

Estudio número 5

Beethoven: su pérdida auditiva y sus audífonos.

Otology Neurotology - Italia y Estados Unidos.

Este interesante artículo, que se sale de la temática habitual relacionada con la investigación básica o clínica, nos sirve para celebrar el 250 aniversario del nacimiento del gran compositor clásico, Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827). En él se describe cómo le afectó su pérdida auditiva y cómo los primitivos audífonos de esa época ayudaron a mitigar su sordera. Desde los 26 años, Beethoven comenzó a sufrir una hipoacusia fluctuante y progresiva, que comenzó en su oído izquierdo, donde tenía dificultad para escuchar tonos más altos y palabras, y asociado con tinnitus y el reclutamiento.

Sin embargo, a pesar de su pérdida auditiva, Beethoven nunca perdió su amor por la música y continuó componiendo, a veces usando algunos de los audífonos acústicos que se estaban desarrollando. Se analizan y describen las trompetas y la placa resonante que el ingeniero Johan Nepomuk Maelzel y el pianista Conrad Graf, respectivamente, construyeron para tratar de mejorar la audición de Beethoven.

Un artículo muy recomendable para los interesados en la historia de la especialidad y los amantes de la música.

Beethoven: his hearing loss and his hearing aids.

To celebrate the 250th anniversary of the birth of the great classical composer, Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827), we point out how his hearing loss affected him and how the primitive hearing aids at that time helped mitigate his hearing loss. From the age of 26, Beethoven began to suffer from a fluctuating, progressive hearing loss ("my hearing grew worse and worse"), This started in his left ear ("in my left ear, with which this illness of my ears had started"), where he had difficulty hearing higher pitched tones ("I don't hear the high notes of the instruments and voices") and words ("Sometimes, I cannot hear people who speak quietly, I can hear the sounds, but not the words") and associated with tinnitus ("my ears, they still keep buzzing and humming day and night") and loudness recruitment ("if someone yells, it is unbearable to me").

However, in spite of his hearing loss, Beethoven never lost his love for music and continued composing music, at times using some of the acoustic hearing aids that were just being developed. We analyze and describe the ear trumpets, and the resonant plate that engineer Johan Nepomuk Maelzel and piano-maker Conrad Graf, respectively, constructed to try to improve Beethoven's hearing. Moreover, we discuss the possible use of a wooden drumstick Beethoven might have used to improve his perception of the piano's sound.

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