

Marilyn Hacker

Quotes

*Writing, Literature, Thinking, Teaching, Mean, Together, Reading, Book,
Teacher, Different, Home, Brilliant, Cities, Years, Two, Vocabulary, Syntax,
Oddities, Helping, Important*

The ambiguities of language, both in terms of vocabulary and syntax, are fascinating: how important connotation is, what is lost and what is gained in the linguistic transition.

~Marilyn Hacker

The phenomenon of university creative writing programs doesn't exist in France. The whole idea is regarded as a novelty, or an oddity.

~Marilyn Hacker

I have experienced healing through other writers' poetry, but there's no way I can sit down to write in the hope a poem will have healing potential. If I do, I'll write a bad poem.

~Marilyn Hacker

With, or despite our scars, we stay alive.

~Marilyn Hacker

Poetry seems to have been eliminated as a literary genre, and installed instead, as a kind of spiritual aerobic exercise - nobody need read it, but anybody can do it.

~Marilyn Hacker

There is a way in which all writing is connected. In a second language, for example, a workshop can liberate the students' use of the vocabulary they're acquiring.

~Marilyn Hacker

The woman poet must be either a sexless, reclusive eccentric, with nothing to say specifically to women, or a brilliant, tragic, tortured suicide.

~Marilyn Hacker

I worked at all kinds of jobs, mostly commercial editing.

~Marilyn Hacker

There is something very satisfactory about being in the middle of something.

~Marilyn Hacker

I lived in the studio apartment that I bought for four years before I bought it in 1989, so I was already in it. I began living there in 1985, so I've had the same address and phone number since then.

~Marilyn Hacker

We sometimes received - and I would read - 200 manuscripts a week. Some of them were wonderful, some were terrible; most were mediocre. It was like the gifts of the good and bad fairies.

~Marilyn Hacker

I started to send my work to journals when I was 26, which was just a question of when I got the courage up. They were mostly journals I had been reading for the previous six or seven years.

~Marilyn Hacker

Paris is a wonderful city. I can't say I belong to an especially anglophone community.

~Marilyn Hacker

As a teacher you are more or less obliged to pay the same amount of attention to everything. That can wear you down.

~Marilyn Hacker

Women love a sick child or a healthy animal; A man who is both itches them like an incubus.

~Marilyn Hacker

I don't think it's by accident that I was first attracted to translating two French women poets.

~Marilyn Hacker

You happened to me. You were as deep down as I've ever been. You were inside me like my pulse.

~Marilyn Hacker

Good writing gives energy, whatever it is about.

~Marilyn Hacker

Who gets to choose what battle takes her down?

~Marilyn Hacker

Translation makes me look at how a poem is put together in a different way, without the personal investment of the poem I'm writing myself, but equally closely technically.

~Marilyn Hacker

Perhaps first and foremost is the challenge of taking what I find as a reader and making it into a poem that, primarily, has to be a plausible poem in English.

~Marilyn Hacker

Translation is an interestingly different way to be involved both with poetry and with the language that I've found myself living in much of the time. I think the two feed each other.

~Marilyn Hacker

Poetry dovetails contradictions.

~Marilyn Hacker

Did you love well what you very soon left? Come home and take me in your arms and take away this stomach ache, headache, heartache.

~Marilyn Hacker

The pull between sound and syntax creates a kind of musical tension in the language that interests me.

~Marilyn Hacker

I think there is something about coming to a city to work that puts you in touch with it in a different way.

~Marilyn Hacker

My mother was told she couldn't go to medical school because she was a woman and a Jew. So she became a teacher in the New York City public school system.

~Marilyn Hacker

Everyone thinks they're going to write one book of poems or one novel.

~Marilyn Hacker

Clearly, once the student is no longer a student the possibilities of relationship are enlarged.

~Marilyn Hacker

You are almost not free, if you are teaching a group of graduate students, to become friends with one of them. I don't mean anything erotically charged, just a friendship.

~Marilyn Hacker

Community means people spending time together here, and I don't think there's really that.

~Marilyn Hacker

I don't know whether a poem has to be there to help to develop something. I think it's there for itself, for what the reader finds in it.

~Marilyn Hacker

I try to write everyday. I do that much better over here than when I'm teaching. I always rewrite, usually fairly close-on which is to say first draft, then put it aside for 24 hours then more drafts.

~Marilyn Hacker

i'm alternatingly brilliant and witless-and sleepless: bed is just a swamp
to roll in.

~Marilyn Hacker

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