

Stephen Nachmanovitch

Quotes

Play, Art, Creativity, Creative, Practice, Real, Mean, Self, Inspiration, Hands, Way, Struggle, Artist, Identity, Intuition, Technique, Spring, People, Skills, Action

Every moment of life is unique—a kiss, a sunset, a dance, a joke. None will ever recur in quite the same way. Each happens only once in the history of the universe.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

The most potent muse of all is our own inner child.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

Improvisation is intuition in action, a way to discover the muse and learn to respond to her call.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

The easiest way to do art is to dispense with success and failure altogether and just get on with it.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

Structure ignites spontaneity. Limits yield intensity. When we play... by our self-chosen rules, we find that containment of strength amplifies strength.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

The noun of self becomes a verb. This flashpoint of creation in the present moment is where work and play merge.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

Creative work is play. It is free speculation using materials of one's chosen form.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

To do anything artistically you have to acquire technique, but create through your technique and not with it.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

Surrender means cultivating a comfortable attitude toward not knowing,

being nurtured by the mystery of moments that are dependably surprising, ever fresh.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

Any action can be practiced as an art, as a craft, or as drudgery.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

Every conversation is a form of Jazz. The activity of instantaneous creation is as ordinary to us as breathing.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

If we are transparent, with nothing to hide, the gap between language and being disappears. Then the Muse can speak.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

If a creative person has a sense of humor, a sense of style and a certain amount of stubbornness, he finds a way to do what he needs to in spite of the obstacles.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

Creativity exists more in the searching than in the finding.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

Play is the taproot from which original art springs. It is the raw stuff that the artist channels with all his learning and technique.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

Fidgeting and boredom are the symptoms of fear of emptiness, which we try to fill up with whatever we can lay our hands on.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

There are only people doing their imperfect best at doing their imperfect jobs

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

The beauty of playing together is meeting in the One.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

As an improvising musician, I am not in the music business, I am not in the creativity business; I am in the surrender business.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

Writing, playing, composing, painting, reading, listening, looking-all require that we submit to being swept away by Eros, to a transformation of self of the kind that happens when we fall in love.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

Commitment to a set of rules frees your play to attain a profundity and vigor otherwise impossible.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

We provide both irritation and inspiration for each other- the grist for each other's pearl making.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

Play enables us to rearrange our capacities and our very identity so that they can be used in unforeseen ways

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

Play, creativity, art, spontaneity, all these experiences are their own rewards and are blocked when we perform for reward or punishment, profit or loss.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

Looking at the creative process is like looking into a crystal: no matter which facet we gaze into, we see all the others reflected.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

To create, we need both technique and freedom of technique

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

If we operate with a belief in long sweeps of time, we build cathedrals; if we operate from fiscal quarter to fiscal quarter, we build ugly shopping malls.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

You can't express inspiration without skill.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

Memory and intention and intuition are fused. The iron is always hot.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

The conception, composition, practice, and performance of a piece of music can blossom in a single moment.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

Practice is an ever-fresh, challenging flow of work and play in which we continually test and demolish our own delusions; therefore, it is sometimes painful.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

Creative living, or the life of a creator, seems like a leap into the unknown only because "normal life" is rigid and traumatized.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

Play, intrinsically rewarding, doesn't cost anything; as soon as you put a price on it, it becomes, to some extent, not play.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

If the art is created with the whole person, then the work will come out whole. Education must teach, reach, and vibrate the whole person rather than merely transfer knowledge.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

We can depend on the world being a perpetual surprise in perpetual motion.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

An improviser does not operate from a formless vacuum, but from three billion years of organic evolution

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

Mastery means responsibility, ability to respond in real time to the need of the moment. Intuitive or inspired living means not just passively hearing the voice, but acting on it.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

Every attempt we make is imperfect; yet each one of those imperfect attempts is an occasion for a delight unlike anything else on earth.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

With too little judgement, we get trash. With too much judgement, we get blockage.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

Whispered words can be devastatingly effective.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

If we split practice from the real thing, neither one of them will be very real.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

Faithfulness to the moment and to the present circumstance entails continuous surrender.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

When we are totally faithful to our own individuality, we are actually following a very intricate design. This kind of freedom is the opposite of

"just anything".

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

Play cannot be defined, because in play all definitions slither, dance, combine, break apart, and recombine.

~Stephen Nachmanovitch

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- Artist Quotes
- Identity Quotes
- Intuition Quotes
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