

Norman MacCaig

Quotes

Literature, Book, Thinking, Writing, Years, People, Men, Fishing, Care, Hills, Skins, Fish Tanks, Nice, Love Is, Rivers, Real, Light, Jobs, Want, Taught

I'm very gregarious, but I love being in the hills on my own.

~Norman MacCaig

However, I learned something. I thought that if the young person, the student, has poetry in him or her, to offer them help is like offering a propeller to a bird.

~Norman MacCaig

But I hang on to books. I love them. I even think they're very nice decor in a room - far better than paintings... That's not quite true!

~Norman MacCaig

When I go fishing I like to know that there's nobody within five miles of me.

~Norman MacCaig

I said I have no powers of invention. Well, I also have no powers of mimicry.

~Norman MacCaig

I used to fish the Border rivers, but nowadays you have to queue up for a shot and I can't stand that.

~Norman MacCaig

When I was asked to be Writer in Residence at Edinburgh I thought, you can't teach poetry. This is ridiculous.

~Norman MacCaig

And the second question, can poetry be taught? I didn't think so.

~Norman MacCaig

There are some friends you don't meet for twenty years and when you meet them again it's as if no twenty years has happened - you're lucky when that happens. I feel the same about books.

~Norman MacCaig

It's like breathing in and out to me. It's like having a conversation with someone who isn't there. Because it has to be addressed to somebody - not a particular person, or very rarely.

~Norman MacCaig

Well, I love fishing. I wouldn't kill a fly myself but I've no hesitation in killing a fish. A lot of men are like that. No bother. Out you come. Thump. And that's not the only reason.

~Norman MacCaig

When I was a teacher, teachers would come into my classroom and admire my desk on which lay nothing whatever, whereas theirs were heaped with papers and books.

~Norman MacCaig

I learned words, I learned words; but half of them died from lack of exercise. And the ones I use often look at me with a look that whispers, Liar.

~Norman MacCaig

When I talk of hearing a poet's voice speaking, I always think of it as in the presence of the man.

~Norman MacCaig

I don't care whether a book is a first edition or not. I'm not a bibliophile in that word's natural sense.

~Norman MacCaig

A terrible thing about getting oldish is that your friends start dying, and in the last ten years I have lost seven or eight of my closest.

~Norman MacCaig

Well, I'm a light traveller. I chuck things away.

~Norman MacCaig

If I wrote a play with four characters every single one of them would talk like me regardless of age or sex.

~Norman MacCaig

In some ways I'm a reticent man, and for quite a number of years there wasn't very much of my real true deep feelings in my writing.

~Norman MacCaig

I don't think of myself all the time.

~Norman MacCaig

I only keep books that I like very much. Otherwise I'd throw them out.

~Norman MacCaig

And in a way, that's been a help to me, because I take great passions for a particular poet - sometimes it lasts for many years, sometimes only for a while. This happens to everybody.

~Norman MacCaig

And it's impossible for me to read Henry James.

~Norman MacCaig

But you'd have a job to find many of my poems which would seem to be very influenced by a particular person.

~Norman MacCaig

People haven't got the interest in long long works these days. A lack of interest which I share.

~Norman MacCaig

All I write about is what's happened to me and to people I know, and

the better I know them, the more likely they are to be written about.

~Norman MacCaig

Anybody who writes doesn't like to be misunderstood.

~Norman MacCaig

I was very interested in American poetry for many years. Much less now.

~Norman MacCaig

I used to have a great love for Dostoyevsky and Tolstoy, the big boys of the last century.

~Norman MacCaig

I just didn't want to shoot other people.

~Norman MacCaig

I never think about poetry except when I'm writing it. I mean my poetry.

~Norman MacCaig

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