Beethoven

Ludwig van Beethoven, baptized in Bonn in 1770, was a musician and composer famous not only for his style of music, but also for composing, playing, and conducting music when almost totally deaf. Thought of by most as one of the greatest composers that ever lived, Beethoven composed and played music nearly all of his life, even after becoming deaf.

Beethoven spent his early childhood and growing years in Bonn, Germany, where his father tried to make him into a child prodigy at the piano but did not succeed. His father was well known throughout the town as being both a great musician, and when he saw young Beethoven first perform at the age of seven, he took him out of school and found him music teachers for his education.

When he was fifteen, Beethoven had the chance to play for the famous composer and musician Mozart. In his early twenties, he left Bonn for Vienna, Austria, and studied under teacher Joseph Haydn. Beethoven became well known as a virtuoso in some of the high-ranking society circles of the day. He was also known for his talent in improvising music.

At the age of 27, Beethoven discovered that he was losing his hearing, and would soon be totally deaf. He almost decided to kill himself, but after thinking about it realized that he could still hear music, if only inside his head, so he decided to keep on with it. He composed works even as he was going deaf. His Ninth Symphony, today recognizable by almost anyone even in the first few notes, was composed after he was totally deaf.

Beethoven suffered from bad health for years, and was three times rejected by women he wanted to marry. He died a bachelor in 1827 in Vienna, Austria, and his funeral was attended by more than 10, 000 people. His symphonies, some of which he could not even hear when conducting, are

still some of the best known and widely played pieces of music throughout the world today.

Source:

Cole, Richard. " Ludwig van Beethoven." Virginia Tech Multimedia Music Dictionary Composer Biographies. Virginia Tech, 22 Feb 2007. Web. 4 May 2011. .