

Elia Kazan

Quotes

People, Actors, Directors, Thinking, Acting, Film, Made, Action, Believe, Guy, Writing, Fighting, Play, Way, Party, Police, Years, Motivational, Inspirational, Groups

I was not a collective person or a bohemian; I was an elitist.

~Elia Kazan

The world was like a huge red carpet out ahead of me to be walked on. And it stretched on and on, no end.

~Elia Kazan

What's called a difficult decision is a difficult decision because either way you go there are penalties.

~Elia Kazan

The real challenge is not simply to survive. Hell, anyone can do that. It's to survive as yourself, undiminished.

~Elia Kazan

Look for the contradictions in every character, especially in your heroes and villains. No one should be what they first seem to be. Surprise the audience.

~Elia Kazan

Take it from a director: if you get an actor that Sandy Meisner has trained, you've been blessed.

~Elia Kazan

Whatever hysteria exists is inflamed by mystery, suspicion and secrecy. Hard and exact facts will cool it.

~Elia Kazan

I knew the exuberance of playing before an admiring audience and hearing my secret voice.

~Elia Kazan

You've got to keep fighting; you've got to risk your life every six months to stay alive.

~Elia Kazan

Wonder is our need today, not information.

~Elia Kazan

The motion pictures I have made and the plays I have chosen to direct represent my convictions.

~Elia Kazan

The essence of the stage is concentration and penetration. Of the screen action, movement, sweep.

~Elia Kazan

I used to spend most of my time straining to be a nice guy so people would like me.

~Elia Kazan

A film director has to get a shot, no matter what he does. We're desperate people.

~Elia Kazan

I gave my life to the Group Theatre, because in it I'm building something for myself. What I build, I am.

~Elia Kazan

I was an outsider... but I was also sympathetic with people that were struggling to get up, because I struggled to get up.

~Elia Kazan

One final thing a director needs: The ability to say 'I am wrong' or 'I was wrong.' Not as easy as it sounds. But in many situations, these 3 words, honestly spoken, will save the day.

~Elia Kazan

Every picture that is successful has one little miracle in it.

~Elia Kazan

I was born in Turkey in an extremely oppressive climate at the time of pogroms, massacres, really. An immigrant appreciates the freedom more.

~Elia Kazan

I value peace, too, when it is not bought at the price of fundamental decencies.

~Elia Kazan

I joined the Communist Party late in the summer of 1934. I got out a year and a half later.

~Elia Kazan

I truly believe that all power corrupts. Such is probably the thinking behind every political film ever made in Hollywood.

~Elia Kazan

I like directors who come on the set and create something that's a little dangerous, difficult or unusual.

~Elia Kazan

Never underestimate the narcissism of a writer.

~Elia Kazan

Anybody who informs on other people is doing something disturbing and even disgusting.

~Elia Kazan

I said to Tennessee, this thing is becoming the Marlon Brando show.

~Elia Kazan

The only guy who was at all helpful as a producer was Sam Spiegel with *On the Waterfront*. He's one of the few who even knows what he's doing.

~Elia Kazan

I would rather do what I did than crawl in front of a ritualistic Left and lie the way those other comrades did betray my own soul.

~Elia Kazan

I was able to capture on film things the actors didn't even know they were doing.

~Elia Kazan

The writer, when he is also an artist, is someone who admits what others don't dare reveal.

~Elia Kazan

A good director's not sure when he gets on the set what he's going to do.

~Elia Kazan

The more ambivalent you are and the more uncertain you are, then you can get something that you cannot anticipate.

~Elia Kazan

Miller didn't write *Death of a Salesman*. He released it. It was there inside him, waiting to be turned loose. That's the measure of its merit.

~Elia Kazan

The first thing you should do with an actor is not sign a contract with him. Take him to dinner. And take him for a walk afterwards.

~Elia Kazan

Every fighter has one fight that makes or breaks him.

~Elia Kazan

I may be getting old, but not foolish.

~Elia Kazan

For years after I resigned, I was still faithful to their way of thinking. But not in the American Communists.

~Elia Kazan

I want to thank the Academy for its courage and generosity.

~Elia Kazan

I owe Bankhead a gift; she made a director out of me.

~Elia Kazan

I was the true future. I understood Communism better than they did.

~Elia Kazan

I was both very successful and very left; the living demonstration of how you could be on the left and still be in the gossip columns and be envied for the money you made.

~Elia Kazan

The makers of entertainment must try, in our field, to be honest and grown-up.

~Elia Kazan

The physical life of the scene is determined by whether the set squeezes people together or whether the set has an escape place in it.

~Elia Kazan

I was always a self-conscious person.

~Elia Kazan

I was very intense. I think it's a privilege to be an actor.

~Elia Kazan

I was the hero of the young insurgent working class art movement.

~Elia Kazan

Hey, you must be doin' good, 'cause I never hear from you.

~Elia Kazan

Acting, I found, was the biggest charge I ever had. What other artist has it so good? Approval so quick?

~Elia Kazan

To be a member of the Communist Party is to have a taste of the police state. It is a diluted taste but it is bitter and unforgettable.

~Elia Kazan

There is only one thing I respect in so-called Broadway actors... and that is their competitive sense.

~Elia Kazan

I spoke without fear of contradiction. I simply did not suffer self-doubt.

~Elia Kazan

I'm going to make a film where not one word is really important. I'm going to make it all action.

~Elia Kazan

I wouldn't go up on a stage now if you paid a thousand dollars for one minute of acting. It's a nasty experience. You're up there all by yourself. You're so damn exposed.

~Elia Kazan

The belief that the good in American society will finally win out... I don't

believe any more.

~Elia Kazan

I think there should be collaboration, but under my thumb.

~Elia Kazan

The Communists automatically violated the daily practices of democracy to which I was accustomed.

~Elia Kazan

I question the value of stars. I think they're overrated. They get too much money, too much praise.

~Elia Kazan

Criticism- a big bite out of someone's back.

~Elia Kazan

You have no idea how fragile an actor's self-worth is.

~Elia Kazan

I'm small, but I'm neither compliant nor agreeable.

~Elia Kazan

If you're going to play a cowboy, show up with the horse at the audition

~Elia Kazan

Very often the Group actor is a critic when he's acting and an actor when he's criticizing.

~Elia Kazan

TV has made us get down to the nub and new films will begin to live up to what the medium can be.

~Elia Kazan

You have to remind people of their own struggles. It's a responsibility.

~Elia Kazan

I don't remember anything anybody said in any Jack Ford picture. Nothing happens except action.

~Elia Kazan

When you know what an actor has, you can reach in and arouse it. If you don't know what he has, you don't know what the hell is going on.

~Elia Kazan

I was not what you'd call a first-class actor, but I did all right.

~Elia Kazan

Stylized acting and direction is to realistic acting and direction as poetry is to prose.

~Elia Kazan

I will say nothing to an actor that cannot be translated into action.

~Elia Kazan

I left the theater; I literally left to begin a new life.

~Elia Kazan

I'm very pro-America, but I feel it necessary to keep in touch with Europe to maintain a perspective.

~Elia Kazan

With kids you can take a chance but casting a guy at 45 is different. You don't discover somebody that age. If an actor hasn't made it by that time he probably has no talent.

~Elia Kazan

I won't go back to the theater. I like some of the things they're doing but

it's different now, not something I could do. I'll go on making films the rest of my life.

~Elia Kazan

I didn't have the problem of finding myself at 45 on the wrong course - I always wanted to be a film director.

~Elia Kazan

I've lost many of my best friends... I'm going to satisfy myself now, not the critics, not even my friends.

~Elia Kazan

People made suggestions, but, hell, I don't actually listen to anybody, I just go my own way.

~Elia Kazan

Truth gets buried, that's why people write autobiographies.

~Elia Kazan

I know many of the critics and I don't think of them as God-like figures. What can they do to hurt me? Sure, I might be slightly embarrassed for a day, but then you just go your own way.

~Elia Kazan

I have no spy stories to tell, because I saw no spies. Nor did I understand, at that time, any opposition between American and Russian national interest.

~Elia Kazan

I was taken in by what might be called the Hard Times version of the Communists' advertising or recruiting technique.

~Elia Kazan

The camera is more than a recorder, it's a microscope. It penetrates, it

goes into people and you see their most private and concealed thoughts.

~Elia Kazan

The thing with films is that you have to make something that will get people out of their houses, away from the TV set. You must touch people, say something. Otherwise, they'll stay at home.

~Elia Kazan

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