

# Quotes on Art and Artists



Mankind's Wisdom on Art  
from  
Plato to Picasso

*Quotes on Art and Artists*  
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*from Plato to Picasso*

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*Richer Resources Publications*  
*Arlington, Virginia*

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Richer Resources Publications  
1926 N. Woodrow Street  
Arlington, Virginia 22207  
or via our website at:  
[www.RicherResourcesPublications.com](http://www.RicherResourcesPublications.com)

ISBN 978-I-935238-98-0

Printed in India by Fine Grains  
New Delhi 110019 India

For Artists *and their* Art



*Peter Paul Rubens*

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

Pablo Picasso



*Paul Gauguin*

*Art, being quite useless except to the soul, is the  
highest of all human endeavors.*

Bruce Rogers

*Color in a picture is like enthusiasm in life.*

Vincent van Gogh

*An artist is a dreamer consenting  
to dream of the actual world.*

George Santayana

*I close my eyes in order to see.*

Paul Gauguin

*Where the spirit does not work with  
the hand, there is no art.*

Leonardo da Vinci

*Art is not a mirror held up to reality, but  
a hammer with which to shape it.*

Bertolt Brecht

*Every artist dips his brush into his own soul  
and paints his own nature into it.*

Henry Ward Beecher



*Claude Monet*

*I think it pisses God off if you walk by the color purple  
in a field somenwhere and don't notice it.*

*Alice Walker, The Color Purple*

*Art flourishes where there is a sense of adventure.*

*Alfred North Whitehead*

*Great art picks up where nature ends.*

*Marc Chagall*

*Painting is silent poetry,  
and poetry is painting that speaks.*

*Simonides*

*Every art requires the whole person.*

*French Proverb*

*Only in art will the lion lie down with the lamb,  
and the rose grow without thorn.*

*Martin Amis*

*Blessed are they who see beautiful things in humble  
places where other people see nothing.*

*Camille Pissarro*



Mao

*Some painters transform the sun into a yellow spot.  
Others transform a yellow spot into the sun.*

*Pablo Picasso*

*The artist does not tinker with the universe,  
he recreates it out of his own experience  
and understanding of life.*

*Henry Miller*

*The greatness of art is not to find what is  
common, but what is unique.*

*Isaac Bashevis Singer*

*Art must take reality by surprise.*

*F. Sagan*

*The effort of art is to keep what is interesting in  
existence; to recreate it in the eternal.*

*George Santayana*

*Every great work of art has two faces, one toward  
its own time and one toward the  
future, toward eternity.*

*Anon*



*Jan van Goyen*

*A work of art is above all an adventure of the mind.*

Eugene Ionesco

*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'Keefe

*There is no must in art because it is free.*

Wassily Kandinsky

*Space is the breath of art.*

Frank Lloyd Wright

*To affect the quality of the day, that  
is the highest of the arts.*

Anon

*Art is unquestionably one of the highest  
elements in human happiness.*

Anon

*Vision is the art of seeing what is invisible to others.*

Anon



*Claude Lorraine*

*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*

*Everyone wants to understand painting. Why is there no attempt to understand the song of the birds?*

*Pablo Picasso*

*Art is born of the observation and investigation of nature.*

*Cicero*

*Art takes nature as its model.*

*Aristotle*

*Art is a way of expression that has to be understood by everyone, everywhere.*

*Rufino Tamayo*

*The artist should open the eyes of the viewer to overlooked beauty that is sometimes right in front of us.*

*Kenn Backhaus*



*Johan Barthold Jongkind*

*Without art, the view of the world would be incomplete.*

*Conrad Fiedler*

*It is the artist's business to create sunshine  
when the sun fails.*

*Anon*

*Art is the proper task of life.*

*Friedrich Nietzsche*

*The painting has a life of its own.  
I try to let it come through.*

*Jackson Pollack*

*Nature is painting for us, day after day,  
pictures of infinite beauty.*

*John Ruskin*

*Art cannot be copied. It must be created.*

*Anon*

*Keep your love of nature, for that is the true way  
to understand art more and more.*

*Vincent van Gogh*



*Michelangelo*

*Art is the expression of the immortal part of man.*

*Ignace Paderewski*

*No amount of skillful invention can replace the  
essential element of imagination.*

*Edward Hopper*

*Art is about giving the viewer something  
that they could never imagine.*

*Brad Greek*

*I saw the angel in the marble and  
carved until I set him free.*

*Michelangelo*

*Art, when really understood, is the province  
of every human being.*

*Robert Henri*

*Art teaches nothing, except the significance of life.*

*Henry Miller*

*What a society deems important is enshrined in its art.*

*Harry Broudy*



*Alexej Kondratjewitsch Sawrassow*

*When I judge art, I take my painting and put it next to a  
God made object like a tree or flower.  
If it clashes, it is not art.*

*Paul Cezanne*

*In art and dream may you proceed with abandon.  
Patti Smith*

*True art is characterized by an irresistible urge  
in the creative artist.*

*Albert Einstein*

*Imagination will often carry us to worlds  
that never were. But without it,  
we go nowhere.*

*Carl Sagan*

*To send light into the darkness of men's hearts  
- such is the duty of the artist.*

*Robert A. Schumann*

*It is art that makes life, makes interest, makes  
importance and I know of no substitute whatever  
for the force and beauty of its process.*

*Henry James*



*Maler der Grabkammer des Menna*

*The artist brings something into the world that didn't  
exist before, and he does it without destroying  
something else - a kind of refutation of the  
conservation of matter.*

*John Updike*

*Art is man's expression of his joy in labor.*

*Henry Kissinger*

*Art is like a border of flowers along  
the course of civilization.*

*Lincoln Steffens*

*Art is the signature of civilizations.*

*Beverly Sills*

*Art has continuously broadened our horizon,  
increasing our awareness and our  
tolerance of the world as it is.*

*Ernst Lurker*

*Science and art belong to the whole world, and before  
them vanish the barriers of nationality.*

*Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*



*Leonardo da Vinci*

*Art arises when the secret vision of the artist  
and the manifestation of nature  
agree to find new shapes.*

*Kahlil Gibran*

*If art is to nourish the roots of our culture,  
society must set the artist free to follow  
his vision wherever it takes him.*

*John F. Kennedy*

*Art results, not when there is nothing that can be  
added, but when there is nothing  
that can be taken away.*

*James Collins*

*Art is only an aspect of our evolutionary process  
amid the long struggle to know and experience  
everything imaginable.*

*Nic East*

*At least 50% of my artwork is that which the viewer  
brings to it. If a viewer doesn't contribute his own  
ideas and conclusions, I'd feel my work  
was a profound failure.*

*Ira Crowe*



*Edgar Degas*

*What makes people the world over stand in line for  
van Gogh is not that they will see beautiful pictures,  
but that in an indefinable way, they will come  
away feeling better human beings. And that  
is exactly what Van Gogh hoped for.*

*John Russell*

*In every block of marble I see a statue as plain as  
though it stood before me, shaped and perfect  
in attitude and action. I have only to hew  
away the rough walls that imprison  
the lovely apparition to reveal it  
to their eyes as mine see it.*

*Michelangelo*

*The arts are an even better barometer of what  
is happening in our world than the stock  
market or the debates in Congress.*

*Hendrik Willem Van Loon*

*All the arts, poetry, music, ritual, the visible arts,  
the theater, must singly and together create  
the most comprehensive art of all,  
a humanized society,  
and its masterpiece, free man.*

*Bernard Berenson*



Caravaggio

*The dignity of the artist lies in his duty of keeping awake  
the sense of wonder in the world.*

*Gilbert Chesterton*

*Art is when you hear a knocking from your soul  
- and you answer.*

*Star Richés*

*Every genuine work of art has as much reason  
for being as the earth and the sun.*

*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

*What art is offers is space - a certain  
breathing room for the spirit.*

*John Updike*

*To draw, you must close your eyes and sing.*

*Pablo Picasso*

*I dream my painting and then paint my dream.*

*Vincent van Gogh*

*As the sun colors the flowers, so does art color life.*

*John Lubbock*



*François Boucher*

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

He who works with his hands is a laborer. He who works with his hands and his head is a craftsman. He who works with his hands and his head and his heart is an artist.

St. Francis of Assisi

Without the arts, we would lose our humanity

Szkal

Art completes what nature cannot bring to finish. The artist gives us knowledge of nature's unrealized ends.

Aristotle

The aim of every artist is to arrest motion, which is life, by artificial means and hold it fixed so that a hundred years later, when a stranger looks at it, it moves again, since it is life.

William Faulkner



*Pieter Claesz*

*The truth is that works of art test the spectator  
much more than the spectator tests the art.*

Lawren Harris

*What...man create creates by means of reason  
will pale before the art of inspired beings.*

Plato

*Art is the expression of those beauties and  
emotions that stir the human soul.*

Howard Pyle

*To create one's own world in any  
of the arts takes courage.*

Georgia O'Keefe

*The purpose of art is to create an emotional  
response in the person that is exposed to the art.  
Great art will make you feel an emotion  
you have never felt before.*

Paul O'Neill

*The art of a people is a true mirror to their minds.*

Jawaharlal Nehru



*Jan Davidsz de Heem*

*All art, whether it pleases us or not, helps to add color,  
excitement, joy or sadness and, most often,  
a sense of awe to our life's experience.*

*Henry O. Dormann*

*As artists, we are manifesting thought into  
reality every time we create.*

*Cristina Acosta*

*Art is the demonstration that the  
ordinary is extraordinary.*

*Amédée Ozenfant*

*Good art is not what it looks like,  
but what it does to us.*

*Roy Adzak*

*Art does not reproduce the visible;  
rather it makes visible.*

*Paul Klee*

*A work of art is a world in itself, reflecting senses  
and emotions of the artist's world.*

*Hans Hoffman*



*John William Waterhouse*

*The artist's world is limitless. It can be found anywhere,  
far from where he lives or a few feet away.  
It is always on his doorstep.*

*Paul Strand*

*Artists are the people among us who realize  
creation didn't stop on the sixth day.*

*Joel Peter Witkin*

*Art is not the bread of life, but the wine.*

*John Paul Richter*

*There are two men inside the artist,  
the poet and the craftsman.*

*One is born a poet.*

*One becomes a craftsman.*

*Emile Zola*

*Every time an artist dies, part of the vision  
of mankind passes with him.*

*Franklin D. Roosevelt*

*Art is the stored honey of the human soul fathered  
on wings of misery and travail.*

*Theodore Dreiser*



*Vincent van Gogh*

*Culture is something that evolves out of the simple,  
enduring elements of everyday life; elements most  
truthfully expressed in the folk arts  
and crafts of a nation.*

*Thor Hansen*

*If you ask me what I came to do in this world,  
I, as an artist, will answer you.  
I came to live out loud.*

*Emile Zola*

*At moments, we are all artists.*

*Arnold Bennett*

*I often think the night is more alive and  
more richly colored than the day.*

*Vincent van Gogh*

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

*Edgar Degas*

*What is essential in a work of art is that it should rise  
far above the realm of personal life and speak  
to the spirit and heart of mankind.*

*Carl Gustav Jung*



*August Macke*

*We should comport ourselves with the masterpieces  
of art as with exalted personages - stand quietly  
before them and wait until they speak to us.*

*Arthur Schopenhauer*

*Art points us in new directions that  
make us think and question.*

*Warren Criswell*

*Art condenses the experience we all have as  
human beings...Basically, art is  
an affirmation of life.*

*Trevor Bell*

*Art is an effort to create, beside the real world,  
a more human world.*

*Anon*

*What was any art, but a mold in which to imprison  
for a moment, the shining, elusive  
element which is life itself.*

*Willia Cather*

*The landscape belongs to the man who looks at it.*

*Henry David Thoreau*



*Paul Cézanne*

Art is a staple of mankind - so urgent, so utterly linked  
with the pulse of feeling that it becomes  
the singular sign of life when every  
other aspect of civilization fails.

Jamake Highwater

Art is the flower of life and, as seed, it gives back life.

Remy de Gourmont

Art is the soul and spirit of each generation to be  
passed along to the next, and beyond.

Stewart Turcotte

Whatever adds richness to the experience  
of being alive is an art.

Quang Ho

Every nation which has made a lasting contribution  
to mankind has been aware of its artists.

Harry J. Boyle

Art must touch our lives, our fears and cares - evoke  
our dreams and give hope to the darkness.

Frederick Hart



*Joseph Mallord William Turner*

*Art is, after all, only a trace - like a footprint which  
shows that one has walked bravely  
and in great happiness.*

Robert Henri

*Art thaws even the frozen, darkened soul,  
opening it to lofty spiritual experience.*

Aleksander Solzhenitsyn

*Art is the triumph over chaos.*

John Cheever

*Art is the journey of a free soul.*

Alev Oguz

*To be an artist is to believe in life.*

Henry Moore

*A beautiful thing never gives so much pain  
as does failing to hear and see it.*

Michelangelo

*Art is an outsider, a gypsy over the face of the earth.*

Robert Henri



Rembrandt

Sitting softly by the sea  
The artist paints eternity.  
He paints the air, the ocean surf  
The quiet day, the silent earth.

He paints the sky a silver gray,  
The seagulls flying far away.  
The wind becomes a roiling surf  
The waves change course  
and then they burst.

He paints the surge, the churning shore  
The crimson sky and splintered oars  
The shattered boat on raging seas  
The sailors cries and homeward pleas.

He paints the day becoming calm  
The air refreshed with mid-day balm  
Just sitting softly by the sea  
The artist and eternity.

# Quotes on Art and Artists

## Mankind's Wisdom on Art

### from Plato to Picasso

*"As music is the poetry of sound,  
so is painting the poetry of sight."*

*James Whistler*

*Exquisitely illustrated with some of the  
greatest masterpieces of all time,  
this book is a celebration of life through art.*

*The perfect gift for young and old alike,*

*Quotes on Art and Artists  
is both an introduction to the world of art  
and a celebration of civilization's  
greatest artistic creations.*

*Theodore Dreiser called art,  
"the stored honey of the human soul."  
This book is a sampling of that honey.*

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