Beethoven and Creativity

by Michelle Rasmussen

Feb. 23—If there was one principle at the center of Lyndon LaRouche's life's work, it was that the crucial factor in the progress of human civilization is human creativity. It is human creativity which distinguishes man, and woman, from the beast. It is, or ought to be, the mission of society to foster the potential creativity, which, like a seed, lies dormant in every child, just waiting for loving nourishment to cause it to bloom, to create the most beautiful flower, which, in turn, delights and inspires all others to, themselves, develop their own creative potential. But, you may ask, how do you learn about, and teach creativity?

There is perhaps no better creativity teacher than Ludwig van Beethoven, he who was born 250 years ago, in another time, in another place, whose life-long struggle to perfect his own creative powers, has been, is now, and will forever be a monumental source for the study of creativity. This he was for LaRouche, who would often listen to Beethoven to get his creative juices flowing before sitting down to write. And this he can be for you, dear reader, and all of us, so that we may, also, be creative, that we may "Think like Beethoven."[1]

Lithograph by August von Klöber, 1818

Ludwig van Beethoven

And what is the purpose of such creativity? As Beethoven put it, "to work by means of my art for needy humanity."[2] Not art for art's sake. Beethoven, like Friedrich Schiller, was conscious of great art's ability to raise the moral level of humanity, to better enable human beings to form a more perfect society, one where, in Schiller's immortal words, "All men become brothers," the very words which Beethoven set to music in his *Ninth Symphony*.[3]

Beethoven wrote that art and science, "Give us intimations and hopes of a higher life" to unite "the best and noblest people," and to "raise men to the Godhead."[4]

To a female friend, urging her to devote herself entirely to music, he wrote: "You who have such feeling for all that is beautiful and good. Why will you not make use of this, in order that you may recognize in so beautiful an art the higher perfection which sheds its rays even on us."[5]

Concerning his immortal mass, the *Missa Solemnis*: "In writing this great Mass, it was my chief aim to awaken, and to render lasting, religious feeling as well in the singers as in the hearers."[6]

Plato wrote that music was the most important education for the soul—to fill the soul with beauty, and make it beautiful. People would then praise beauty, receive it with joy into their souls, and become beautiful souls.[7]

1. Lyndon LaRouche, *Think Like Beethoven,* paperback available here.
2. Dr. A.C. Kalischer, *Beethoven's Letters, With Explanatory Notes,* Dover, 1972, page 160.
3. Michelle Rasmussen, " 'All Men Become Brothers': The Decades-Long Struggle for Beethoven's Ninth Symphony," {EIR} Vol. 42, No. 26, June 26, 2015, pages 38-51.
4. Maynard Solomon, "Reason and Imagination: Beethoven's Aesthetic Evolution," in *Historical Musicology: Sources, Methods, Interpretations,* by Stephen A. Crist and Roberta Montemorra Marvin (editors), University of Rochester Press, 2008, page 189.
5. Kalischer, page 68. See note 2.
6. Kalischer, page 331.
7. From a more extensive footnote about Plato written by Edgar A. Poe in "The Colloquy of Monos and Una." *The Complete Tales and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe,* Modern Library, 1938, page 446.

Beauty, Schiller said, ennobles our emotions and our intellect. Not just raw emotions which dominate us, without intellect and reason. Not just intellect and reason, without compassion and agapē—love for our neighbor. But through the freedom of mind and heart, which arises while in the act of play, and especially when experiencing the beauty of great art, the two sides of our nature can be reconciled by rising to a higher, subsuming state of mind, which we call the aesthetical state of mind.

Beethoven quoted Schiller's play *Don Carlos* in a letter from 1797: "Wisdom is for the wise, Beauty for the feeling heart; and both belong to each other." (*Die Wahrheit is vorhanden für den Weisen, Die Schönheit für ein fülend Herz; Sie beide gehören für einander.*)[8]

Friedrich Schiller, in a portrait by Ludovike Simanowiz.

Beethoven wielded his creative powers to touch our souls through the beauty of his music.

The Creative Process

To be creative is a process of perfecting the ability to imagine what no one before you has ever thought about. In modern terms, to think "outside of the box," the box of "This is how it has always been done," "These are the rules," "These are the unquestionable doctrines." And, to be self-conscious about how to do that. But how do you put yourself into a state of mind, where you can think freely? How can you become self-reflective about the creative process and look into your own mind?

The thought process we call the imagination, is not only the key to creativity in the arts, but, also, in scientific discovery. Lyndon LaRouche put it this way in a speech called "Creativity as Such," in 2011:

> And it's in the process of *metaphor,* in which we acquire access to experimental knowledge and use of principles which lie outside the domain of sense-certainties, that mankind distinguishes himself from the beasts.... This is the special genius of Classical musical composition.... [Y]ou look at the question of irony, and you take the case of a Bach fugal composition as the perfect test to demonstrate this.… This aspect of the human mind is the location of human creativity. And the promotion of that aspect of the human experience, Classical artistic culture as an expression of the principle of metaphor, is the principle of ordinary discovery, principled discovery. And when you take this kind of thinking over into the department of the practice of physical science, the same thing! And there, you have an example of the role of Classical musical composition, as in the illustrative cases of both Max Planck and Albert Einstein, in particular—and [Vladimir] Vernadsky also! You get a demonstration that in the department of Classical artistic composition, in which the mind is *experimenting* with the attempt to discover principles, and expresses the yearning for that experimental result as the *incentive of creativity for the human mind.* That is *creativity*.[9]

Albert Einstein, better known as a great scientist, lesser known as a devoted amateur violinist, made his greatest discoveries not in a laboratory, but through "thought-experiments." He had an intriguing insight into the power of the imagination, which he used to make his discoveries, and, also, the power of music to stimulate his own imagination.

Einstein:

> The power of imagination is the ultimate creative power ... no doubt about that. While knowledge defines all we currently know and understand ... imagination points to all we might yet

8. Written in Lenz von Breuning's album, Kalischer, page 11.

9. Speech delivered to the Schiller Institute conference, "Classical Culture, an Imperative for Mankind," held in Rüsselsheim, Germany, July 3, 2011. *EIR* Vol. 38, No. 27, July 15, 2011, pages 30-38.

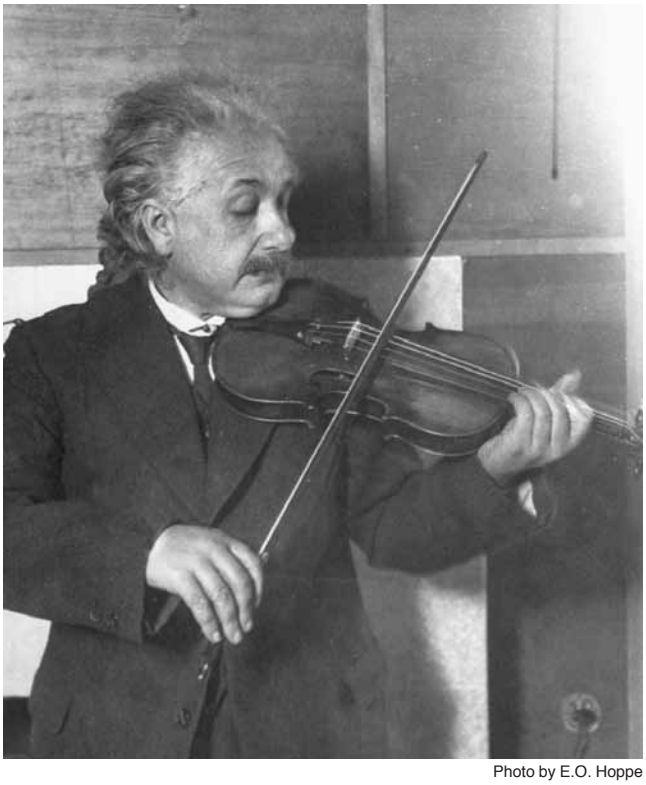


Photo by E.O. Hoppe

"The power of imagination is the ultimate creative power."
—Albert Einstein.

When he became stuck in solving an intellectual problem, Einstein often played his violin to liberate his mental powers.

> discover and create. Imagination is more important than knowledge. Your imagination is your preview of life's coming attractions.[10]
>
> Imagination embraces the entire world, stimulating progress, giving birth to evolution.[11]
>
> Imagination is the language of the soul.[12]
>
> Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere.[13]

Einstein recounted that when he became stuck in the process of solving an intellectual problem, he would play his violin, and that would often liberate his mental powers.[14]

Beethoven wrote this about the challenge of writing fugues in his late quartets: "The imagination, too, asserts its privileges and today a different, truly poetic element must be manifested in conventional form."[15]

In 1823, Beethoven wrote suggestions on how to stimulate the imagination to Archduke Rudolph, one of his very few composition students, and an important financial and political supporter:

> I hope that Your Imperial Highness will continue to acquire special practice in writing down your ideas straightaway at the piano; for this purpose there should be a small table next to the piano. Not only is the imagination strengthened in this way, but one also learns to pin down the remotest ideas at once, it is likewise necessary to write without a piano. Nor should it give Yr. Imperial Highness a headache, but rather the considerable pleasure of finding yourself absorbed in this art, to elaborate a simple melody at times, a chorale, with simple and, then again, with more varied figurations in counterpoint[16] and so forth to more difficult exercises. This will certainly not give Your Royal Highness a headache, but rather, when one finds oneself absorbed in art, a great pleasure. Gradually we develop the [ability to] express just exactly what we wish to, what we feel within us, a need characteristic of all superior persons [noble-minded men in A.C. Kalischer's translation].[17]

This power of the imagination involves our ability to think about the future, about how something could be, not bound by what is, in the here and now.

The concept of the imagination is related to forecasting the future effects of current causes, as in LaRouche's economic forecasts, in which he always proposed alternative courses of action to avoid the dangers stalking in the future as the result of current wrong policies. And, likewise, deciding what to do in the here and

10. Azquotes.com/quote/864207
11. Albert Einstein, *Einstein On Cosmic Religion and Other Opinions & Aphorisms.* goodreads.com/quotes/423568.
12. www.azquotes.com/quote/831606.
13. brainyquote.com /quotes/albert_einstein_121643.
14. Read the article, "Einstein the Artist," by Shawna Halevy, one of LaRouche's collaborators. *EIR* Vol. 39, No. 19, May 11, 2012, pages 58-66
15. Solomon, "Reason and Imagination," in *Historical Musicology,* page 194. See note 4.
16. Counterpoint is the art of writing two or more lines, or voices, of music designed to be in dialogue with each other, from "point against point," writing a contrary note to a given note, or point.
17. Michael Hamburger (editor), *Beethoven: Letters, Journals and Conversations,* Thames & Hudson, 2007, page 199.

now, based on your vision of where you want to arrive in the long-term future, the "future determining the present," as he put it.

In classical music, imagining the future requires, on the one hand, having an insight into the pregnant possibilities of a single new musical theme or motive, but, on the other hand, the ability to invent a musical idea, which is not a theme, but a generative, developmental process, a specific quality of change—the real subject of a unified composition, which acts upon the themes as objects of creative transformation.

The seed-crystal of this development process is in the mind of the composer from the very beginning.

EIRNS/Philip Ulanowsky

"The seed-crystal of the development process is in the mind of the composer from the very beginning." Norbert Brainin, primarius of the Amadeus Quartet, described and demonstrated the process of motivic thorough composition, the subject of Beethoven's enormously fruitful musical creativity. Here he is (right), with his long-time friend, Lyndon LaRouche, on December 4, 1987.

Beethoven from 1815: "I have always a picture in my mind, when I am composing, and work up to it."[18]

Regarding his opera *Fidelio,* "my custom when I am composing even instrumental music is always to keep the whole before my eyes."[19]

There is a tension between what Plato called "the one and the many": the one unifying musical idea, and the many motives, developments, and transitions—the unfolding of the unified idea. The great German conductor Wilhelm Furtwängler spoke of the tension between near-hearing (*nahhören*), the music heard at that moment as it is unfolding, and far-hearing (*fernhören*), the future, completed, composition.

Beethoven was a master of this process, which we call motivic thorough composition or, in German, *motivführung*. Just think about the first movement of his *Fifth Symphony,* and how the first famous four notes—da, da, da, dum—became the object of Beethoven's enormously fruitful musical creativity. Or the *motivführung* that traverses several of Beethoven's late string quartets, as described by Norbert Brainin, the late Amadeus Quartet primarius, at a Schiller Institute seminar, where he started with Op. 132.[20]

Paradoxically the one, unifying musical idea must subsume many free, independent voices. Beethoven wrote the following upon being asked by a composer to criticize his composition:

> [N]ot indirectly, but frankly, as is my wont, I only tell you that you might pay a little more attention to the separate conduct of the parts in future works of this kind.[21]

Creativity is not linear. LaRouche emphasized the role of surprise, paradox, metaphor, irony, even jokes, and puns, all of which Beethoven was a master. The listener is consciously led into a trap, where, suddenly, the unexpected occurs. A dramatic new element takes you by surprise, and you are forced to make a mental leap into the realm of the imagination, away from linear thinking. Afterwards, an emotional release occurs, for example, when you "get the joke." In metaphor, there is a juxtaposition of seemingly unrelated elements in a surprising way, which can only be understood from a higher, subsuming level. (See box on p. 27.)

In the process of unfolding the musical idea in a polyphonic (many-voiced) musical universe, some-

Continued on page 28

18. Maynard Solomon, *Beethoven Essays,* Harvard University Press, 1990, page 127.

19. Solomon, "Reason and Imagination," in *Historical Musicology,* page 194.

20. Over September 20-22, 1995, the Schiller Institute sponsored a series of seminars featuring Lyndon LaRouche's close friend and collaborator Norbert Brainin, at the Dolná Krupá castle in Slovakia. Watch Mr. Brainin demonstrate the principle of motivic through composition in Seminar No. 4 here, or read more about it here.

21. To Baron Carl August von Klein in 1826, Kalischer, page 365.

Beethoven Thought in Metaphor

Even when he was not composing, Beethoven thought in metaphor. In response to a letter from his brother which was proudly signed "landowner," Beethoven signed his letter, "brain-owner."[a]

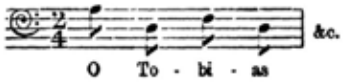
From a remembrance by music critic and literary figure, Johann Friedrich Rochlitz: "Once he is in the vein, rough, striking witticisms, droll conceits, surprising and exciting paradoxes suggest themselves to him in a continuous flow."[b]

From his student Karl Czerny: "He could introduce a play on words anywhere."[c] For example, "As regards Frau v. Stein [stone in English], I beg her not to let Herr v. Steiner be petrified, so that he may still be able to serve me."[d]

Or he could make up funny words, calling a fugue "tone-flight-work."[e]

Here is an example of the great fun Beethoven had when writing to Tobias Hasslinger, publisher Sigmund Anton Steiner's assistant, who later became the publisher (Beethoven usually called Hasslinger the "little adjutant," Beethoven being "Generalissimus"):

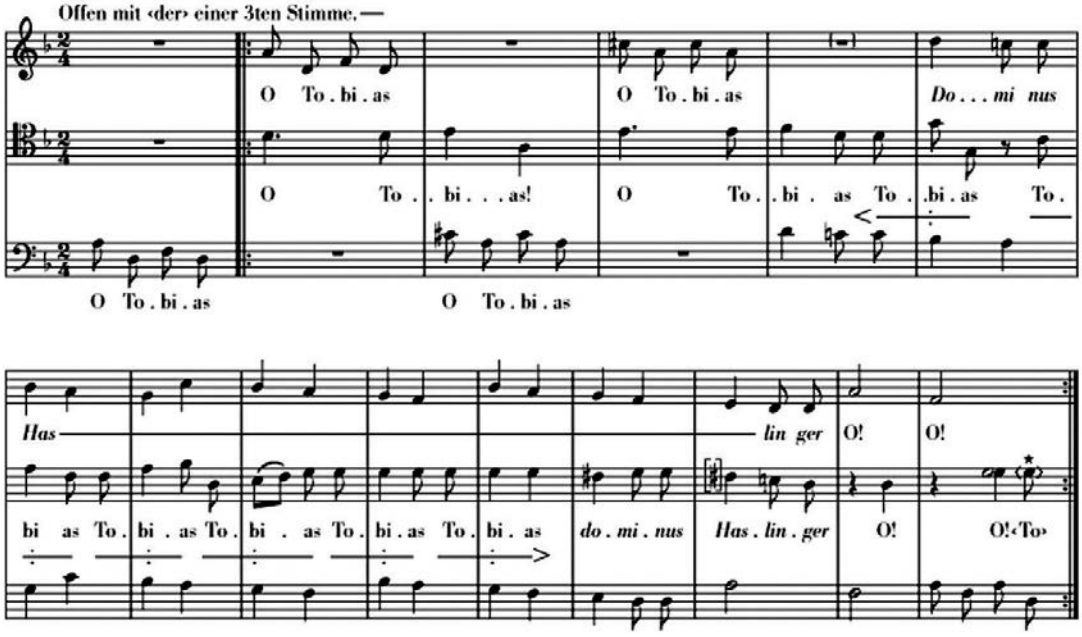
> I dreamed that I was taking a far journey, as far as Syria, as far as India, back again as far as Arabia; finally I came indeed to Jerusalem. The Holy City prompted thoughts about the Holy Writ [Bible], when, and no wonder, I thought of the man Tobias [from the Bible], and naturally that led to my thinking of our little Tobias and our *pertobias[sen]* [making the name a verb, then a noun meaning to turn the name 'Tobias' into music[f]]; now, in my dream journey, the following canon occurred to me:[g]



Beethoven then forgot the canon*, and when he remembered it again, it had turned into a three-voice canon, which he held as strongly as Menelaus had held Proteus.

His letter to Tobias Hasslinger continues:

a. Russell Sherman, *Piano Pieces,* Farrar, Straus and Giroux, September 30, 1997, page 114.
b. Oscar Sonneck (editor), *Beethoven: Impressions by His Contemporaries,* Dover Books, 1967, page 128.
c. Solomon, "Reason and Imagination," in *Historical Musicology,* page 223.
d. Kalischer, page 229.
e. Kalischer, page 356.
f. The Free Dictionary Language Forums, by Farlex, "Beethoven's writing: question."
g. Kalischer, page 281.
* https://beethoven.ru/node/909 [WoO 182: O Tobias!, трехголосный канон Бетховен (beethoven.ru)]



[* Mehrere Durchstreichungen; ursprünglicher Text nur teilweise erkennbar.]

> Soon I shall send in something about Steiner, too, just to prove that he hasn't a heart of stone. Farewell, very dearest of friends, we wish you continually that you may never be true to the name of publisher and may never be publicly humiliated.... [The pun on *Verleger* (publisher) and *verlegen* (embarrassed, at a loss) was one of which Beethoven was especially fond.][h]

Enclosed in a letter to a publisher in 1825 with some canons, Beethoven includes:

> [A] supplement, a romantic description of the life of Tobias Hasslinger in 3 parts. First part: Tobias is an assistant of the celebrated authority, Capellmeister Fux—and holds the ladder to his Gradus ad Parnassum [steps to Parnassus, the mountain where the Muses live, the name of Fux's pedantic book on counterpoint]. As he is now inclined to practical joking, through shaking and pushing the ladder he causes many of those who had got fairly high up to fall headlong and break their necks, &c. He now bids farewell to our clod of earth and reappears at the time of Albrechtsberger [a leading counterpoint teacher who gave Beethoven some lessons].
>
> 2nd part. The already existing Fuxian *nota cambiata* [changed note] is now treated in conjunction with A[lbrechtsberger]. and the changing notes thoroughly expounded; the art of creating a musical skeleton is carried on to the highest degree, &c. Tobias, now a caterpillar, is turned into a grub [butterfly larva], is developed, and appears for the third time on this earth.
>
> 3rd part. The scarcely formed wings now hasten to the *Paternostergässl* [the address of the publisher]; he becomes *Paternostergässler Capellmeister,* and having gone through the school of the changing notes [*Wechselnoten*] he retains nothing of them but the change [*Wechsel*], and so gains the friend of his youth, and finally becomes a member of several inland empty-headed societies, &c. If you ask him, he will certainly allow this account of his life to be published.[i]

h. The Unheard Beethoven website, "Canon, O Tobias, WoO 182."
i. Kalischer, page 229.

Continued from page 26

times the different individual voices come into conflict with each other, and dissonances emerge in the contrapuntal process, which urgently demand to be resolved, thus driving the unfolding process forward in a non-linear way.

This is similar to a human dialogue of cultures, where, sometimes, conflicts emerge. These conflicts, however, can be solved through the process of creating a higher unity, the which Nikolaus von Kues (Nicholas of Cusa) called the "coincidence of opposites." This is actually a common metaphor in Danish known as things "going up in a higher unity" (*at gå op i en højere enhed*.) In music, the higher unity is the overall musical idea of that particular piece.

The creative process also entails great emotional tension in the midst of problem solving, as if you are hanging on a psychological cliff, or lost in no-man's land. You begin to doubt if the problem can ever be solved. But the great thinker, whether in music, science, or elsewhere, develops a power of concentration, sometimes lasting years, based on an underlying consciousness of the importance of his or her endeavor, a striving passion, until a breakthrough occurs, as if in a flash of insight, and the problem is solved.

The creative struggle involves trying out new solutions, which are not in the rulebook, and not in your own past productions. To be self-reflective about the creative process requires not only being conscious about new methods of composition, as Beethoven sometimes explicitly wrote that he had invented, which Plato referred to as a "higher hypothesis," but, also, to be self-conscious about the increasingly creative quality of compositional methods, which Plato called the "hypothesis of the higher hypothesis."

From Beethoven to a publisher in 1802 regarding Piano Variations Op. 34 and 35:

> Both sets are really worked out in a wholly *new manner,* and each in a *separate and different way*…. I myself can assure you that in both these works the *method is quite new so far as I am concerned.*[22]
>
> [W]hen feeling opens up a path for us, then away with all rules.[23]

22. Solomon, "Reason and Imagination," in *Historical Musicology,* page 191.
23. *Op. cit.,* page 192.

In fact, LaRouche wrote that Beethoven should be considered a physical scientist, because of his ability to make one creative breakthrough after another, to discover new worlds, new modes of musical expression. In science, we discover new physical principles of nature, even creating new states of matter, never before seen in nature. Opening your mind to the existence of a paradox, that which does not fit into the accepted theories, spurs the mind to seek new, higher, hypotheses, and design crucial physical experiments to prove, or disprove them.

In art, we use the same cognitive powers to discover new artistic principles, and, also, something new about our own creativity, which we can share with others, be they musicians or listeners. We can communicate the power of creativity, itself, to move men's souls.

Beethoven was a master in making use of known musical forms (for example, the sonata form), and imbuing them with surprising, new, revolutionary content.

Beethoven's Struggle to Approximate Divine Creativity

Beethoven was self-conscious about his own divine spark of creativity, that which LaRouche devoted his life to better understand, that *Götterfunken* (godly spark), of Schiller's "Ode to Joy": *Freude, schöne Götterfunken*[24], the which Beethoven set to music in his monumental *Ninth Symphony*. LaRouche pondered, what does it mean for man to be in the image of The Creator? It is this capacity for man, also, to be a creator. That, stressed LaRouche, is what separates men and women from beasts. (See the section on the divine spark in every individual in LaRouche's article in this issue, "In the Garden of Gethsemane," written in his prison cell in 1990.)

Beethoven wrote to publisher Breitkopf & Härtel in 1812: "my heavenly art, the only true divine gift of Heaven," and in 1824: "I am free from all small-minded vanity: only the divine art, in it alone is the main-spring which gives me strength to devote the best part of my life to the heavenly Muses."[25]

After seeing a collection of Schubert's songs, Beethoven's friend Anton Schindler records him as saying: "Truly, this Schubert is lit by a divine spark."[26]

Resenting publishers who line their pockets with profits from an author's work, treating them as "tasty brain-food," Beethoven wrote:

> The author [Beethoven] is determined to show that the *human brain* cannot be sold either like coffee beans or like any form of cheese which, as everyone knows, must first be produced from *milk, urine* and so forth—The human brain is inherently inalienable.[27]

Beethoven was very conscious of his mission in life: to be as creative as he could be, in order to uplift needy humanity with the power of his music. To adopt the immortal mission of the artist: to ennoble the present, and future generations. There was no standing still or entropy, but, instead, what LaRouche called anti-entropy. Motivated by his love for mankind, Beethoven willfully became more and more conscious of his own creative powers, and constantly strove to leap up to the next higher level of creativity, with the explicit goal of more closely reaching the power of God's own creativity. (See box on page 30.)

The Sublime

Beethoven's passion to fulfill his mission gave him the power to rise above personal adversity, in the form of his increasing deafness. As he put it in his moving Heiligenstadt testament, he was in anguish about losing that very sense which he ought to have in perfection.

Schiller calls this the sublime—our ability to rise above sensual pain, for the purpose of a higher mission.

In 1813, Beethoven wrote: "Lend sublimity to my highest thoughts, enrich them with truths that remain truths forever!"[28]

He copied from another source: "Everything that is called life should be sacrificed to the sublime and be a sanctuary of art."[29]

Beethoven wrote to his good friend Dr. Franz Wegeler, in about 1801, about his anxiety during the previous two years because of his increasing deafness, and recent happy moments due to a woman he was now in love with, continuing:

24. A word coined before Schiller, by Johann Georg Adam Forster in writing about Benjamin Franklin.
25. Kalischer, page 330.
26. Manuel Komroff, *Beethoven and the World of Music*, Dodd, Mead, 1961, page 164.
27. Solomon, "Reason and Imagination," in *Historical Musicology,* page 190.
28. Hamburger, *Beethoven: Letters,* page 122. See note 17.
29. Birgit Lodes, in William Kinderman (editor), *The String Quartets of Beethoven,* University of Illinois Press, 2020, page 186.

Beethoven: 'To Spread the Rays of the Godhead'

In a letter to Archduke Rudolph, Beethoven wrote:

> There is nothing higher than to approach the Godhead more nearly than other mortals and by means of that contact to spread the rays of the Godhead through the human race.[j]

To Emilie, a girl of 8 to 10 years old, who had written to him in 1812:

> Persevere, do not only practice your art, but endeavor also to fathom its inner meaning; it deserves this effort. For only art and science can raise men to the level of gods.... The true artist has no pride. He sees unfortunately that art has no limits; he has a vague awareness of how far he is from reaching his goal; and while others may perhaps be admiring him, he laments the fact that he has not yet reached the point whither his better genius only lights the way for him like a distant sun.
>
> I should probably prefer to visit you and your family than to visit many a rich person who betrays a poverty of mind. If I should ever go to H., then I will call on you and your family. I know of no other human excellences than those which entitle one to be numbered among one's better fellow creatures. Where I find people of that type, there is my home.[k]

In the 1790s, he wrote about the need "to strive towards the inaccessible goal which art and nature have set us."[l]

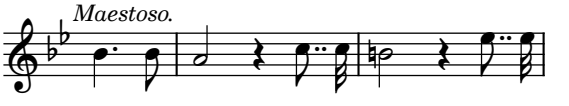
When asked which of the string quartets *opera* 127, 130, 132 was the greatest: "Each in its way. Art demands of us that we shall not stand still…. You will find a new manner of part writing and thank God there is less lack of fancy than ever before."[m]

For the artist "there is no more undisturbed, more unalloyed or purer pleasure" than that which comes from rising "ever higher into the heaven of art."[n]

Freedom and progress are the aims throughout creation:

> [T]he older composers render us double service, since there is generally real artistic value in their works (among them only the German Handel and Seb. Bach possessed genius). But in the world of art, and in the whole of our great creation, *freedom and progress* are the main objectives. And although we moderns are not quite as far advanced in *solidity* as our *ancestors,* yet the refinement of our customs has enlarged many of our conceptions as well.[o]

Dr. Kalischer comments[p] on a letter of Beethoven to a court lawyer, Dr. Johann Baptist Bach: "We may recall the fact that the composer thought of writing an Overture on the name [B-A-C-H: B-flat, A, C, B-natural in German letter notation]; there are many sketches, the following is among some for the *Tenth Symphony*:



In a letter to the new directors of the Royal Imperial Court Theatre in Vienna, Beethoven wrote: "[T]he undersigned has always striven less for a livelihood than for the interests of art, the ennoblement of taste and the uplifting of his genius towards higher ideals and perfection."[q]

---

j. Solomon, "Reason and Imagination," in *Historical Musicology,* page189.
k. Emily Anderson (editor), Letter No. 376, in *The Letters of Beethoven,* Vol. 1, W.W. Norton, 1986, pages 380-381.
l. Solomon, "Reason and Imagination," in *Historical Musicology,* page 191.
m. *Ibid.,* page 192.
n. *Ibid.,* page 192.
o. *Ibid.,* page 192. Words in parentheses from Kalischer, page 270.
p. Kalischer, page 326.
q. *Thayer's Life of Beethoven,* revised and edited by Elliot Forbes, Vol. I, Princeton University Press, 1991, page 426.

> For me there is no greater pleasure than that of practicing and displaying my art. My strength, both in body and mind, for some time has been on the increase. Every day brings me nearer to the goal which I feel but cannot describe. And it is only in that condition that your Beethoven can live. There must be no rest—I know of none but sleep.... I will seize fate by the throat; it shall certainly not wholly overcome me. Oh! life is so beautiful. Would that I could have a thousand lives![30]

A year later, in the testament Beethoven wrote in Heiligenstadt addressed to his brothers, but never sent, he penned that he was so desperate, that he had considered taking his own life. But he could not morally allow himself to do so, because he knew that he had so much more music to give humanity:

> But what a humiliation for me when someone standing next to me heard a flute in the distance and I heard nothing, or someone heard a shepherd singing and again I heard nothing. Such incidents drove me almost to despair; a little more of that and I would have ended my life—it was only my art that held me back. Ah, it seemed to me impossible to leave the world until I had brought forth all that I felt was within me…. "Divine one, thou seest my inmost soul thou knowest that therein dwells the love of mankind and the desire to do good." Ever since my childhood my heart and soul have been imbued with the tender feeling of goodwill; and I have always been inclined to accomplish great things.[31]

Beethoven, sculpted by Hugo Hagen in 1898.

This became Beethoven's moral imperative—Beethoven, the musician, and Beethoven, the man.

On September 17, 1824 to publisher Schott, after writing that his health was poor:

> Apollo and the Muses will not yet hand me over to the Scythe Man, for I still owe them much; and before my departure for the Elysian Fields I must finish what the spirit suggests to me [or, as another translation has it: what the Eternal Spirit has infused into my soul[32]] and commands me to finish. It is to me as if I had only written a few notes.[33]

In art, there is a seeming paradox. The artist's thoughts are often light years ahead of the general population, yet the mission of the artist is to ennoble just those people through the aesthetical experience—to raise the sights of the people to the stars. Beethoven, especially, felt this paradox, but was determined to compose at the highest level he could, despite complaints that his works were either unplayable, or not understandable.

Beethoven for Us, Today

Though he could not hear music with his ears, Beethoven heard music in his mind and felt it in his soul. He would go on to produce what many consider the greatest music in human history. That is why people all over the world still perform and listen to his music. That is also why we must strive to present Beethoven's music to those, emphatically including young people, who don't know the beauty they are missing. Let us give it to them, as Beethoven's present to everyone, on the occasion of his 250th birthday.

Dear reader, take the opportunity to celebrate

30. Kalischer, page 23.
31. *Thayer's Life of Beethoven,* Vol. I, revised and edited by Elliot Forbes, Princeton University Press, 1991, page 305.
32. Maynard Solomon, *Late Beethoven: Music, Thought, Imagination,* University of California Press, 2004, page 93.
33. Kalischer, page 332.

Beethoven's birthday by immersing yourself in listening to, and even playing and singing, his works, so that you may better understand the creative beings that we are. Notes on paper represent not just tones, but the keys to Beethoven's creative mind. Thereby, you can confirm a positive image of man, which also had a political dimension for Beethoven—the pursuit of freedom.

Six months after leaving Bonn, Beethoven quoted from Friedrich Schiller's play, *Don Carlos* in the commemorative leaf that he wrote for a woman: "Do well where one can, love freedom above all, never renounce the truth, not even before the royal throne."[34]

EIRNS/Sylvia Spaniolo

"The true artist feels inward pleasure in the production of great works." —Beethoven. Here, the Schiller Institute NYC Chorus and orchestra in a concert on Schiller's birthday, St. Bartholomew's Church, New York, November 18, 2018. The Schiller Institute encourages members of the public to join the Chorus.

As Schiller said, the road to Freedom goes through Beauty. That was Schiller's solution after the French Revolution, which did not end like the American Revolution, but in a bloodbath.[35] It is not rage and anger that will transform our society for the better, but reasoned future-oriented policy proposals based on the most noble image of man.

Beethoven characterized humanity as "we mortals with immortal minds." His creativity can speak directly to you from his place in the "simultaneity of eternity," the place LaRouche often spoke of, outside of space and time, where the emanations of the most creative people in history are found.

From a letter to a painter: "*Continue to paint* and I shall *continue to write down notes,* and thus we shall live—forever?—yes, perhaps, forever."[36]

"I would rather set to music Homer, Klopstock, Schiller, although even these would cause difficulties, but *these immortal poets* are worth it."[37]

To fellow composer Luigi Cherubini: "True art is imperishable, and the true artist feels inward pleasure in the production of great works."[38]

We can drink from this fountain of creativity, and nourish ourselves, so that, hopefully, we may contribute, each in his or her own way, to enriching the flow.

And ye musicians: strive to master Beethoven's compositional principles so that we may rediscover the almost lost art of composing beautiful and profound music, and, maybe, even, go beyond.

Let Beethoven aid us in developing our own creative powers so that we may generate nothing less than a new global renaissance, for the sake of needy humanity.

—mich.ras@hotmail.com

Read the author's other articles on culture at https://rasmussenmichelle.academia.edu/.

34. To Theodora Johanna Vocke in Nuremberg, May 22, 1793. Joseph Schmidt-Görg, "A Schiller Quote from Beethoven in a New Perspective," in Günter Henle, *Music, Edition, Interpretation,* 1980, page 423.
35. Beethoven actually expressed his desire to travel to North America. "If only God will restore me to my health, which to say the least, has improved, I could do myself justice, in accepting offers from all cities in Europe, yes, even North America, and might still prosper." Beethoven received a request for an oratorio from Boston's Musical Society, which, in the end, he did not write. Kalischer, page 289.
36. Solomon, *Late Beethoven,* page 98. See note 32.
37. Kalischer, page 321.
38. Kalischer, page 296.