

Beethoven bones may identify his illness

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A possible connection between a strand of Beethoven's hair and exhumed bones may show the cause of the classical composer's illness and genius.

The Center for Beethoven Studies at San Jose State University now has both, and will be used for scientific research, the San Jose Mercury News reports.

Beethoven suffered from gastrointestinal issues and deafness.

Theorists believe this suffering may have lead to his ability to compose masterpieces, and maybe his death.

Preliminary studies show the hair and bones had high traces of lead, which may have been the cause of Beethoven's problems.

The bones, passed down a family tree to Paul Kaufmann of Danville, Calif., will be on exhibit at the center. Kaufmann has loaned them "in perpetuity."

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