Eduard Mörike

Eduard Friedrich Mörike (Ludwigsburg, September 8, 1804 – June 4, 1875 in Stuttgart) was a German romantic poet.

He studied Theology at the Seminary of Tübingen, and followed the ecclesiastical career, becoming a Lutheran pastor. In 1834 he was appointed pastor of Cleversulzbach near Weinsberg, and, after his early retirement for reasons of health, in 1851 became professor of German literature at the Katharinenstift in Stuttgart. This office he held until his retirement in 1866; but he continued to live at Stuttgart until his death on the 4th of June 1875.

Mörike's home in Lorch, Württemberg

Mörike is the most lyrically gifted of all the poets belonging to the so-called Swabian school which gathered round Ludwig Uhland. His poems, *Gedichte* (1838; 22nd ed., 1905), are mostly lyrics, graceful in style, original in conception, often humorous, but expressed in simple and natural language. His *lieder* (songs) are of great purity of form and have been compared to those of Goethe. He also wrote a somewhat fantastic *Idylle vom Bodensee, oder Fischer Martin und die Glockendiebe* (1846; 2nd ed., 1856), and published a collection of hymns, odes, elegies and idylls of the Greeks and Romans, entitled *Klassische Blumenlese* (1840), and several novels and narratives, among the former *Maler Nolten* ("The painter Nolten", 1832; 6th ed., 1901), a bildungsroman which enjoyed great popularity. Another work is the novella *Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag* ("Mozart on the way to Prague", 1856), a humorous examination of the problems of artists in a world uncongenial to art. Many of his lyrics were set to music by Hugo Wolf. Mörike's *Gesammelte Schriften* (*Collected Writings*) were first published in 4 vols.

Friedrich Hölderlin

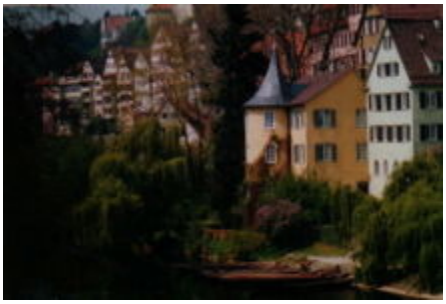
Friedrich Hölderlin

Johann Christian Friedrich Hölderlin (March 20, 1770 – June 6, 1843) was a major German lyric poet. His work bridges the Classical and Romantic schools.

Hölderlin was born in Lauffen am Neckar in the kingdom of Württemberg. He studied Theology at the *Tübinger Stift* (seminary of the Protestant Church in Württemberg), where he was friends and roommates with the future philosophers Georg Hegel and Friedrich Schelling. They mutually influenced one another, and it has been speculated that it was probably Hölderlin who brought to Hegel's attention the ideas of Heraclitus about the union of opposites, which the philosopher would develop into his concept of dialectics.

Being from a family of limited means (his mother was twice a widow), and having little inclination for an ecclesiastical career, Hölderlin had to earn his living as a tutor of children of well-to-do families. While working as the tutor of the sons of Jakob Gontard, a Frankfurt banker, he fell in love with his employer's wife Susette, who would become his great love. Susette Gontard is the model for the Diotima of his epistolary novel, *Hyperion*.

Having been publicly insulted by Gontard, Hölderlin felt forced to quit his job in the banker's household and found himself again in a difficult financial situation (even as some of his poems were already being published through the influence of his occasional protector, the poet Friedrich Schiller), having to accept a small allowance from his mother.


Hölderlinturm in Tübingen

Already at this time he was diagnosed as suffering from a severe "hypochondria", a condition that would worsen after his last meeting with Susette Gontard in 1800. In early 1802 he found a job as tutor of the children of the Hamburg consul in Bordeaux, France, and traveled by foot to that city. His travel and stay there are celebrated in *Andenken* (Remembrance), one of his greatest poems. In a few months, however, he would be back in Germany showing signs of mental disorder, which was aggravated by the news of Susette's death.

In 1807, having become largely insane, he was brought into the home of Ernst Zimmer, a Tübingen carpenter with literary leanings, who was an admirer of his *Hyperion*. For the next 36 years, Hölderlin would live in Zimmer's house, in a tower room overlooking the beautiful Neckar valley, being cared for by the Zimmer family until his death in 1843. Wilhelm Waiblinger, a young poet and admirer, has left a poignant account of Hölderlin's day-to-day life during these long, empty years.

Friedrich Schiller

Friedrich Schiller

Johann Christoph Friedrich (later: **von**) **Schiller** (November 10, 1759 – May 9, 1805), was a German poet, philosopher, historian, and dramatist. During the last several years of his life (1788–1805), Schiller struck a productive, if complicated, friendship with already famous and influential Johann Wolfgang Goethe, with whom he discussed much on issues concerning aesthetics, encouraging Goethe to finish works he left merely as sketches; this thereby gave way to a period now referred to as Weimar Classicism. They also worked together on *Die Xenien* (*The Xenies*), a collection of short but harshly satiric poems in which both Schiller and Goethe verbally attacked those persons they perceived to be enemies of their aesthetic agenda.