

### THE LIFE OF LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Ludwig van Beethoven was born on December 16, 1770 in Bonn, Germany. There were seven children in his family, but only 3 boys survived. Beethoven was the oldest surviving son. Beethoven's father was a musician who wanted his son, Ludwig, to be a child prodigy. Many say his dad was extremely harsh and very strict when it came to Ludwig. He insisted that Beethoven practice music, including the violin, piano and organ from morning until very late at night. He hoped his son would become the next Mozart.

Beethoven gave his first performance when he was just 8 years old. People began to notice and recognize him for his incredible talent. When he was 11 years old, he began lessons with a renowned musician named, Gottlob Neefe. At the age of 12, Beethoven published his first work, 9 Variations, in C Minor, for piano. By the age of 14 Beethoven began

supporting his family. His father was an alcoholic and unable to support them. When Beethoven turned 17, he went to study with Mozart in Vienna. But soon after that, he had to return home because his mother was dying. He was deeply affected by his mother's death and he called her "his best friend."

Beethoven returned to Vienna in 1792, and by 1795 he was a well known pianist who was admired for his brilliant musical talent. While Beethoven had a reputation for having a large ego and being difficult, people flocked to see his concerts. He also helped leading piano building companies create what is now the modern grand piano. Around 1798, Beethoven began suffering from a hearing disorder. For the first few years, he became extremely depressed and withdrew from people. However, when he finally accepted that his career as a pianist had to end, he plunged into composing. His works of this time include Symphony no. 2. Beethoven went on to write an opera and many more symphonies. Eventually, Beethoven became completely deaf. In 1815 Beethoven's brother, Kasper Karl, died and Beethoven became a guardian

to his nephew, Karl. Beethoven took this responsibility seriously. By this time he was 45 and found it very difficult to raise this child, along with the child's mother. Beethoven found it very difficult to understand a child and there were many battles and troubles.

In 1827, Beethoven caught pneumonia coming back from his brother's place. Beethoven passed away on March 26, 1827, surrounded by his closest friends. He will forever be known as one of the finest composers that have ever lived.