerlitz



■ **1808:** Long-awaited benefit concert at **Theater an der Wien** (above) sees first performances of **Fifth** and **Sixth (Pastoral) Symphonies**

■ **1809:** Austria declares war on France

■ **1812:** Beethoven writes passionate letter to "Immortal Beloved", whose identity remains uncertain

■ **1813:** **Wellington** defeats Napoleon's army in Spain. Beethoven marks victory with piece later orchestrated as **Battle Symphony op. 91**

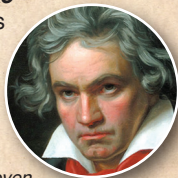
Ear trumpet made for Beethoven in 1813

■ **1814:** Revived **Fidelio** acclaimed by crowned heads of Europe at **Congress of Vienna**, held to mark end of 20 years of Napoleonic Wars

■ **1815:** Beethoven's brother **Caspar** dies – his widow **Johanna** and Beethoven are appointed joint guardians of his son **Karl**, 9. Legal battle to win sole custody rumbles on for years

■ **1818:** Completes **Hammerklavier Sonata**

■ **1820:** Begins **Missa Solemnis** for enthronement of **Archduke Rudolph** as Archbishop of Olmütz, but it is not ready in time



Beethoven in 1820

■ **1824:** Stands alongside conductor at premiere of **Ninth Symphony**. Deafness is now total – soloist turns him around so he can see wild applause

■ **1825-26:** Composes final **String Quartets**



Beethoven's last grand piano, built in Vienna by Conrad Graf

■ **1826:** Nephew Karl attempts suicide

■ **Mar 26, 1827:** Beethoven dies in Vienna. Funeral procession attended by some 20,000 people



Beethoven's death mask