

David Mamet

Quotes

*Writing, Thinking, People, Drama, Years, Art, Play, Government, Want, Dream,
Ideas, School, Character, Men, Law, Way, Theatre, World, Jobs, Doe*

Films have degenerated to their original operation as carnival amusement - they offer not drama but thrills.

~David Mamet

The Oscars demonstrate the will of the people to control and judge those they have elected to stand above them (much, perhaps, as in bygone days, an election celebrated the same).

~David Mamet

Every scene should be able to answer three questions: "Who wants what from whom? What happens if they don't get it? Why now?"

~David Mamet

When the three branches of government have failed to represent the citizenry and the mass of the media has failed to represent the citizenry, then the citizenry better represent the citizenry.

~David Mamet

Forget narrative, backstory, characterisation, exposition, all of that. Just make the audience want to know what happens next.

~David Mamet

It is the writer's job to make the play interesting. It is the actor's job to make the performance truthful.

~David Mamet

Opportunity may knock, but it seldom nags.

~David Mamet

People may or may not say what they mean... but they always say something designed to get what they want.

~David Mamet

We must have a pie. Stress cannot exist in the presence of a pie.

~David Mamet

Being a writer in Hollywood is like going to Hitler's Eagle Nest with a great idea for a bar mitzvah.

~David Mamet

A good film script should be able to do completely without dialogue.

~David Mamet

There's no such thing as talent; you just have to work hard enough.

~David Mamet

We all die in the end, but there's no reason to die in the middle.

~David Mamet

Every fear hides a wish.

~David Mamet

The subject of drama is The Lie. At the end of the drama THE TRUTH -- which has been overlooked, disregarded, scorned, and denied -- prevails. And that is how we know the Drama is done.

~David Mamet

Encounter: Doubt, Shame, Humiliation. It will finally be worth it. Acting is more about courage than anything else.

~David Mamet

In a restaurant one is both observed and unobserved. Joy and sorrow can be displayed and observed "unwittingly," the writer scowling naively and the diners wondering, What the hell is he doing?

~David Mamet

Anyone ever lost in the wild knows that nature wants you dead.

~David Mamet

Old age and treachery will always beat youth and exuberance.

~David Mamet

Train yourself for a profession that does not exist.

~David Mamet

The greater the intellect, the more ease in its misdirection.

~David Mamet

Art is an expression of joy and awe. It is not an attempt to share one's virtues and accomplishments with the audience, but an act of selfless spirit.

~David Mamet

My alma mater is the Chicago Public Library.

~David Mamet

A good writer gets better only by learning to cut, to remove the ornamental, the descriptive, the narrative, and especially the deeply felt and meaningful. What remains? The story remains.

~David Mamet

You know, young actors say all the time, 'Should I use my own life experience?' And my response is, 'What choice do you have?'

~David Mamet

The first amendment ensures not that speech will be fair, but that it will be free. It cannot be both.

~David Mamet

If the scene bores you when you read it, rest assured it WILL bore the actors, and will then bore the audience, and we're all going to be back in the breadline.

~David Mamet

Liberalism is a religion. Its tenets cannot be proved, its capacity for waste and destruction demonstrated. But it affords a feeling of spiritual rectitude at little or no cost.

~David Mamet

I've always been fascinated by the picaresque.

~David Mamet

It's hard to write a good play because it's hard to structure a plot. If you can think of it off the top of your head, so can the audience.

~David Mamet

They have a desire to put on plays and to fulfill that traditional role of a theater in a community: to be the place where people go to hear the truth.

~David Mamet

All fears are one fear. Just the fear of death. And we accept it, then we are at peace.

~David Mamet

The job of the artist, is to say, wait a second, everything that we have thought is wrong. Let's re-examine it.

~David Mamet

Roll back the clock, and every possession of every great country started with a crime.

~David Mamet

Always tell the truth - it's the easiest thing to remember.

~David Mamet

It is not the constitutional prerogative of the Government to determine needs.

~David Mamet

The avant-garde is to the left what jingoism is to the right. Both are a refuge in nonsense.

~David Mamet

What I value most in my friends is loyalty.

~David Mamet

Like Lincoln said: "If slavery is not wrong, nothing is wrong," and I feel the same way about the leftist dismantling of the West. If that's not wrong, then nothing is wrong.

~David Mamet

I've always been more comfortable sinking while clutching a good theory than swimming with an ugly fact.

~David Mamet

Luck, if there is such a thing, is either going to favor everyone equally or going to exhibit a preference for the prepared.

~David Mamet

I look back on my liberal political beliefs with a sort of wonder - as another exercise in self-involvement - rewarding myself for some superiority I could not logically describe.

~David Mamet

They say the definition of ambivalence is watching your mother-in-law drive over a cliff in your new Cadillac.

~David Mamet

I was fortunate enough to have a rambling youth.

~David Mamet

I'm afraid of only two things: being lazy and being cowardly.

~David Mamet

The audience perceives only what the actor wants to do to the other actor.

~David Mamet

To find beauty in the sad, hope in the midst of loss, and dignity in failure is great poetic art.

~David Mamet

All rhetorical questions are accusations.

~David Mamet

I love working on a typewriter - the rhythm, the sound; it's like playing the piano, which I do, too.

~David Mamet

Policemen so cherish their status as keepers of the peace and protectors of the public that they have occasionally been known to beat to death those citizens or groups who question that status.

~David Mamet

The quality I most admire in a man is steadfastness.

~David Mamet

When we fear things I think that we wish for them ... every fear hides a wish

~David Mamet

I always thought the real violence in Hollywood isn't what's on the screen. It's what you have to do to raise the money.

~David Mamet

When we leave the play saying how spectacular the sets or costumes were, or how interesting the ideas, it means we had a bad time.

~David Mamet

Get into the scene late; get out of the scene early.

~David Mamet

The individual is not only best qualified to provide his own personal defense, he is the only one qualified to do so: and his right to do so is guaranteed by the Constitution.

~David Mamet

The liberals in my neighbourhood wouldn't give away Brentwood to the Palestinians, but they want to give away Tel Aviv.

~David Mamet

The study of acting consists in the main of getting out of one's own way, and in learning to deal with uncertainty and being comfortable being uncomfortable.

~David Mamet

Every reiteration of the idea that nothing matters debases the human spirit.

~David Mamet

The audience requires not information but drama.

~David Mamet

I know very well what it is to be out of work and to be cheated by employers and I know what it is to be an employer.

~David Mamet

In a world we find terrifying, we ratify that which doesn't threaten us.

~David Mamet

In Chicago, we love our crooks!

~David Mamet

I hate the computer. I hate their spell-check. I won't ever do e-mail.

~David Mamet

The mind is a mill which can incessant turn, 'til its mere operation focus the stress inward and the stones grind themselves to dust.

~David Mamet

If You can't tell it to me in one sentence, they can't put it in TV Guide.

~David Mamet

I tend to write a lot, which I think is the secret to being prolific.

~David Mamet

The purpose of technique is to free the unconscious. If you follow the rules ploddingly, they will allow your unconscious to be free.

~David Mamet

We respond to a drama to that extent to which it corresponds to our dream life.

~David Mamet

Before you can steal fire from the Gods you gotta be able to get coffee for the director.

~David Mamet

The conscious mind is going to suggest the obvious, the cliché, because these things have offered the security of having succeeded in the past.

~David Mamet

Everybody makes their own fun. If you don't make it yourself, it isn't fun.

It's entertainment.

~David Mamet

The true writer must write not the acceptable but the true.

~David Mamet

It's only words... unless they're true.

~David Mamet

Welcome to Chicago. This town stinks like a whorehouse at low tide.

~David Mamet

It's upsetting to be a man in our society.

~David Mamet

I grew up in a tough neighborhood and we used to say you can get further with a kind word and a gun than just a kind word.

~David Mamet

As you all know first prize is a Cadillac El Dorado. Anyone wanna see second prize? Second prize is a set of steak knives. Third prize is you're fired.

~David Mamet

Don't assume I'm dumb because I wear a suit and tie.

~David Mamet

The dream and the film are the juxtaposition of images in order to answer a question.

~David Mamet

The surprise is half the battle. Many things are half the battle, losing is half the battle. Let's think about what's the whole battle.

~David Mamet

Invent nothing, deny nothing, speak up, stand up, stay out of school.

~David Mamet

Everyone needs money. That's why they call it money

~David Mamet

I love Superman. I'm a big fan of anyone who can make his living in his underwear.

~David Mamet

President Obama seems to understand the Constitution as a 'set of suggestions.'

~David Mamet

I don't have any experience with film schools. I suspect that they're useless, because I've had experience with drama schools, and have found them to be useless.

~David Mamet

My idea of perfect happiness is a healthy family, peace between nations, and all the critics die.

~David Mamet

In my family, in the days prior to television, we liked to while away the evenings by making ourselves miserable, solely based on our ability to speak the language viciously.

~David Mamet

A man stands alone at the plate. This is the time for what? For individual achievement. There he stands alone. But in the field, what? Part of a team.

~David Mamet

If you find that a point cannot be made without narration, it is virtually

certain that the point is unimportant to the story (which is to say, to the audience).

~David Mamet

You got an all-out prize fight, you wait 'til the fight's over, one guy's left standing and that's how you know who's won.

~David Mamet

It is the objective of the protagonist that keeps us in our seats.

~David Mamet

We all hope. It's what keeps us alive.

~David Mamet

For it is written that just as it is forbidden to partake of the forbidden, it is forbidden not to partake of the permitted.

~David Mamet

There is no such thing as character other than the habitual action, as Mr. Aristotle told us two thousand years ago.

~David Mamet

Worry is interest paid in advance on a debt that never comes due.

~David Mamet

I hate vacations. There's nothing to do.

~David Mamet

As long as the protagonist wants something, the audience will want something.

~David Mamet

My greatest fear is that the audience will beat me to the punch line.

~David Mamet

No one enjoys being equal.

~David Mamet

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