

Claire Messud Quotes

*Thinking, Writing, Art, People, Book, Dream, Way, World, Mother, Sorrow,
Ideas, Children, Heart, Home, Reading, Ifs, Believe, Years, Mind, Essentials*

Above all, in my anger, I was sad. Isn't that always the way, that at the heart of the fire is a frozen kernel of sorrow that the fire is trying -- valiantly, fruitlessly -- to eradicate.

~Claire Messud

I've discovered over the years that the simplest explanation is almost always the right one; and that hunger of one kind or another - desire, by another name - is the source of almost every sorrow.

~Claire Messud

That's so her. You know, torn between Big Ideas and a party. She's always been that way.

~Claire Messud

To my mind, Guernica is the most important online intellectual and literary journal in America today.

~Claire Messud

Geniuses have the shortest biographies.

~Claire Messud

It doesn't ever occur to you, as you fashion your mask so carefully, that it will grow into your skin and graft itself, come to seem irremovable.

~Claire Messud

We read to find life, in all its possibilities.

~Claire Messud

I was funny -- ha-ha, not peculiar. It was a modest currency, like pennies: pedestrian, somewhat laborious, but a currency nonetheless. I was funny, in public, most often at my own expense.

~Claire Messud

I wanted to write a voice that for me, as a reader, had been missing

from the chorus: the voice of an angry woman.

~Claire Messud

Yes, writing is essential to me. It's my way of living in the world.

~Claire Messud

The more accurately one can illuminate a particular human experience, the better the work of art.

~Claire Messud

Does Being Happy simply Create More Time, in the way that Being Sad, as we all know, slows time and thickens it, like cornstarch in a sauce?).

~Claire Messud

I measure my life out in books." "You should be measuring your life by living. Correction: you shouldn't be measuring your life. What's the point?

~Claire Messud

I believe that, in an ideal world, writers would feel free to write what matters to them without having to consider success, failure, the market, etc.

~Claire Messud

If you're reading to find friends, you're in deep trouble.

~Claire Messud

But we're lost in a world of appearances now.

~Claire Messud

Maybe that, really, is as good a definition as any of an artist in the world: a ruthless person.

~Claire Messud

As my wise friend Didi has more than once observed about life's passages, every departure entails an arrival elsewhere, every arrival implies a departure from afar.

~Claire Messud

I've always felt that if a project seems easy, or even attainable, why pursue it? I'll always find the hardest path.

~Claire Messud

An abiding preoccupation for me is how much of our lives are invisible and unknown by other people like the Chekhov story *The Lady With the Little Dog*.

~Claire Messud

If I had to summarize, most broadly, my concerns as a writer, I'd say the question 'How then must we live?' is at the heart of it, for me.

~Claire Messud

I'm not a writing group member, not a joiner in that way. I don't seek a wide swath of feedback.

~Claire Messud

I always say to my students, if you can do anything other than writing and be happy, then you should.

~Claire Messud

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