



The Composer in Question
BEETHOVEN 250

Friday 24 January

This year we celebrate the 250th anniversary of the birth of Beethoven, the archetypal Romantic composer. We explore his early days in Bonn, capital of the Electorate of Cologne, and his pupilage with Haydn in Vienna, through to his First Symphony of 1800 and the great Symphonies that followed: the Eroica inspired by Napoleon, the Fifth with its now-legendary opening chords, the Pastoral inspired by country songs, and the mighty Ninth inspired by Schiller's Ode to Joy, one of the first examples of a Choral Symphony. During his life, he composed nine symphonies; five piano concertos; one violin concerto; thirty-two piano sonatas; sixteen string quartets; two masses; and the opera Fidelio. His piano sonatas, the Moonlight, Pathétique and Hammerklavier, Waldstein and Appassionata, and his piano concertos such as the Emperor have become central to the repertoire, and an appreciation of his late quartets essential to the public image of the intellectual. We set the music in the context of the Beethovens' financial and emotional difficulties, not to mention his increasing deafness, as evidence of the potential of the human spirit to soar above worldly and bodily troubles.

All Culture in Question lectures take place in the Art Workers Guild, Queen Square, Bloomsbury, Coffee is served at 10.30, the lectures begin at 11, and a light lunch with wine is served at 1 pm. The event ends by 3.30 p.m. £90 members, £100 non-members