

# Michael Longley

## Quotes

*Writing, Might, Grows, Book, Art, Way, Monday, Fun, Levels, Good Poetry,  
Meditation, Men, Enormous, Shapes, Ambition, Hard Work, Mean, Couple,  
Looks, World*

There's always a danger of writers believing their own publicity. We live in a world of puff and solicited blurb, a world of favours and backscratching.

~Michael Longley

I would insist that poetry is a normal human activity and its proper concern all the things that happen to people.

~Michael Longley

I suppose that as you grow older some sense of an accumulating oeuvre is unavoidable.

~Michael Longley

Every Monday morning I try to remember to say "Thank you, Lord. I'm not at the Senior Staff Meeting."

~Michael Longley

I think a philistine environment should be bracing for young artists. You have to make your own enjoyment, you've got to make your own art.

~Michael Longley

I was the first Arts Council official in the archipelago to do something for what you might call indigenous music.

~Michael Longley

A good poem is not completely a poem until it has received a critical response that grows out of the poem in an almost biological way.

~Michael Longley

Most poets' revisions are disastrous. They buckle and dent what was originally forged at a red-hot heat.

~Michael Longley

For me the form, the stanzaic shape, is an endorsement, proof that I'm

engaged with the Latin or Greek at an original level, that my versions are explorations.

~Michael Longley

I work hard to make the poems as good as they can be, and if they're not good enough I scrap them. I find it difficult after a gap of a few years to tinker - I'm more likely to destroy.

~Michael Longley

I'm not the kind of poet who arranges treasure-hunts to please the academics and keep them busy. Poetry should be surprising in deeper ways.

~Michael Longley

The gap between verse and poetry is enormous. Between good poetry and good prose the gap is much narrower

~Michael Longley

I'm not against ambition and reach, but if you can say it in four lines, why waste your time saying it in more? Challenge the world by all means, but it's bad for your poetry to take steroids.

~Michael Longley

I hardly ever look at my published books.

~Michael Longley

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