

Quotes on art from famous artists

Picasso is the reason why I paint. He is the father figure, who gave me the wish to paint.

Francis Bacon

I paint for myself. I don't know how to do anything else, anyway. Also I have to earn my living, and occupy myself.

Francis Bacon

The job of the artist is always to deepen the mystery.

Francis Bacon

...I paint German artists whom I admire. I paint their pictures, their work as painters, and their portraits too. But oddly enough, each of these portraits ends up as a picture of a woman with blonde hair. I myself have never been able to work out why this happens.

Georg Baselitz

I myself do nothing. The Holy Spirit accomplishes all through me.

William Blake

To see far is one thing, going there is another.

Constantin Brancusi

Create like a god, command like a king, work like a slave.

Constantin Brancusi

What is real is not the external form, but the essence of things . . . it is impossible for anyone to express anything essentially real by imitating its exterior surface.

Constantin Brancusi

Don't look for obscure formulas or mystery in my work. It is pure joy that I offer you. Look at my sculptures until you see them. Those closest to God have seen them.

Constantin Brancusi

Art is made to disturb. Science reassures. There is only one valuable thing in art: the thing you cannot explain.

Georges Braque

Who in the world am I? Ah, that's the great puzzle.

Lewis Carroll

Don't be an art critic, but paint, there lies salvation.

Paul Cezanne

A work of art which did not begin in emotion is not art.

Paul Cezanne

What is one to think of those fools who tell one that the artist is always subordinate to nature? Art is in harmony parallel with nature.

Paul Cezanne

All my life I have worked to be able to earn my living, but I thought that one could do good painting without attracting attention to one's private life. Certainly, an artist wishes to raise himself intellectually as much as possible, but the man must remain obscure. The pleasure must be found in the work.

Paul Cezanne

Great art picks up where nature ends.

Marc Chagall

The beautiful is in nature, and it is encountered under the most diverse forms of reality. Once it is found it belongs to art, or rather to the artist who discovers it.

Gustave Courbet

Have no fear of perfection, you'll never reach it.

Salvador Dali

Those who do not want to imitate anything, produce nothing.

Salvador Dali

Art is not what you see, but what you make others see.

Edgar Degas

What moves men of genius, or rather what inspires their work, is not new ideas, but their obsession with the idea that what has already been said is still not enough.

Eugene Delacroix

The longer you look at an object, the more abstract it becomes, and, ironically, the more real.

Lucian Freud

I remember Francis Bacon would say that he felt he was giving art what he thought it previously lacked. With me, it's what Yeats called the fascination with what's difficult. I'm only trying to do what I can't do.

Lucian Freud

The object of art is not to reproduce reality, but to create a reality of the same intensity.

Alberto Giacometti

My contribution to the world is my ability to draw. I will draw as much as I can for as many people as I can for as long as I can. Drawing is still basically the same as it has been since prehistoric times. It brings together man and the world. It lives through magic.

Keith Haring

If I could say it in words there would be no reason to paint.

Edward Hopper

I never paint dreams or nightmares. I paint my own reality.

Frida Kahlo

There is no must in art because art is free.

Wassily Kandinsky

A Good artist has less time than ideas.

Martin Kippenberger

I am rather like a travelling salesman. I deal in ideas. I do much more for people than just paint them pictures.

Martin Kippenberger

In our time there are many artists who do something because it is new; they see their value and their justification in this newness. They are deceiving themselves; novelty is seldom the essential. This has to do with one thing only; making a subject better from its intrinsic nature.

Henri de Toulouse Lautrec

Poor is the pupil who does not surpass his master.

Leonardo da Vinci

Life obliges me to do something, so I paint.

Rene Magritte

What I dream of is an art of balance, of purity and serenity devoid of troubling or depressing subject matter.

Henri Matisse

Drawing is like making an expressive gesture with the advantage of permanence.

Henri Matisse

. . I have always sought to be understood and, while I was taken to task by critics or colleagues, I thought they were right, assuming I had not been clear enough to be understood. This assumption allowed me to work my whole life without hatred and even without bitterness toward criticism, regardless of its source. I counted solely on the clarity of expression of my work to gain my ends. Hatred, rancor, and the spirit of vengeance are useless baggage to the artist. His road is difficult enough for him to cleanse his soul of everything which could make it more so.

Henri Matisse

Creativity takes courage.

Henri Matisse

If people knew how hard I worked to get my mastery, it wouldn't seem so wonderful at all.

Michelangelo

Lord, grant that I may always desire more than I can accomplish.

Michelangelo

I feel the need of attaining the maximum of intensity with the minimum of means. It is this which has led me to give my painting a character of even greater bareness.

Joan Miro

The position of the artist is humble. He is essentially a channel.

Piet Mondrian

Colour is my day-long obsession, joy and torment.

Claude Monet

To be an artist is to believe in life.

Henry Moore

It is important to express oneself...provided the feelings are real and are taken from your own experience.

Berthe Morisot

Nature is not only all that is visible to the eye.. it also includes the inner pictures of the soul.

Edvard Munch

No longer shall I paint interiors with men reading and women knitting. I will paint living people who breathe and feel and suffer and love.

Edvard Munch

So I said to myself-I'll paint what I see-what the flower is to me but I'll paint it big and they will be surprised into taking the time to look at it-I will make even busy New Yorkers take time to see what I see of flowers.

Georgia O'Keeffe

I found I could say things with color and shapes that I couldn't say any other way--things I had no words for.

Georgia O'Keeffe

I am for an art that is political-erotic-mystical, that does something other than sit on its ass in a museum.

Claes Oldenburg

Painting is a means of self-enlightenment.

John Olsen

On the floor I am more at ease. I feel nearer, more a part of the painting, since this way I can walk around it, work from the four sides and literally be in the painting.

Jackson Pollock

The painting has a life of its own.

Jackson Pollock

Every good painter paints what he is.

Jackson Pollock

If you want to have clean ideas, change them as often as you change your shirts.

Francis Picabia

I don't say everything, but I paint everything.

Pablo Picasso

Art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life.

Pablo Picasso

I begin with an idea and then it becomes something else.

Pablo Picasso

Painting is just another way of keeping a diary.

Pablo Picasso

There are painters who transform the sun into a yellow spot, but there are others who, thanks to their art and intelligence, transform a yellow spot into the sun.

Pablo Picasso

Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up.

Pablo Picasso

Painting is the grandchild of nature. It is related to God.

Rembrandt

You come to nature with all her theories, and she knocks them all flat.

Pierre Auguste Renoir

It is a widely accepted notion among painters that it does not matter what one paints as long as it is well painted. This is the essence of academicism. There is no such thing as good painting about nothing.

Mark Rothko

For me, painting is a way to forget life. It is a cry in the night, a strangled laugh.

Georges Rouault

Everytime I paint a portrait I lose a friend.

John Singer Sargent

It is not the language of painters but the language of nature which one should listen to, the feeling for the things themselves, for reality, is more important than the feeling for pictures.

Vincent Van Gogh

The only time I feel alive is when I'm painting.

Vincent Van Gogh

I want to touch people with my art. I want them to say 'he feels deeply, he feels tenderly.'

Vincent Van Gogh

The emotions are sometimes so strong that I work without knowing it. The strokes come like speech.

Vincent Van Gogh

I have Social Disease. I have to go out every night. If I stay home one night I start spreading rumors to my dogs.

Andy Warhol

Why do people think artists are special? It's just another job.

Andy Warhol

Making money is art and working is art and good business is the best art.

Andy Warhol

Being born is like being kidnapped. And then sold into slavery.

Andy Warhol

Don't pay any attention to what they write about you. Just measure it in inches.

Andy Warhol

Death means a lot of money, honey. Death can really make you look like a star.

Andy Warhol

An artist is not paid for his labor but for his vision.

James McNeill Whistler

The fine art of painting, which is the bastard of alchemy, always has been always will be, a game. The rules of the game are quite simple: in a given arena, on as many psychic fronts as the talent allows, one must visually describe, the centre of the meaning of existence

Brett Whiteley

Art is the thrilling spark that beats death - that's all

Brett Whiteley

Everything is such a sort of stoned state... I walk around with a bunch of violets in my hand and a sledgehammer and a grain of sand in my head. I am happy.

Brett Whiteley