

Stephen Greenblatt

Quotes

*Writing, Believe, Pleasure, Book, Firsts, Thinking, Ghost, Way, World, Art,
Reading, Couple, Dancing, Names, Listening To Music, Howl, Years, Broken,
Moments, Quests*

Now a Protestant confronting a Catholic ghost is exactly Shakespeare's way of grappling with what was not simply a general social problem but one lived out in his own life.

~Stephen Greenblatt

My father who in this case was an obsessive life-long storyteller, and by a very peculiar trick of my father's. My father would tell a very, very long story, and the punch line would be in Yiddish.

~Stephen Greenblatt

First of all, there was a volcano of words, an eruption of words that Shakespeare had never used before that had never been used in the English language before. It's astonishing. It pours out of him.

~Stephen Greenblatt

One of my favorite writers is Michel de Montaigne. My wife gave me a beautiful 17th-century edition of Montaigne's essays translated by John Florio. That's probably my most precious possession.

~Stephen Greenblatt

Compared to the unleashed forces of warfare and of faith, Mount Vesuvius was kinder to the legacy of antiquity.

~Stephen Greenblatt

I think the writing of literature should give pleasure. What else should it be about? It is not nuclear physics. It actually has to give pleasure or it is worth nothing.

~Stephen Greenblatt

The greatest obstacle to pleasure is not pain; it is delusion.

~Stephen Greenblatt

I believe that nothing comes of nothing, even in Shakespeare. I wanted to know where he got the matter he was working with and what he did

with that matter.

~Stephen Greenblatt

No special writing rituals. And my desk is usually cluttered.

~Stephen Greenblatt

What I wanted to do was to get that sense of being in touch with this lost world while holding onto what draws readers and audiences there in the first place.

~Stephen Greenblatt

Through reading literature we can make ghosts speak to us, and we can speak back to them.

~Stephen Greenblatt

The Shakespeare that Shakespeare became is the name that's attached to these astonishing objects that he left behind.

~Stephen Greenblatt

But I never listen to music while I'm writing.

~Stephen Greenblatt

What we know is that Shakespeare wrote perhaps the most remarkable body of passionate love poetry in the English language to a young man.

~Stephen Greenblatt

[People in 1600s] didn't have many books. They would have been staggered by the personal libraries we have today, because books back then were incredibly expensive.

~Stephen Greenblatt

In short, it became possible - never easy, but possible - in the poet Auden's phrase to find the mortal world enough.

~Stephen Greenblatt

I was in Venice teaching, so I reread Henry James's "The Wings of the Dove." I love James.

~Stephen Greenblatt

The exercise of reason is not available only to specialists; it is accessible to everyone.

~Stephen Greenblatt

Poems are difficult to silence.

~Stephen Greenblatt

First of all, Shakespeare is about pleasure and interest. He was from the first moment he actually wrote something for the stage, and he remains so.

~Stephen Greenblatt

Writing is a performance, like singing an aria or dancing a jig

~Stephen Greenblatt

Art always penetrates the particular fissures in one's psychic life.

~Stephen Greenblatt

I'm reading Hans Kummer's "In Quest of the Sacred Baboon." It's wonderful. It's a scientist's journal about baboons, but it relates to the search for human origin.

~Stephen Greenblatt

I have lots of things that aren't so old that I value, such as a copy of Allen Ginsberg's "Howl," which he signed for me.

~Stephen Greenblatt

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