

Aleksandar Hemon

Quotes

Writing, Thinking, People, World, Book, Stories, Art, Literature, Space, Way, Country, Mean, America, Home, Fiction, War, Believe, Language, Long, Self

When I look at my old pictures, all I can see is what I used to be but am no longer. I think: What I can see is what I am not.

~Aleksandar Hemon

Home is where somebody notices when you are no longer there.

~Aleksandar Hemon

The perfect borscht is what life should be but never is.

~Aleksandar Hemon

Belief and delusion are incestuous siblings.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I am itching to criticize some well-regarded writers' works, but I am not doing it because I am perfectly aware that my critique could easily be reduced to envy or just plain meanness.

~Aleksandar Hemon

You don't want your neurosurgeon to have doubts about the meaning of it all while he or she is operating on your brain.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I gradually became aware that my interiority was inseparable from my exteriority, that the geography of my city was the geography of my soul.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I much preferred winning to thinking and I didn't like losing at all.

~Aleksandar Hemon

If you can't go home, there is nowhere to go, and nowhere is the biggest place in the world-indeed, nowhere is the world.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I had an epiphany: I was a loser.

~Aleksandar Hemon

We knew - but didn't want to know - what was going to happen, the sky descending upon our heads like the shadow of a falling piano in a cartoon.

~Aleksandar Hemon

Our daughter was born in Chicago, and she's already showing it. The temperature has to be approaching zero for her to wear a hat.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I like to blur the line between fact and fiction, but not to condescend to the reader by enmeshing her/him into some sort of a postmodern coop.

~Aleksandar Hemon

We hated pretentiousness; it was a form of self-hatred.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I've never meditated for a moment in my life. I don't know how it works. But one of the things you have to do to put yourself in the meditating mode is stop narrating yourself to yourself.

~Aleksandar Hemon

Memoir implies the need to reveal something about yourself - to recount your life for educational purposes.

~Aleksandar Hemon

New York is the Hollywood of the publishing industry, complete with stars, starlets, suicidal publishers/producers, intrigues, and a lot of money.

~Aleksandar Hemon

It seemed that we loved each other better when there were large

swaths of two continents between us. The daily work of love was often hard to perform at home.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I do have a sense of displacement as constant instability â€” the uninterrupted existence of everything that I love and care about is not guaranteed at all. I wait for catastrophes.

~Aleksandar Hemon

Lord, why did you leave me in these woods?

~Aleksandar Hemon

Whatever solidarity I have established with other writers individually, it is usually organized around books. We connected as readers, as it were, not writers.

~Aleksandar Hemon

The hopeless hope is one of the early harbingers of spring, bespeaking an innocent belief that the world might right its wrongs and reverse its curses simply because the trees are coming into leaf.

~Aleksandar Hemon

Your nightmares follow you like a shadow, forever.

~Aleksandar Hemon

The funny thing is that in Bosnia there are no words that are equivalent to fiction and nonfiction. From the storytelling point of view, the difference is artificial.

~Aleksandar Hemon

Arabs are a complete abstraction in the propaganda world and all the death and destruction is completely unreal to Americans.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I believe people are much more complicated than they can handle.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I like the idea of a book being a democratic space which readers enter, carrying their own thoughts, and participate in a conversation, or experience of grace.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I resist when someone calls me a novelist: it implies some kind of inherent superiority of the novel. I'm not a novelist, I'm a writer.

~Aleksandar Hemon

My country's main exports are stolen cars and sadness.

~Aleksandar Hemon

Politics imagined as direct agency, whether by voting or by participating in politics, you can think you're not political because you don't do anything between elections.

~Aleksandar Hemon

The world is always greater than your desires; plenty is never enough.

~Aleksandar Hemon

An unjust world represented as harmonious is a political position.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I am just like everybody else...because there is nobody like me in the whole world.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I long for, not a writer's retreat - I can write in any situation - but a reader's retreat.

~Aleksandar Hemon

Time does nothing but hand you down shabbier and older things.

~Aleksandar Hemon

Where can you go from nowhere, except deeper into nowhere?

~Aleksandar Hemon

I'm not nervous if I think about something for nine years and then I don't write it. Even if it fades it doesn't concern me. It'll come back if it's worth it.

~Aleksandar Hemon

There's no bad writing; you did something. I was operating inside language, and I did something. I'm not ashamed of it.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I tend to wait for true stories to mature into fiction. Most of my fiction grew out of a long-germinating real-life situation.

~Aleksandar Hemon

The beauty of literature - also its limit - is that it is inescapably personal, even if you're writing science fiction.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I'm a dilettante by temperament. I don't have any expectation.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I'm bright, but there are lots of bright writers and people everywhere. In no way, at no point do I think I'm better than them.

~Aleksandar Hemon

Memory narrativises itself.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I have a hard time imagining a country or a government where I would

say, "Oh, this is good," where I could live under a government that I respect for a day or a week, even to see what it feels like.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I suppose I'm interested in sorrow, which is very different from depression or despair. Sorrow is continuous with the world; it allows for creativity.

~Aleksandar Hemon

To me there's no difference between a book of stories and a novel - they're just slightly different shapes.

~Aleksandar Hemon

The mind is complicated and you can't trace the roots of its processes, but there is something about mathematical and algorithmic patterns that I like to recognize in things.

~Aleksandar Hemon

It is my belief that we as human beings have a need to tell stories - I think it's evolutionary. So you can think of the short story as a literary form, or you can instead think of stories.

~Aleksandar Hemon

If you have information you've got the world by the balls. But we have to convert information into knowledge in order to make it humanly useful.

~Aleksandar Hemon

There's something in psychology called the narrative paradigm, which essentially means that we think of our lives as stories in which we are the main characters.

~Aleksandar Hemon

People will always tell stories. The publishing industry might vanish, but

not stories.

~Aleksandar Hemon

There's no connection between consumption of art and moral stamina at all.

~Aleksandar Hemon

It's difficult for me to understand how it was possible to live under the Bush regime for eight years and then just roll over and do other things.

~Aleksandar Hemon

To write has to be related to a drive inside.

~Aleksandar Hemon

Washington D.C.! Congress is full of self-declared outsiders.

~Aleksandar Hemon

Outsider means "I will accept the possibility that I don't have responsibility for what is happening inside my domain."

~Aleksandar Hemon

I hate traveling and being away from my family. But I like meeting my readers, as what I write is actualized in them. Those encounters are exhilarating to me.

~Aleksandar Hemon

When I was young, I was all about personal sovereignty and that junk, because there was no privacy and the available ideologies were collective, both socialism/communism and nationalism.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I started appreciating and valuing different things. Some things just became insufferable to me, and not just literature. I used to like horror movies and now I couldn't stand them.

~Aleksandar Hemon

Writing is a mode of agency in the world that is different from mere employment. There has to be some sort of ethical or moral drive, even if you are unaware of it.

~Aleksandar Hemon

Politics is about ethics and morality, openly or not openly.

~Aleksandar Hemon

Everyone operates within their own domain and obviously those domains overlap to a great extent.

~Aleksandar Hemon

No reader owes me anything - I am owed nothing for my noble efforts, because my writing was always unconditional, always coming out of inner necessity.

~Aleksandar Hemon

Rilke said that art can come only out of inner necessity. I write because I must. Or because I cannot not write.

~Aleksandar Hemon

As long as there are living human beings, there will be language and stories.

~Aleksandar Hemon

Chicago has very few public spaces where people are encouraged to get together. It's partly to prevent riots, and also to segregate a city with a history of racial segregation.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I want to make money, and I would like to have a lot of money, but I still believe that the only reason to write is that somehow it will make

something or somebody better.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I do believe - and I know I shouldn't - that art transcends money and success and any of that. You can still do it if you're not clinging to the notion of nobility.

~Aleksandar Hemon

It's so internalized, the way your mind works in relation to anything - it's a process, but then it isn't. It's working all the time.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I end up writing something every day, since I develop six or seven things at the same time - soccer columns, this and that.

~Aleksandar Hemon

Sometimes I don't write at all. Someone once asked me, "What do you do when you're not writing?" And I said, "I idle."

~Aleksandar Hemon

Even if you tried to extinguish your personality, what is left in the story will reflect it, perhaps by its negation. Our lives provide the bricks from which we build these cathedrals.

~Aleksandar Hemon

We, as writers, have to figure out a way to create a consciousness in language. It's crazy even to attempt to do that.

~Aleksandar Hemon

What fiction and art can do, particularly narrative art, is construct consciousness - in a sense, we have to do it for the first time, every time.

~Aleksandar Hemon

Wherever there's capitalism there's this inclination toward simplicity. There's also a human need to process complicated things by turning them into something else.

~Aleksandar Hemon

What I don't like about America is not necessarily an American thing; it's a capitalist thing. This is the Vatican of capitalism.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I cannot think of a country in which I would be happy with the government and dominant ideology and available propaganda.

~Aleksandar Hemon

If I represent the world as it is as harmonious, that's a political position.

~Aleksandar Hemon

Literature is always something - it is either story or poetry, ideally both. That is, you always know what it is and even if the interpretation is not available, the experience of language is.

~Aleksandar Hemon

To me, the solidarity of readers is far more important than the solidarity of writers, particularly since readers in fact find ways to connect over a book or books, whatever they may be.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I want a book to contain a world - indeed the world. Writing is my main means of engagement with the world and I want the scars of that engagement to be left in the language.

~Aleksandar Hemon

What you demand from storytelling is a moral - even political - import. I tend to shun that didactic aspect.

~Aleksandar Hemon

It's not that war crimes stop as soon as a novel about them is published. Literature operates slowly, it is always inching toward bliss, never quite getting there.

~Aleksandar Hemon

The balls do not make a writer.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I've read books in school that were written by ideological rote - they were brainwashers. Therefore, any art, any literature, that has a clearly defined political goal is repellent to me.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I don't think that everyone should have a philosophical answer to any given question. There are things that need to be done.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I write and read with the assumption that literature contains knowledge of human experience that is not available otherwise.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I don't believe in inspiration. I write when I can't avoid writing anymore.

~Aleksandar Hemon

Language is so inherent to humanity, so necessary for even basic thinking, that stories and poetry are available to anyone who can process language.

~Aleksandar Hemon

Despite all that I know rationally, and everything that I can put into words, I can say that I have difficulty giving up the notion of the nobility of art.

~Aleksandar Hemon

It was always clear to me that I would have to earn my readers, some I would have to find, some to create.

~Aleksandar Hemon

My skin was the border between the world and me.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I have been on the margins in terms of having to find a place to live and getting a job, but at some point, and before that point, I always thought no matter where I am, that's the center.

~Aleksandar Hemon

What I was interested in is the lens organizing my sovereign space. I avoid the term outsider and also exile for the same reason. Outsider implies a kind of nobility.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I don't know the numbers, but roughly half of the people who came through Ellis Island returned home. They came here to make money, not to make history.

~Aleksandar Hemon

The incessant perpetuation of collective fantasies makes people crave the truth and nothing but the truth - reality is the fastest American commodity.

~Aleksandar Hemon

You devise ways to tell a story that complies with your sensibility. Style and method are really extensions of your present sensibility.

~Aleksandar Hemon

In some way there is no real life. It's always the story of your life that you're living.

~Aleksandar Hemon

Cliché activates the comfortable mental laziness, we sort of revert to the domain of the already-familiar, what we have already imagined so that it doesn't seem that bad.

~Aleksandar Hemon

I wanted us to share the sense that the number of wrong moves far exceeds the number of good moves, to share the frightening instability of the correct decision, to bond in being confounded.

~Aleksandar Hemon

Related Links:

- Writing Quotes
- Thinking Quotes
- People Quotes
- World Quotes
- Book Quotes
- Stories Quotes
- Art Quotes
- Literature Quotes
- Space Quotes
- Way Quotes
- Country Quotes
- Mean Quotes
- America Quotes
- Home Quotes
- Fiction Quotes
- War Quotes
- Believe Quotes
- Language Quotes
- Long Quotes
- Self Quotes