

Nathanael West

Quotes

*Men, Heart, Math, Tears, Animal, Thinking, Benefits, Expression, Dream,
Needs, Book, Suffering, Rocking It, Cowboy, Looks, Zoos, Sea, Calm,
Numbers, Prayer*

Art Is a Way Out. Do not let life overwhelm you. When the old paths are choked with the debris of failure, look for newer and fresher paths. Art is just such a path. Art is distilled from suffering.

~Nathanael West

Only those who still have hope can benefit from tears.

~Nathanael West

At college, and perhaps for a year afterwards, they had believed in literature, had believed in Beauty and in personal expression as an absolute end. When they lost this belief, they lost everything.

~Nathanael West

Let him ride a horse. He's a cowboy ain't he?

~Nathanael West

Every child, everywhere; in the whole world there was not one child who was not gravely, sweetly dancing.

~Nathanael West

Numbers constitute the only universal language.

~Nathanael West

Her sureness was based on the power to limit experience arbitrarily.

~Nathanael West

Like a dead man, only friction could make him warm or violence make him mobile.

~Nathanael West

Feeling is of the heart and nerves and the crudeness of its expression has nothing to do with its intensity.

~Nathanael West

He thought of how calm he was. His calm was so perfect that he could not destroy it even by being conscious of it.

~Nathanael West

He felt as though his heart were a bomb, a complicated bomb that would result in a simple explosion, wrecking the world without rocking it.

~Nathanael West

Prayers for the condemned man will be offered on an adding machine. Numbers constitute the only universal language.

~Nathanael West

Betty took him for a walk in the zoo and he was amused by her evident belief in the curative power of animals. She seemed to think that it must steady him to look at a buffalo.

~Nathanael West

Man spends a great deal of time making order out of chaos, yet insists that the emotions be disordered. I order my emotions: I am insane.

~Nathanael West

He read it for the same reason an animal tears at a wounded foot: to hurt the pain.

~Nathanael West

Crowds of people moved through the streets with a dream-like violence.

~Nathanael West

But whether he was happy or not was hard to say. Probably he was neither, just as a plant is neither.

~Nathanael West

It's solitary drinking that makes drunkards.

~Nathanael West

It is hard to laugh at the need for beauty and romance, no matter how tasteless, even horrible, the results of that need are. But it is easy to sigh. Few things are sadder than the truly monstrous.

~Nathanael West

No dream ever entirely disappears. Somewhere it troubles some unfortunate person and some day, when that person has been sufficiently troubled, it will be reproduced on the lot.

~Nathanael West

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