

Clement Greenberg Quotes

*Art, Artist, Kitsch, Photography, Eye, Sacrifice, Leisure, Recognition, Effort,
Quality, Carrying On, Culture, Views, Reality, Men, People, Principles, Logic,
Accepted, Influence*

Where the Old Masters created an illusion of space into which one could imagine walking, the illusion created by a Modernist is one into which one can look, can travel through, only with the eye.

~Clement Greenberg

Complete honesty has nothing to do with 'purity' or naivety. The full truth is unattainable to naivety, and the completely honest artist is not pure in heart.

~Clement Greenberg

All profoundly original art looks ugly at first.

~Clement Greenberg

If you want to change your art, change your habits.

~Clement Greenberg

Realistic, naturalistic art had dissembled the medium, using art to conceal art; Modernism used art to call attention to art.

~Clement Greenberg

Art is a matter strictly of experience, not of principles and what counts first and last in art is quality, all other things are secondary.

~Clement Greenberg

You like it, that's all, whether it's a landscape or abstract. You like it. It hits you. You don't have to read it. The work of art-sculpture or painting-forces your eye.

~Clement Greenberg

The reality of art is disclosed only in experience, not in reflection upon experience.

~Clement Greenberg

The dissolution of the pictorial into sheer texture, into apparently sheer

sensation, into an accumulation of repetitions, seems to speak for and answer something profound in contemporary sensibility.

~Clement Greenberg

When you don't like something the words come more readily.

~Clement Greenberg

With an 'advanced' artist, it's not now possible to make a portrait.

~Clement Greenberg

The difficulty of carrying on a leisure-oriented tradition of culture in a work-oriented society is enough in itself to keep the present crisis in our culture unresolved.

~Clement Greenberg

The superior artist is the one who knows how to be influenced.

~Clement Greenberg

Nothing could be further from the authentic art of our time than the idea of a rupture of continuity. Art is - among other things - continuity, and unthinkable without it.

~Clement Greenberg

Art solves nothing, either for the artist himself or for those who receive his art.

~Clement Greenberg

Kitsch is Mechanical and operates by formulas.

~Clement Greenberg

Kitsch is deceptive. It has many different levels, and some of them are high enough to be dangerous to the naive seeker of true light.

~Clement Greenberg

I don't get into 'because.' When you come into a studio you see a number of works. My habit is to go to the one I like most. If you start to say, 'because,' you get into art jargon.

~Clement Greenberg

A large picture can give us images of things, but a relatively small one can best re-create the instantaneous unity of nature as a view - the unity of which the eyes take in at a single glance.

~Clement Greenberg

One is also reminded of how, in art, the tortoise so often overtakes the hare.

~Clement Greenberg

Not all, but too many of the best writers, composers, and artists of our time begin to be acclaimed only when they no longer have anything to say and take to performing instead of stating.

~Clement Greenberg

The avant-garde poet or artist tries in effect to imitate God by creating something valid solely on its own terms.

~Clement Greenberg

For every good art critic there may be ten great artists.

~Clement Greenberg

I myself happen to find, on the basis of experience and nothing else, that photography can be a high art.

~Clement Greenberg

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