

Peter Schjeldahl

Quotes

*Art, Artist, People, Writing, Mean, Thinking, Photography, World, Strong,
Beautiful, Joy, Eye, Needs, Photograph, Persons, Brain, Covering, No Matter
What, Roles, May*

Black and white can show how something is. Color adds how it is, imbued with temperatures and humidities of experience.

~Peter Schjeldahl

A lot of education is like teaching marching; I try to make it more like dancing.

~Peter Schjeldahl

Everything that would begin to make somebody a good student would tend to make him or her a poor artist, and vice versa.

~Peter Schjeldahl

What I want to know from students, and I ask them right away, is, 'What do you want? I don't care what it is. I want to help you get it.

~Peter Schjeldahl

Matisse can make you hate your life for its comparatively insipid joys.

~Peter Schjeldahl

To me, the greatest artists are almost entirely non-verbal.

~Peter Schjeldahl

You could say that clinical depression is an incapacity to aesthetic response. It's like there's a constant agreement within ourselves, a kind of mutual understanding between ourselves and the world.

~Peter Schjeldahl

Picasso had nicknamed Georges Braque "Wilbur," thereby becoming "Orville" in their Wright Brothers-like ambition to get painting off the ground of conventional representation.

~Peter Schjeldahl

I find that the mask of the critic is to have distance.

~Peter Schjeldahl

I can do pretty good work in various short forms, but anything over 1400 words, I'd be of no use. I like to say I'm a river navigator. I need to see the shore behind the shore.

~Peter Schjeldahl

I think being interested is really what being civilized is about. I mean, you have to be conscious of everything.

~Peter Schjeldahl

There's art that I would readily buy if I could afford it, and enjoy, but would never write about because it doesn't seem significant.

~Peter Schjeldahl

Art teachers are always the doormats of the previous generation.

~Peter Schjeldahl

It's possible I am the only art critic that a lot of people read. And maybe Robert Hughes, if he's still writing.

~Peter Schjeldahl

A word is a thought, of course. But any image, including a photograph, may become an instrument of sufficiently lucid cogitation.

~Peter Schjeldahl

There is an ineffable but fatal difference in attitude between people behaving naturally and people behaving naturally for a camera.

~Peter Schjeldahl

Rembrandt was way ahead of his time. It's as if he was painting an amateur theatrical, or a professional theatrical, in his studio. It's a kind of performance.

~Peter Schjeldahl

Artists are expected to talk about their work but writers aren't expected

to talk about their writing.

~Peter Schjeldahl

There's a double standard between writers and readers. Readers can be unfaithful to writers anytime they like, but writers must never ever be unfaithful to the readers.

~Peter Schjeldahl

It's my duty to sell the ideas. But there's always a question when it comes to beauty.

~Peter Schjeldahl

Artists are sometimes in a position to tell the truth, but they're positioned as a Cassandra. They're gifted with impeccable prophecy and the assurance of never being listened to.

~Peter Schjeldahl

For Rembrandt, reality is role-playing.... Everyone is portrayed in relation to a social hierarchy.

~Peter Schjeldahl

I have painted enough to have a lot of respect for mediocre painters. It's really hard.

~Peter Schjeldahl

I have a total responsibility to the reader. The reader has to trust me and never feel betrayed.

~Peter Schjeldahl

I'm absolutely convinced that people cannot look and read at the same time. Not any more than you can kneel and jump at the same time. It's a completely different physiological setting.

~Peter Schjeldahl

Comic books, graphic novels, involve constant toggling and it's hard work. You get tired reading comic books, but you never get tired looking at pictures or reading words.

~Peter Schjeldahl

All artists and creative people are basically unhappy people. If you were happy, that would mean you were content with the world as it was and why would you ever want to change it?

~Peter Schjeldahl

Minimalism itself had a very strong iconoclast impulse. You think of the sixties as loose and liberated, but in art it was actually quite the contrary.

~Peter Schjeldahl

Love and fear, the two strongest emotions we have. It all starts with emotion.

~Peter Schjeldahl

The aesthetic experience has to be given. And beauty is a regular experience of every person - every person who is not clinically depressed!

~Peter Schjeldahl

A lot of writers and artists are like chefs who eat their own cooking in the kitchen and then deliver an empty plate with assurances that it's great.

~Peter Schjeldahl

Everybody's got plants, but most are just growing weeds. The cultivated have greater gardens, finer and gaudier gardens.

~Peter Schjeldahl

Beauty is a physiological reaction. Beauty is not an object.

~Peter Schjeldahl

My problem with political art is not that it's bad art necessarily, but that it is terrible politics.

~Peter Schjeldahl

Beauty is not a concept. It is the animal joy of the mind.

~Peter Schjeldahl

With art criticism it's difficult to discuss beauty, to assess it, because there's always the possibility that we're insane.

~Peter Schjeldahl

Everything I've learned about art was (a) because I was actually interested, or (b) I was actually interested in covering my ass because of what I was writing about.

~Peter Schjeldahl

Beauty makes us more like ourselves and more like each other.

~Peter Schjeldahl

Art is always subject to change in a moment by somebody who's strong enough to shed new light on it.

~Peter Schjeldahl

I do have pleasure when I'm writing. I mean, I'm aware of pleasure. And sometimes I make myself laugh, with a joke or something; or I feel gleeful.

~Peter Schjeldahl

Smithson was someone of tremendous significance whose work was not beautiful at all. I think he was an iconoclast.

~Peter Schjeldahl

Your medium has to be alive to you, no matter what you do.

~Peter Schjeldahl

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- Roles Quotes
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