

# Mark Rothko

## Quotes

*Art, Painting, Artist, Color, Silence, World, Thinking, Anecdotes, Real, People,  
Men, Looks, Self, Intimacy, Views, Mean, Companionship, Drama, Ideas,  
Missing*

To me art is an adventure into an unknown world, which can be explored only by those willing to take the risk.

~Mark Rothko

There is only one thing I fear in life, my friend: One day, the black will swallow the red.

~Mark Rothko

I'm not an abstractionist. I'm not interested in the relationship of color or form or anything else. I'm interested only in expressing basic human emotions: tragedy, ecstasy, doom, and so on.

~Mark Rothko

The most interesting painting is one that expresses more of what one thinks than of what one sees

~Mark Rothko

A painting is not a picture of an experience, but is the experience.

~Mark Rothko

There is more power in telling little than in telling all.

~Mark Rothko

If you are only moved by color relationships, you are missing the point. I am interested in expressing the big emotions - tragedy, ecstasy, doom.

~Mark Rothko

The artist invites the spectator to take a journey within the realm of the canvas... Without taking the journey, the spectator has really missed the essential experience of the picture.

~Mark Rothko

You think my paintings are calm, like windows in some cathedral? You should look again. I'm the most violent of all the American painters.

Behind those colours there hides the final cataclysm.

~Mark Rothko

Art to me is an anecdote of the spirit.

~Mark Rothko

Silence is so accurate.

~Mark Rothko

I am here to make you think. . . . I am not here to make pretty pictures!

~Mark Rothko

Art to me is an anecdote of the spirit, and the only means of making concrete the purpose of its varied quickness and stillness.

~Mark Rothko

This world of the imagination is fancy-free and violently opposed to common sense.

~Mark Rothko

If you are moved only by the color relationships, then you miss the point.

~Mark Rothko

It is a widely accepted notion among painters that it does not matter what one paints as long as it is well painted. This is the essence of academicism.

~Mark Rothko

While the authority of the doctor or plumber is never questioned, everyone deems himself a good judge and an adequate arbiter of what a work of art should be and how it should be done.

~Mark Rothko

Without monsters and gods, art cannot enact a drama.

~Mark Rothko

My art is not abstract, it lives and breathes

~Mark Rothko

Look, it's my misery that I have to paint this kind of painting, it's your misery that you have to love it, and the price of the misery is thirteen hundred and fifty dollars.

~Mark Rothko

The abstract artist has given material existence to many unseen worlds and tempi.

~Mark Rothko

There is no such thing as good painting about nothing.

~Mark Rothko

Many of those who are driven to this life are desperately searching for those pockets of silence where we can root and grow.

~Mark Rothko

I don't express myself in my paintings. I express my not-self.

~Mark Rothko

I'm interested only in expressing basic human emotions. And the fact that a lot of people break down and cry when confronted with my pictures shows that I can communicate these basic human emotions.

~Mark Rothko

The picture must be... a revelation, an unexpected and unprecedented resolution of an eternally familiar need.

~Mark Rothko

Pictures must be miraculous: the instant one is completed, the intimacy between the creation and the creator is ended.

~Mark Rothko

(I am) dealing not with the particular anecdote, but rather with the Spirit of Myth, which is generic to all myths at all times.

~Mark Rothko

A picture lives by companionship, expanding and quickening in the eyes of the sensitive observer

~Mark Rothko

The reason for my painting large canvases is that I want to be intimate and human.

~Mark Rothko

It is really a matter of ending this silence and solitude, of breathing and stretching one's arms again.

~Mark Rothko

Small pictures since the Renaissance are like novels; large pictures are like dramas in which one participates in a direct way.

~Mark Rothko

I'm not an abstractionist... I'm not interested in relationships of colour or form or anything else.

~Mark Rothko

I also hang the pictures low rather than high, and particularly in the case of the largest ones, often as close to the floor as is feasible, for that is the way they are painted.

~Mark Rothko

The people that weep before my paintings are having the same

religious experience that I had when I painted it.

~Mark Rothko

We assert that the subject is crucial and only that subject matter is valid which is tragic and timeless.

~Mark Rothko

And last, it may be worthwhile trying to hang something beyond the partial wall because some of the pictures do very well in a confined space.

~Mark Rothko

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