

# Ned Rorem Quotes

*Art, Artist, Music, Memories, Mean, Needs, Gay, Men, Perfect, Hero, Musical,  
People, Magic, Firsts, Evoke, Composer, Tolerance, Missing, Eleven, Dare*

Don't be too dismissive of children. While it's true that few children are artists, all artists are children.

~Ned Rorem

Arguably, no artist grows up: If he sheds the perceptions of childhood, he ceases being an artist.

~Ned Rorem

Divine fires do not blaze each day but an artist functions in their afterglow, hoping for their recurrence.

~Ned Rorem

Inspiration could be called inhaling the memory of an act never experienced.

~Ned Rorem

It's not evil that's ruining the earth, but mediocrity. The crime is not that Nero played while Rome burned, but that he played badly.

~Ned Rorem

Humor is the ability to see three sides to one coin.

~Ned Rorem

If music could be translated into human speech, it would no longer need to exist.

~Ned Rorem

The beautiful are shyer than the ugly, for they move in a world that does not ask for beauty.

~Ned Rorem

Nothing is a waste that makes a memory.

~Ned Rorem

The art of translation lies less in knowing the other language than in knowing your own.

~Ned Rorem

composition is notation of distortion of what composers think they've heard before. Masterpieces are marvelous misquotations.

~Ned Rorem

To start writing about your life is, from one standpoint, to stop living it. You must avoid adventures today so as to make time for registering those of yesterday.

~Ned Rorem

Quarrels in France strengthen a love affair, in America they end it.

~Ned Rorem

The Great don't innovate, they fertilize seeds planted by lackeys, they leave to others the inhaling of the flowers whose roots they've manured. A deceptive memory may be the key to their originality.

~Ned Rorem

So far as musical pedagogy is concerned - And by extension of musical creation - Nadia Boulanger is the most influential person who ever lived

~Ned Rorem

Art means to dare - and to have been right.

~Ned Rorem

Artists, by definition innocent, don't steal. But they do borrow without giving back.

~Ned Rorem

An artist doesn't necessarily have deeper feelings than other people,

but he can express these feelings. He is like everyone else-only more so! He speaks with a Formal Sigh.

~Ned Rorem

There are no fascinating people, only their works are fascinating.

~Ned Rorem

Perfection is no more a requisite to art than to heroes.

~Ned Rorem

To see itself through, music must have idea or magic. ... Music with neither dies young though rich.

~Ned Rorem

The same piece of music alters at each hearing. But oh, the need to repeat and repeat and repeat unchanged the sexual experience.

~Ned Rorem

Music is the sole art which evokes nostalgia for the future.

~Ned Rorem

In music the present is extended.

~Ned Rorem

If a composer could state in words what being a composer means, he would no longer need to be a composer.

~Ned Rorem

Bel canto is to opera what pole-vaulting is to ballet.

~Ned Rorem

All men are forced into one of two categories: those with eleven fingers and those without.

~Ned Rorem

Intelligence is silence, truth is being invisible. But what a racket I make in declaring this.

~Ned Rorem

Art's the biggest vanity: the assumption that one's view of peace or fright or beauty is permanently communicable.

~Ned Rorem

The hardest of all the arts to speak of is music, because music has no meaning to speak of

~Ned Rorem

Sooner or later you've heard all your best friends have to say. Then comes the tolerance of real love.

~Ned Rorem

Minor artists borrow, great ones steal.

~Ned Rorem

Greatness is not the effect of which inspiration is the cause. We are all inspired, but we are all not great.

~Ned Rorem

Anyone can be gay - it's no accomplishment - but only I can be me.

~Ned Rorem

Compose first, worry later.

~Ned Rorem

I don't go to concerts much. I've heard everything. When I do go to movies, I walk out half the time. As for literature, I've read everything.

~Ned Rorem

Classic means standard as opposed to Romantic: form before meaning

as opposed to meaning before form. It grows from inside out, while Romantic grows from outside in.

~Ned Rorem

Perfection is no more a requisite to art than to heroes. Frigidaires are perfect. Beauty limps. My frigidaire has had to be replaced.

~Ned Rorem

Why, after all, must everyone like music? That they are missing something is just the lover's opinion.

~Ned Rorem

Love is a mystery which, when solved, evaporates. The same holds for music.

~Ned Rorem

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