



# Beethoven: The Man and the Artist: As Revealed in His Own Words

*Ludwig van Beethoven*

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## **Beethoven: The Man and the Artist: As Revealed in His Own Words** Ludwig van Beethoven

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) is widely considered to be one of the pre-eminent classical music figures of the Western world. This German musical genius created numerous works that are firmly entrenched in the repertoire. Except for a weakness in composing vocal and operatic music (to which he himself admitted, notwithstanding a few vocal works like the opera "Fidelio" and the song "Adelaide,"), Beethoven had complete mastery of the artform. He left his stamp in 9 symphonies, 5 piano concertos, 10 violin sonatas, 32 piano sonatas, numerous string quartets and dozens of other key works. Many of his works are ingeniously imaginative and innovative, such as his 3rd symphony (the "Eroica"), his 9th Violin Sonata (the "Kreutzer"), his "Waldstein" piano sonata, his 4th and 5th piano concertos, or his "Grosse Fugue" for string quartet. (Of course, each of Beethoven's works adds its own unique detail to Beethoven's grand musical paradigm.) It is difficult to sum up briefly what his musical works represent or symbolize, since taken together they encompass a vast system of thought. Generally, however, those who apprehend his music sense that it reflects their own personal yearnings and sufferings. It egoistically, and always intelligently, "discusses" with its listener his or her feelings in the wake of personal failure and personal triumph, from the lowest depths of despair to the highest heights of happy or triumphant fulfilment. In his music, he represents the feelings felt by those attempting to achieve their goals within their societies, whether they are competing for love, status, money, power, mates and/or any other things individuals feel naturally inclined to attempt to acquire.

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