

John Banville

Quotes

*Book, Writing, Self, Thinking, World, People, Art, Artist, Long, Littles, Way, Past,
May, Invention, Men, Novelists, Childhood, Firsts, Sentimental, Rain*

Fictional characters are made of words, not flesh; they do not have free will, they do not exercise volition. They are easily born, and as easily killed off.

~John Banville

In order really to write one has to sink deep into the self and become lost there.

~John Banville

All my life I have lied. I lied to escape, I lied to be loved, I lied for placement and power; I lied to lie. It was a way of living; lies are life's almost-anagram.

~John Banville

The past beats inside me like a second heart.

~John Banville

If I was asked to say what was the greatest invention of human beings, I would say the sentence.

~John Banville

Everything we do is tinged with the knowledge that this may be the last time that we will do this, and that makes what we're doing incredibly sweet.

~John Banville

We carry the dead with us only until we die too, and then it is we who are borne along for a little while, and then our bearers in their turn drop, and so on into the unimaginable generations.

~John Banville

To take possession of a city of which you are not a native you must first fall in love there.

~John Banville

For memory, we use our imagination. We take a few strands of real time and carry them with us, then like an oyster we create a pearl around them.

~John Banville

A man is not much if he can't depend on himself, and nothing if others can't depend on him.

~John Banville

Sleep is uncanny, I have always found it so, a nightly dress-rehearsal for being dead.

~John Banville

Most crime fiction, no matter how 'hard-boiled' or bloodily forensic, is essentially sentimental, for most crime writers are disappointed romantics.

~John Banville

The world is not real for me until it has been pushed through the mesh of language.

~John Banville

I've always been fascinated by physics and cosmology. It gets more and more scary the older you get.

~John Banville

With the crime novels, its delightful to have protagonists I can revisit in book after book. Its like having a fictitious family.

~John Banville

How flat all sounds are at the seaside, flat and yet emphatic, like the sound of gunshots heard at a distance.

~John Banville

Given the world that he created, it would be an impiety against God to believe in him.

~John Banville

Dogs are dim creatures, do not speak to me of their good sense--have you ever heard of a team of tomcats hauling a sled across the frozen wastes?

~John Banville

All art at a certain level is entertainment. We go to a tragedy by Sophocles to be entertained.

~John Banville

A plot begins when somebody has something to hide.

~John Banville

Perhaps all of life is no more than a long preparation for the leaving of it.

~John Banville

Ian McEwan is a very good writer; the first half of *Atonement* alone would ensure him a lasting place in English letters.

~John Banville

Art is amoral, whether we accept this or not; it does not take sides. The finest fictions are cold at heart.

~John Banville

I'm full of self-doubt. I doubt everything I do. Everything I do is a failure.

~John Banville

I don't own a Kindle, no. I love books, they are beautiful objects.

~John Banville

I would be far more critical than any reviewer could be of my own work. So I simply don't read them.

~John Banville

In my books you have to concentrate, but I work hard to make it that, when you do, the rewards are quite high.

~John Banville

It's great people still care about books, and it's great you can still fashion a life from literature.

~John Banville

We artists love to talk tough, but we're just as sentimental as everyone else when it comes down to it.

~John Banville

The novel is resilient, and so are novelists.

~John Banville

I like ideas. I find them more exciting than human behavior for the most part.

~John Banville

I am the worst judge of my books.

~John Banville

...being alone with him was like being in a room which someone had just violently left

~John Banville

The white May blossom swooned slowly into the open mouth of the grave.

~John Banville

The trouble with you, Vic," he said, "is that you think of the world as a sort of huge museum with too many visitors allowed in.

~John Banville

The Booker Prize is a big, popular prize for big, popular books, and that's the way it should be.

~John Banville

The secret of survival is a defective imagination.

~John Banville

Enormous morning, ponderous, meticulous; gray light streaking each bare branch, each single twig, along one side, making another tree, of glassy veins.

~John Banville

Dostoevsky is such a bad writer it is hard to take him seriously as a novelist, though he is a wonderful philosopher.

~John Banville

I have this fantasy. I'm walking past a bookshop and I click my fingers and all my books go blank. So I can start again and get it right.

~John Banville

Life is tragic but it's equally comic.

~John Banville

That's one of the many things I hate about life, that it's a hideously cliched business.

~John Banville

No two things the same, the equals sign a scandal.

~John Banville

And indeed nothing had happened, a momentous nothing, just another of the great world's shrugs of indifference.

~John Banville

We think we're living in the present, but we're really living in the past.

~John Banville

When I finish a sentence, after much labor, it's finished. A certain point comes at which you can't do any more work on it because you know it will kill the sentence.

~John Banville

I never went to university. I'm self-educated. I didn't go because I was too impatient, too arrogant.

~John Banville

I don't make a distinction between men and women. To me they are just people.

~John Banville

The sentence is the greatest human invention of civilization.

~John Banville

I think I'm less the writer than I'm the written.

~John Banville

If they give me the bloody prize, why can't they say nice things about me?

~John Banville

All a work of art can do is present the surface. I can't know the insides of people. I know very little about the inside of myself.

~John Banville

I don't know if there is a personal identity. We all imagine that we are absolute individuals. But when we begin to look for where this individuality resides, it's very difficult to find.

~John Banville

I'm a hopeless 19th-century romantic.

~John Banville

What is money, after all? Almost nothing, when one has a sufficiency of it.

~John Banville

I read Nietzsche when I was a teenager and then I went back to reading him when I was in my thirties, and his voice spoke directly to me. Nietzsche is such a superb literary artist.

~John Banville

Doing what you do well is death. Your duty is to keep trying to do things that you don't do well, in the hope of learning.

~John Banville

Where I went, no one could follow. Yet someone managed to hold my hand.

~John Banville

Related Links:

- Book Quotes
- Writing Quotes
- Self Quotes
- Thinking Quotes
- World Quotes
- People Quotes
- Art Quotes
- Artist Quotes
- Long Quotes
- Littles Quotes
- Way Quotes
- Past Quotes
- May Quotes
- Invention Quotes
- Men Quotes
- Novelists Quotes
- Childhood Quotes
- Firsts Quotes
- Sentimental Quotes
- Rain Quotes