

Martha Graham Quotes

*Dance, Dancing, Inspirational, Believe, Art, Dancer, Body, Mean, Thinking,
Lying, Motivational, People, Memories, Life, World, Men, Years, Beautiful,
Passion, Practice*

Our arms start from the back because they were once wings.

~Martha Graham

Great dancers are not great because of their technique, they are great because of their passion.

~Martha Graham

The body says what words cannot.

~Martha Graham

Movement never lies. It is a barometer telling the state of the soul's weather to all who can read it.

~Martha Graham

I feel that the essence of dance is the expression of man--the landscape of his soul. I hope that every dance I do reveals something of myself or some wonderful thing a human can be.

~Martha Graham

The body is a sacred garment. It's your first and last garment; it is what you enter life in and what you depart life with, and it should be treated with honor.

~Martha Graham

Dance is the hidden language of the soul, of the body.

~Martha Graham

Misery is a communicable disease.

~Martha Graham

Nobody cares if you can't dance well. Just get up and dance. Great dancers are great because of their passion.

~Martha Graham

No artist is pleased. There is no satisfaction whatever at any time. There is only a strange, divine dissatisfaction, a blessed unrest that keeps us marching and makes us more alive than the others.

~Martha Graham

All that is important is this one moment in movement. Make the moment important, vital, and worth living. Do not let it slip away unnoticed and unused.

~Martha Graham

What people in the world think of you is really none of your business.

~Martha Graham

Dance is communication, and so the great challenge is to speak clearly, beautifully and with inevitability.

~Martha Graham

Every dance is a kind of fever chart, a graph of the heart.

~Martha Graham

Stand up! Keep your backs straight! Remember that this is where the wings grow.

~Martha Graham

You see, when weaving a blanket, an Indian woman leaves a flaw in the weaving of that blanket to let the soul out.

~Martha Graham

No artist is ahead of his time. He is his time; it is just that others are behind the times.

~Martha Graham

People have asked me why I chose to be a dancer. I did not choose. I was chosen to be a dancer, and with that, you live all your life.

~Martha Graham

There is a vitality, a life force, an energy, a quickening, that is translated through you into action, and because there is only one of you in all time, this expression is unique.

~Martha Graham

We are all of us, unique - each a unique pattern of creativity and if we do not fulfill it, it is lost for all time.

~Martha Graham

Theater is a verb before it is a noun, an act before it is a place.

~Martha Graham

Some men have thousands of reasons why they cannot do what they want to, when all they need is one reason why they can.

~Martha Graham

Dance is a song of the body. Either of joy or pain.

~Martha Graham

Looking at the past is like lolling in a rocking chair. It is so relaxing and you can rock back and forth on the porch, and never go forward.

~Martha Graham

You do not even have to believe in yourself or your work. You have to keep open and aware directly to the urges that motivate you. Keep the channel open.

~Martha Graham

The reason dance has held such an ageless magic for the world is that it has been the symbol of the performance of living.

~Martha Graham

The secret to dancing is that it is about everything except dancing.

~Martha Graham

I am certain that movement never lies. There is only one law of posture I have been able to discover - the perpendicular line connecting heaven and earth.

~Martha Graham

Modern dance isn't anything except one thing in my mind: the freedom of women in America.

~Martha Graham

Dancers are the messengers of the gods.

~Martha Graham

Wherever a dancer stands is holy ground.

~Martha Graham

Practice means to perform, over and over again in the face of all obstacles, some act of vision, of faith, of desire. Practice is a means of inviting the perfection desired.

~Martha Graham

Freedom to a dancer means discipline. That is what technique is for -- liberation.

~Martha Graham

There is a force, a quickness that is translated through you into action. If you block it, the world will not have it.

~Martha Graham

My dancing is not an attempt to interpret life in the literary sense. It is an affirmation of life through movement.

~Martha Graham

You will only get out of a dance class what you bring to it. Learn by practice.

~Martha Graham

The spine is the tree of life. Respect it.

~Martha Graham

'Age' is the acceptance of a term of years. But maturity is the glory of years.

~Martha Graham

Censorship is the height of vanity.

~Martha Graham

I did not choose to be a dancer. I was chosen.

~Martha Graham

There is a vitality, a life force, an energy, a quickening that is translated through you into action, and because there is only one of you in all of time, this expression is unique.

~Martha Graham

Dancing is just discovery, discovery, discovery - what it all means, the way the little bone near the ankle relates itself to the floor for a perfect stance, a perfect plie.

~Martha Graham

Nobody cares if you can't dance well.

~Martha Graham

A dancer must listen to his body and pay homage to it. Behind the movement lies this terrible, driving passion, this necessity. I won't settle for anything less.

~Martha Graham

The body is a sacred garment.

~Martha Graham

What makes a great dancer is not technique. What makes a great dancer is passion.

~Martha Graham

If you feel depressed you shouldn't go out on the street because it will show on your face and you'll give it to others. Misery is a communicable disease.

~Martha Graham

In the end, it all comes down to the art of breathing.

~Martha Graham

Practice is a means of inviting the perfection desired.

~Martha Graham

In a dancer, there is a reverence for such forgotten things as the miracle of the small beautiful bones and their delicate strength.

~Martha Graham

We learn by practice. Whether it means to learn to dance by practicing dancing or to learn to live by practicing living, the principles are the same. One becomes in some area an athlete of God.

~Martha Graham

Think of the magic of that foot, comparatively small, upon which your whole weight rests. It's a miracle, and the dance is a celebration of that miracle.

~Martha Graham

I get up, I fall down, all the while I am dancing.

~Martha Graham

Nothing is more revealing than movement.

~Martha Graham

Dancers today can do anything; the technique is phenomenal. The passion and the meaning to their movement can be another thing.

~Martha Graham

The past is not dead; it is not even past. People live on inner time; the moment in which a decisive thought or feeling takes place can be at any time. Timeless feelings are common to all of us.

~Martha Graham

Fire is the test of gold; adversity, of strong men.

~Martha Graham

At the time I started in ballet they were dancing 'The Spirit of Champagne' on pointe, in Paris. I thought, 'I don't want to dance the spirit of champagne, I want to drink it!

~Martha Graham

To me, a building - if it's beautiful - is the love of one man, he's made it out of his love for space, materials, things like that.

~Martha Graham

When you start with an idea, or something hits you, then you have to follow that through to the end, and it's the following through to the end that makes the pattern. That, for me, is choreography.

~Martha Graham

It's not my job to look beautiful. It's my job to look interesting.

~Martha Graham

I am absorbed in the magic of movement and light. Movement never lies. It is the magic of what I call the outer space of the imagination.

~Martha Graham

The center of the stage is where I am.

~Martha Graham

I don't think in art there is ever a precedent; each moment is a new one and terrifying and threatening and bursting with hope.

~Martha Graham

I use the words gods and goddesses principally, I think, to mean beautiful bodies - bodies that are absolute instruments. And I believe in discipline, I believe in a very definite technique.

~Martha Graham

You can be Eastern or Burmese or what have you, but the function of the body and the awareness of the body results in dance and you become a dancer, not just a human being.

~Martha Graham

It takes ten years, usually, to make a dancer. It takes ten years of handling the instrument, handling the material with which you are dealing, for you to know it completely.

~Martha Graham

The gesture is the thing truly expressive of the individual - as we think so will we act.

~Martha Graham

The unique must be fulfilled.

~Martha Graham

Art is eternal for it reveals the inner landscape which is the soul of man.

~Martha Graham

Repetition not for monotony but the ecstasy it induces.

~Martha Graham

The body is your instrument in dance, but your art is outside that creature, the body.

~Martha Graham

It's what I always wanted to do, to show the laughter, the fun, the joy of dance.

~Martha Graham

No animal ever has an ugly body until it is domesticated. It is the same with the human body.

~Martha Graham

There is fatigue so great that the body cries, even in its sleep.

~Martha Graham

First we have to believe, and then we believe.

~Martha Graham

The body is shaped, disciplined, honored, and in time, trusted.

~Martha Graham

I have spent all my life with dance and being a dancer. It's permitting life to use you in a very intense way. Sometimes it is not pleasant. Sometimes it is fearful. But nevertheless it is inevitable.

~Martha Graham

I think comedy is the most difficult thing in the world, I really do.

~Martha Graham

Sometimes it's blood memory... not the blood your mother and father gave you... but that which stretches back two or three thousand years.

~Martha Graham

Every dance is a kind of fever chart, a graph of the heart. The instrument through which the dance speaks is also the instrument through which life is lived ... the human body.

~Martha Graham

I want to make people feel intensely alive. I'd rather have them against me than indifferent.

~Martha Graham

All things I do are in every woman. Every woman is Medea. Every woman is Jocasta. There comes a time when a woman is a mother to her husband. Clytemnestra is every woman when she kills.

~Martha Graham

The world I'm interested in is the one where things are not named.

~Martha Graham

I believe one thing: that today is yesterday and tomorrow is today and you can't stop.

~Martha Graham

Some of you are doomed to be artists.

~Martha Graham

Discipline is liberation.

~Martha Graham

I believe that we learn by practice.

~Martha Graham

I don't try to tell the dancers exactly what a dance means before they do it.

~Martha Graham

Dance is the landscape of man's soul.

~Martha Graham

What I do must be done in the sunlight of awareness.

~Martha Graham

One can always lament, you know "but to laugh in the face of life, that's very hard. And for me the great tragedian should also be a great comedian.

~Martha Graham

Pity is a corroding thing.

~Martha Graham

Theater used to be a verb; it used to be an act. But nowadays it is just a noun. It is a place.

~Martha Graham

You give all your life to doing this one thing. It sounds grim, it sounds frightening - it isn't - it has a great gaiety at times and a great wonder.

~Martha Graham

I'd rather an audience like me than dislike me, but I'd rather they disliked me than be apathetic, because that is the kiss of death.

~Martha Graham

If I can't dance, I don't care if my dances are ever done again!

~Martha Graham

My childhood years were a balance of dark and light.

~Martha Graham

You don't pick dance. Dance picks you.

~Martha Graham

Dancers have more bones than most people and on the days when you work hard you are sure that you have somehow accumulated more bones than you started with.

~Martha Graham

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