

The madness of genius Glenn Gould (3)

Glenn Gould (25 September 1932 – 4 October 1982) was a Canadian pianist who became one of the best-known and most-celebrated classical pianists of the 20th century.

Glenn Gould was renowned as an interpreter of the keyboard works of [Johann Sebastian Bach](#). Gould's playing was distinguished by a remarkable technical proficiency and a capacity to articulate the [contrapuntal](#) texture of Bach's music.

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Glenn Gould studied piano from the age of 3, began composing at 5, and entered the Royal Conservatory of Music of Toronto at 10, earning its associate degree in 1946. In 1952 Gould isolated himself and, working only with a [tape recorder](#), developed an individual style of playing with his head hunched over the keyboard.



His debut performances (1955) in [New York City](#) and Washington, D.C., earned him critical success and a recording contract, and his recording of [J.S. Bach's Goldberg Variations](#) (released 1956) enjoyed an unusual popular success.

Gould's preferred [repertoire](#) consisted of contrapuntal works, particularly those of Bach, late [Beethoven](#), and [Arnold Schoenberg](#), and notably omitted the lush works of 19th-century [Romanticism](#). In 1964 he gave up a successful concert career to work exclusively in the recording studio as performer, editor, and producer of his own recordings.

The eccentricity of some of Gould's musical interpretations was matched by the disconcerting strangeness of his posture, dress, and behaviour in concert, but the quality of his performances of Bach's keyboard works was probably unrivaled in the 20th century. Among the numerous honours conferred upon him was a lifetime achievement award from the Recording Academy, presented posthumously in 2013.