

Edward Albee

Quotes

*Play, Writing, Thinking, People, Art, Character, Reality, Years, Responsibility,
Two, Ifs, Differences, Mean, Long, Want, Ends, Should, Creative, Matter, Fall*

If you're willing to fail interestingly, you tend to succeed interestingly.

~Edward Albee

The arts are the only things that separate us from the other animals. The arts are not decorative. ... They are essential to our comprehension of consciousness and ourselves.

~Edward Albee

Do you know what a playwright is? A playwright is someone who lets his guts hang out on the stage.

~Edward Albee

Sometimes it's necessary to go a long distance out of the way in order to come back a short distance correctly.

~Edward Albee

The act of writing is an act of optimism. You would not take the trouble to do it if you felt that it didn't matter.

~Edward Albee

Who's afraid of Virginia Woolf means who's afraid of the big bad wolf ... who's afraid of living life without false illusions.

~Edward Albee

You're alive only once, as far as we know, and what could be worse than getting to the end of your life and realizing you hadn't lived it?

~Edward Albee

You gotta have swine to show you where the truffles are.

~Edward Albee

One must let the play happen to one; one must let the mind loose to respond as it will, to receive impressions, to sense rather than know, to gather rather than immediately understand.

~Edward Albee

School curricula that ignore the arts produce highly educated
Barbarians

~Edward Albee

I am sick of the disparity between things as they are and as they should be. I'm tired. I'm tired of the truth and I'm tired of lying about the truth.

~Edward Albee

Art has an obligation to offend

~Edward Albee

I think I was probably wondering, having looked at human beings for a long time, wondering if evolution ever took place. And I still have my doubts.

~Edward Albee

A playwright has a responsibility in his society not to aid it, or comfort it, but to comment and criticize it.

~Edward Albee

What I mean by an educated taste is someone who has the same tastes that I have.

~Edward Albee

All serious art is being destroyed by commerce. Most people don't want art to be disturbing. They want it to be escapist. I don't think art should be escapist. That's a waste of time.

~Edward Albee

There are only two things to write about: life and death.

~Edward Albee

That's the happiest moment. When it's all done. When we stop. When we can stop.

~Edward Albee

Remember one thing about democracy. We can have anything we want and at the same time, we always end up with exactly what we deserve.

~Edward Albee

People often ask me how long it takes me to write a play, and I tell them 'all of my life.'

~Edward Albee

If you have no wounds, how can you know if you're alive?

~Edward Albee

Anything you put in a play -- any speech -- has got to do one of two things: either define character or push the action of the play along.

~Edward Albee

Creativity is magic. Don't examine it too closely.

~Edward Albee

Good writers define reality; bad ones merely restate it.

~Edward Albee

As a playwright, I imagine that in one fashion or another I've been influenced by every single play I've ever experienced.

~Edward Albee

A lot of people are confused by "hello." A lot of people are confused by a lot of things they shouldn't be confused by.

~Edward Albee

It always seems to me better to slough off the answer to a question that

I consider to be a terrible invasion of privacy - the kind of privacy that a writer must keep for himself.

~Edward Albee

One has always got to be terribly careful, since the theater is made up of a whole bunch of prima donnas, not to let the distortions occur.

~Edward Albee

I created myself, and I'll attack anybody I feel like.

~Edward Albee

Why we are here is an impenetrable question.

~Edward Albee

The function of art is to bring people into greater touch with reality, and yet our movie houses and family rooms are jammed with people after as much reality-removal as they can get.

~Edward Albee

What people really want in the theater is fantasy involvement and not reality involvement.

~Edward Albee

I don't like symbolism that hits you over the head. A symbol should not be a cymbal.

~Edward Albee

Writing has got to be an act of discovery. Finding out things about what one is writing about.

~Edward Albee

Sincerity doesn't mean anything. A person can be sincere and be more destructive than a person who is insincere.

~Edward Albee

I write to find out what I'm talking about.

~Edward Albee

I am not interested in living in a city where there isn't a production by Samuel Beckett running.

~Edward Albee

A play is fiction and fiction is fact distilled into truth.

~Edward Albee

Martha: Oh, I like your anger. I think that's what I like about you most. Your anger.

~Edward Albee

Martha: Truth or illusion, George; you don't know the difference.
George: No, but we must carry on as though we did. Martha: Amen.

~Edward Albee

Dashed hopes and good intentions. Good, better, best, bested.

~Edward Albee

Good writers define reality; bad ones merely restate it. A good writer turns fact into truth; a bad writer will, more often than not, accomplish the opposite.

~Edward Albee

Progress is a set of assumptions.

~Edward Albee

When a critic sets himself up as an arbiter of morality, a judge of the matter and not the manner of a work, he is no longer a critic; he is a censor.

~Edward Albee

When people don't like the way a play ends, they're likely to blame the play.

~Edward Albee

American critics are like American universities. They both have dull and half-dead faculties.

~Edward Albee

I have a fine sense of the ridiculous, but no sense of humor.

~Edward Albee

The ultimate judgment of a work of art, whether it be a masterpiece or a lesser event, must be solely in terms of its artistic success and not on Freudian guesswork.

~Edward Albee

Every monster was a man first.

~Edward Albee

The most profound indication of social malignancy ... no sense of humor. None of the monoliths could take a joke.

~Edward Albee

Im not suggesting that the play is without fault; all of my plays are imperfect, Im rather happy to say-it leaves me something to do.

~Edward Albee

There is chaos behind the civility, of course.

~Edward Albee

I find relatively little relationship between the work of art and the immediate critical response it gets.

~Edward Albee

The responsibility of the writer is to be a sort of demonic social critic -- to present the world and people in it as he sees it and say, "Do you like it? If you don't like it, change it.

~Edward Albee

I am pleased and reassured by the fact that a lot of younger playwrights seem to pay me some attention and gain some nourishment from what I do.

~Edward Albee

I swear, if you existed I'd divorce you.

~Edward Albee

The thing that makes a creative person is to be creative and that is all there is to it.

~Edward Albee

Your source material is the people you know, not those you don't know, but every character is an extension of the author's own personality.

~Edward Albee

Very few people who met my adoptive mother in the last 20 years of her life could abide her, while many people who have seen my play find her fascinating. Heavens, what have I done?!

~Edward Albee

A writer is a controlled schizophrenic.

~Edward Albee

A lot interests me - but nothing surprises me particularly.

~Edward Albee

Audiences and, to a large extent, critics who want less from theater than it is possible for it to give. If everybody's encouraged to want less,

you'll end up with less.

~Edward Albee

I am a Doctor. A.B... M.A... PH.D... ABMAPHID! Abmaphid has been variously described as a wasting disease of the frontal lobes, and as a wonder drug. It is actually both.

~Edward Albee

The only time I'll get good reviews is if I kill myself.

~Edward Albee

I have learned that neither kindness or cruelty by themselves, or independent of each other, create any effect beyond themselves.

~Edward Albee

First, I'll kill the dog with kindness, and if that doesn't work, I'll just kill him.

~Edward Albee

I don't feel that catharsis in a play necessarily takes place during the course of a play. Often it should take place afterward.

~Edward Albee

Few sensible authors are happy discussing the creative process--it is, after all, black magic.

~Edward Albee

I have been both overpraised and underpraised. I assume by the time I finish writing -- and I plan to go on writing until I'm 90 or gaga -- it will all equal itself out.

~Edward Albee

It is a lazy public which promotes a slothful and irresponsible theater.

~Edward Albee

When you write a play, you make a set of assumptions -- that you have something to say, that you know how to say it, that its worth saying, and that maybe someone will come along for the ride.

~Edward Albee

I suppose if you simplify things, it's going to make it easier to understand.

~Edward Albee

I said I was impressed, Martha. I'm beside myself with jealousy. What do you want me to do, throw up?

~Edward Albee

I imagine as an axiom you could say that the better the play, the less "creativity" the director need exert.

~Edward Albee

If I've been accused a number of times of writing plays where the endings are ambivalent, indeed, that's the way I find life.

~Edward Albee

Arthur Miller once payed me a great compliment saying that my plays were 'necessary.' I will go one step further and say that Arthur's plays are 'essential'

~Edward Albee

I suppose, writing a play is finding out what the play is.

~Edward Albee

Read the great stuff, but read the stuff that isn't so great, too. Great stuff is very discouraging. If you read only Beckett and Chekhov, you'll go away and only deliver telegrams for Western Union.

~Edward Albee

I think it's for the critics to decide whether or not their loathing of the play is based on something other than the play's merits or demerits. They must search their own souls, or whatever.

~Edward Albee

Influence is a matter of selection - both acceptance and rejection.

~Edward Albee

Any definition which limits us is deplorable.

~Edward Albee

I don't think I've ever written about me. I'm not a character in any of my plays, except that boy, that silent boy that turns up in *Three Tall Women*.

~Edward Albee

I was twenty-nine years old and I wasn't a very good poet and I wasn't a very good novelist, [so] I thought I would try writing a play, which seems to have worked out a little better.

~Edward Albee

I think that's foolishness on the part of the playwright to write about himself. People don't know anything about themselves.

~Edward Albee

I'm not responsible for the commercialization. The people who produce the plays are responsible for it.

~Edward Albee

And the west, encumbered by crippling alliances, and hardened with a morality too rigid to accommodate itself to the swing of events, must eventually fall.

~Edward Albee

To write a play one must be born a playwright. Otherwise, you're starting at a huge disadvantage.

~Edward Albee

Careers are funny things. They begin mysteriously and, just as mysteriously, they can end.

~Edward Albee

Well, when I was six years old I decided, not that I was going to be, but with my usual modesty, that I was a writer.

~Edward Albee

I find that when my plays are going well, they seem to resemble pieces of music. But if I had to go into specifics about it, I wouldn't be able to. It's merely something that I feel.

~Edward Albee

The one living playwright I admire without any reservation whatsoever is Samuel Beckett. I have funny feelings about almost all the others.

~Edward Albee

There are a number of contemporary playwrights whom I admire enormously, but that's not at all the same thing as being influenced.

~Edward Albee

Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?

~Edward Albee

All plays are social comment to one extent or another.

~Edward Albee

Some things that make sense to me don't make the same degree of sense to other people.

~Edward Albee

If you intellectualize and examine the creative process too carefully it can evaporate and vanish. It's not only terribly difficult to talk about, it's also dangerous.

~Edward Albee

There are always going to be more actors than anybody can ever use.

~Edward Albee

Everybody wants to go see the big hit [at the theatre]. Not because it's any good. Because it's the big hit and everybody wants to be able to talk about the big hit.

~Edward Albee

The final evaluation of a play has nothing to do with immediate audience or critical response.

~Edward Albee

It's the function of a playwright to write. Some playwrights write a large number of plays, some write a small number.

~Edward Albee

Related Links:

- Play Quotes
- Writing Quotes
- Thinking Quotes
- People Quotes
- Art Quotes
- Character Quotes
- Reality Quotes
- Years Quotes
- Responsibility Quotes
- Two Quotes
- Ifs Quotes
- Differences Quotes
- Mean Quotes
- Long Quotes
- Want Quotes
- Ends Quotes
- Should Quotes
- Creative Quotes
- Matter Quotes
- Fall Quotes