

# Denise Duhamel

## Quotes

*Writing, Forever, Book, Years, People, Self, Mean, Ideas, Form, Thinking, Art,  
Wonderful, Work Out, Phones, Photography, Suffering, Cutting, Taken,  
Community, Magazines*

My advice to my younger self would have been, "Chill. Concentrate on the poems. Everything else will work itself out."

~Denise Duhamel

I had no idea, when I was writing early on, that my poems would be published or read by anyone, never mind people I knew or would meet. I just wrote urgently - naïvely, I suppose, looking back.

~Denise Duhamel

Writing is performative - and while, yes, the words in essence will be there "forever," poems are often about ecstatic moments rather than trying to pin down a particular truth of an event.

~Denise Duhamel

I still write what I need to write - but I can't deny that something has changed when I think about sending work out. Maybe it's just growing older and feeling more responsible to the world.

~Denise Duhamel

I started wanting desperately to say something, to make a point, to be heard - and I still feel that way. Free verse served me best when I embarked on poetry.

~Denise Duhamel

I don't know if there are topics that I unconsciously avoid, but as soon as they pop up in my writing, I try to take on those topics, whether or not I publish the poems.

~Denise Duhamel

Unlike Woody Allen, I would be happy to be part of any (poetry) club that would have me.

~Denise Duhamel

Over the years, I became more and more interested in the forms and

techniques in which things could be said.

~Denise Duhamel

Jean Valentine and Jane Cooper were my professors at Sarah Lawrence College - and they were uncompromised in their art. They gave me models of how to live one's life as a poet.

~Denise Duhamel

I always wanted to be some kind of writer - I wrote plays and songs and "books" before I realized living and breathing people still wrote poems.

~Denise Duhamel

The spoken word community was significant in making me want to write accessible and urgent poems. Bob Holman, in particular, was an impressive figure.

~Denise Duhamel

I know writers for whom the act of writing is a necessary chore. They suffer to write great work. I am very lucky that for me writing is a delight.

~Denise Duhamel

I am open to squeezing in whatever I can in this wonderful life. Instead of asking, "Is that all there is?" I seem, lately, to be always saying, "Wow!"

~Denise Duhamel

In addition to writing in received forms, I have also had fun making up forms - Möbius strips and visual poems, particularly.

~Denise Duhamel

I am interested in the confines of the page and busting through/off the page as well. A writer must let go of the line when writing prose poems, which brings its own pleasures.

~Denise Duhamel

Visual media is the dominant art form in our present day culture, whereas poetry is, at best, a proxy. Yet poetry and film are both "dream factories."

~Denise Duhamel

I love going to movie theaters, even in the era of movies on-demand and Netflix. When you are in a movie theater, no one can reach you by phone or other means.

~Denise Duhamel

After my marriage ended, I had an urge to skip that part of my life completely in terms of poetry, not publish anything at all about it.

~Denise Duhamel

If you are my friend and say to me, "Please don't write about this," I won't.

~Denise Duhamel

What has stayed true in my life as a writer is my dedication to writing - I try to write every day, no matter what - and the joy that writing has given me.

~Denise Duhamel

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