

# Morton Feldman

## Quotes

*Art, Memories, Thinking, Music Is, Ideas, Play, Secret, Years, People, Attitude,  
Music, Purpose, Order, Remember, Sound, Procedures, Guitar, Might, Drawing,  
Composition*

Music can imply the infinite if enough things depart from the norm far enough. Strange "abnormal" events can lead to the feeling that anything can happen, and you have a music with no boundaries.

~Morton Feldman

The tragedy of music is that it begins with perfection.

~Morton Feldman

We do not hear what we hear..., only what we remember.

~Morton Feldman

The composer makes plans, music laughs.

~Morton Feldman

Do we have anything in music that really wipes everything out? That just cleans everything away?

~Morton Feldman

Most music is metaphor, but Wolff is not. I am not metaphor either. Parable, maybe. Cage is sermon.

~Morton Feldman

Music is essentially built upon primitive memory structures.

~Morton Feldman

I never understood what rules I was supposed to learn, and what rules I was supposed to break

~Morton Feldman

If you think you might have secret information listening to me, you're lost.

~Morton Feldman

Compositionally I always wanted to be like Fred Astaire.

~Morton Feldman

For years I said if I could only find a comfortable chair I would rival Mozart.

~Morton Feldman

To understand what music has to be, you have to live for music. Who's ready to do that?

~Morton Feldman

At one point [Cardew] taught himself to play guitar simply in order to take part in the performance in a composition by Boulez, which is a little like saying he learned Danish to read Kiekegaard.

~Morton Feldman

I want to give my compliments to Australia. Ever since your government paid a few million dollars for a Jackson Pollack painting, I figure that it must be a marvellous country

~Morton Feldman

I was once married to a woman who could eat anything and tell you what was in it: the most complicated recipes. Her memory of taste - now that's what I call memory!

~Morton Feldman

What was great about the 50s is that for one brief moment - maybe, say, six weeks - nobody understood art.

~Morton Feldman

After all, Jews invented psychiatry to help other Jews become Gentiles.

~Morton Feldman

I never feel that my music is sparse or minimalist; the way fat people

never really think they're fat. I certainly don't consider myself minimalist at all

~Morton Feldman

For me it's the instrument. If I want to think of a flute and the state of the arts I hear a vibrato; I don't know what a flute is unless the person plays it for me

~Morton Feldman

I'm not suspicious, I'm just careful.

~Morton Feldman

No one has the Houdini school of composition.

~Morton Feldman

Since music has never had a Rembrandt, we have remained nothing more than musicians.

~Morton Feldman

Boulez, who is everything I don't want art to be... Boulez, who once said in an essay that he is not interested in how a piece sounds, only how it is made.

~Morton Feldman

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