

Paul Beatty

Quotes

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All this angst, all this stuff we all feel, is just tied to making art. It's so ancient.

~Paul Beatty

If all the world's a stage, I want to operate the trap door.

~Paul Beatty

I don't write to put it in a drawer, I hope that people see it.

~Paul Beatty

People are very comfortable when race relations get looked at retrospectively. Slavery, the civil rights movement, etc.

~Paul Beatty

I'm not searching for the truth. That's too much pressure .

~Paul Beatty

Why are the mainstream buzz things rarely contemporary? It doesn't happen very often. It's hard to feel culpable or implicated or even apathetic.

~Paul Beatty

I think there's nothing new going on. Except that, you're even more public than you've ever been. There's some good and some bad to that.

~Paul Beatty

If New York is the City That Never Sleeps, then Los Angeles is the City That's Always Passed Out on the Couch.

~Paul Beatty

It's so hard to say what you really mean. For any number of reasons: to protect yourself, or if you just can't find the words.

~Paul Beatty

Don't write about trying to change the world, just write about a changed world or a world that's not changing. Let that do the work.

~Paul Beatty

In *The Sellout* I tried to capture how we can talk and see race, how we see urbanity, and how we see our history.

~Paul Beatty

I think everybody focuses on race, but it's about a ton of things, and I just see these things as all interrelated and all interwoven in a weird way.

~Paul Beatty

I think, and a lot of that has to do with where I grew up in California; [status] isn't something I think about that much.

~Paul Beatty

Contradictions make people feel off. They'll say, "Hey, you just said this and now this person is doing that, how is that possible?"

~Paul Beatty

It's all the same for me, how I teach, how I write, how I think.

~Paul Beatty

I don't try to be satirical. I just try to get what's in my head on the page. And that part is hard for me to do. It takes a long, long time to make it poetic, somewhat essayistic.

~Paul Beatty

I can't say that I love writing, but I do love the satisfaction that it gives me.

~Paul Beatty

My dad fought in Korea. It was one of the first stories I remember

hearing about.

~Paul Beatty

I wrote poems and an essay about that weird language. We still remember it to a certain extent, and it still comes up when we're all together. It's so fundamental to how I think.

~Paul Beatty

Like when you have the right title for something you're writing and you get lost - you can always go back to the title and go, "Yeah, that's what this is about."

~Paul Beatty

There are certain things that happen in New York that just don't happen anywhere else.

~Paul Beatty

I've also never written anything really in LA.

~Paul Beatty

I've written a little bit in Germany.

~Paul Beatty

If I'm in LA, I'm close to home, and that just brings up all these other things, good and bad. There is a reason why I am not there .

~Paul Beatty

I'm healthier in California, probably a little happier, maybe.

~Paul Beatty

I forget how beautiful and calm California is. It's not so much about the place, but also the age that I came to the place and, well, other things. New York is hard.

~Paul Beatty

I'm hugely honored [with the Man Booker Prize].

~Paul Beatty

I'm very fortunate. I'm not much of a self-promoter or anything.

~Paul Beatty

If all the students who slept through lectures were laid end to end, they'd all be a lot more comfortable. If all the world's a stage, I want to operate the trap door.

~Paul Beatty

I don't know exactly what a black Chinese restaurant would be, but I would sure love to see one.

~Paul Beatty

There's this line between propriety and how we really speak and how we really think. And I'm just trying to have fun with that stuff.

~Paul Beatty

I'm not very pious about anything, fortunately, but I'm skewering myself first. I'm skewering things that I care about and things that are important to me and then just my own foibles.

~Paul Beatty

My good friend, the poet Kofi Natambu, once said, "Contradiction is how we operate."

~Paul Beatty

We don't act the same in every situation. Things bleed into all kinds of other things, from behavior to identity.

~Paul Beatty

Even when it comes to writing fiction, how do you encompass all this stuff that's right on the tip of your tongue? You have to fold that into

what you're working on.

~Paul Beatty

I co-taught a seminar called Small Group Processes with my professor. I learned so much from it, so much about myself, about groups, how this stuff works. I bring all that stuff to teaching now.

~Paul Beatty

The anger and fear are so global. And of course, we live where we live and there's a hierarchy to who is worth what. It's been going on for a long, long time.

~Paul Beatty

I remember going to see Amiri Baraka. It wasn't actually too long before he died. He said, "You've got to write to change the world!" I was like, "Not me, no, no, no, no."

~Paul Beatty

The Sellout is about friends and relatives who have touched me in real ways.

~Paul Beatty

I try to be accommodating, but I'm pretty much a loner.

~Paul Beatty

Sometimes I would get frustrated, I'd think, "You know, this is a good book, how come no one is paying attention to it?" So it's nice to have some recognition.

~Paul Beatty

The other thing [my psychology professor] said to me was that I was always very mindful of the person who was away from the group, that I was always trying to bring them in.

~Paul Beatty

Maybe I'm just sensitive to that person who's on the outside.

~Paul Beatty

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