

Thornton Wilder

Quotes

*Life, Children, Men, Love, World, People, Eye, Years, Self, Writing, Art, Play,
Time, Doe, Mind, Hope, Country, Essentials, Needs, Secret*

We can only be said to be alive in those moments when our hearts are conscious of our treasures.

~Thornton Wilder

I would love to be the poet laureate of Coney Island.

~Thornton Wilder

My advice to you is not to inquire why or whither, but just enjoy your ice cream while it's on your plate.

~Thornton Wilder

There is nothing like eavesdropping to show you that the world outside your head is different from the world inside your head.

~Thornton Wilder

If I wasn't an actor, I'd be a secret agent.

~Thornton Wilder

The highest tribute to the dead is not grief but gratitude.

~Thornton Wilder

Art is not only the desire to tell one's secret; it is the desire to tell it and hide it at the same time.

~Thornton Wilder

If you write to impress it will always be bad, but if you write to express it will be good

~Thornton Wilder

Oh, earth, you're too wonderful for anybody to realize you. Do any human beings ever realize life while they live it -- every, every minute?

~Thornton Wilder

There is a land of the living and a land of the dead and the bridge is

love, the only survival, the only meaning.

~Thornton Wilder

Hope, like faith, is nothing if it is not courageous; it is nothing if it is not ridiculous.

~Thornton Wilder

Enjoy your ice cream while it's on your plate.

~Thornton Wilder

Every good thing in the world stands on the razor-edge of danger.

~Thornton Wilder

The stuff of which masterpieces are made drifts about the world waiting to be clothed in words.

~Thornton Wilder

EMILY: "Does anyone ever realize life while they live it...every, every minute?" STAGE MANAGER: "No. Saints and poets maybe...they do some.

~Thornton Wilder

A play visibly represents pure existing.

~Thornton Wilder

The more decisions that you are forced to make alone, the more you are aware of your freedom to choose.

~Thornton Wilder

Life is a fatal adventure. It can only have one end. So why not make it as far-ranging and free as possible.

~Thornton Wilder

Seek the lofty by reading, hearing and seeing great work at some

moment every day.

~Thornton Wilder

Love is an energy which exists of itself. It is its own value.

~Thornton Wilder

There is no drunkenness equal to that of remembering whispered words in the night.

~Thornton Wilder

When you're safe at home you wish you were having an adventure; when you're having an adventure you wish you were safe at home.

~Thornton Wilder

A sense of humor judges one's actions and the actions of others from a wider reference. It pardons shortcomings, it consoles failure.

~Thornton Wilder

Many who have spent a lifetime in it can tell us less of love than the child that lost a dog yesterday.

~Thornton Wilder

Faith is a never-ending pool of clarity, reaching far beyond the margins of consciousness. We all know more than we know we know.

~Thornton Wilder

I am convinced that, except in a few extraordinary cases, one form or another of an unhappy childhood is essential to the formation of exceptional gifts.

~Thornton Wilder

A dramatist is one who believes that the pure event, an action involving human beings, is more arresting than any comment that can be made upon it.

~Thornton Wilder

Money is like manure; it's not worth a thing unless it's spread around encouraging young things to grow.

~Thornton Wilder

It is very necessary to have markers of beauty left in a world seemingly bent on making the most evil ugliness.

~Thornton Wilder

An incinerator is a writer's best friend.

~Thornton Wilder

Ninety-nine percent of the people in the world are fools and the rest of us are in great danger of contagion.

~Thornton Wilder

There is no need for me to curse you -the murderer survives the victim only to learn that it was himself that he longed to be rid of. Hatred is self-hatred.

~Thornton Wilder

Choose the least important day in your life. It will be important enough.

~Thornton Wilder

Providence has nothing good or high in store for one who does not resolutely aim at something high or good. A purpose is the eternal condition of success.

~Thornton Wilder

The future author is one who discovers that language, the exploration and manipulation of the resources of language, will serve him in winning through to his way.

~Thornton Wilder

I regard the theatre as the greatest of all art forms.

~Thornton Wilder

All excellence is equally difficult.

~Thornton Wilder

It is only in appearance that time is a river. It is rather a vast landscape and it is the eye of the beholder that moves.

~Thornton Wilder

People are meant to go through life two by two. 'Tain't natural to be lonesome.

~Thornton Wilder

We do not choose the day of our birth nor may we choose the day of our death, yet choice is the sovereign faculty of the mind.

~Thornton Wilder

Where there is an unknowable, there is a promise.

~Thornton Wilder

Throughout the hours of the night, though there had been few to hear it, the whole sky had been loud with the singing of these constellations.

~Thornton Wilder

Being employed is like being loved: you know that somebody's thinking about you the whole time.

~Thornton Wilder

I not only bow to the inevitable; I am fortified by it.

~Thornton Wilder

I have inherited this burden of superstition and nonsense. I govern innumerable men but must acknowledge that I am governed by birds

and thunderclaps

~Thornton Wilder

Every person who has ever lived has lived an unbroken succession of unique occasions.

~Thornton Wilder

In advertising, not to be different is virtual suicide.

~Thornton Wilder

Marriage is a bribe to make a housekeeper think she's a householder.

~Thornton Wilder

Characterization in a play is like a blank check which the dramatist accords to the actor for him to fill in.

~Thornton Wilder

The unencumbered stage encourages the truth operative in everyone. The less seen, the more heard. The eye is the enemy of the ear in real drama.

~Thornton Wilder

[Camila] was quite incapable of establishing any harmony between the claims of her art, of her appetites, or her dreams, and of her crowded daily routine. Each of these was a world in itself.

~Thornton Wilder

the whole purport of literature...is the notation of the heart. Style is but the faintly contemptible vessel in which the bitter liquid is recommended to the world.

~Thornton Wilder

The best thing about animals is they don't talk much.

~Thornton Wilder

Do any human beings ever realize life while they live it?

~Thornton Wilder

Many plays - certainly mine - are like blank checks. The actors and directors put their own signatures on them.

~Thornton Wilder

Pride, avarice, and envy are in every home.

~Thornton Wilder

When you're at war, you think about a better life; when you're at peace you think about a more comfortable one.

~Thornton Wilder

The planting of trees is the least self-centered of all that we can do. It is a purer act of faith than the procreation of children.

~Thornton Wilder

I was an old man when I was 12; and now I am an old man, AND IT'S
SPLENDID!

~Thornton Wilder

I rose by sheer military ability to the rank of corporal.

~Thornton Wilder

The theatre is supremely fitted to say: 'Behold! These things are.' Yet most dramatists employ it to say: 'This moral truth can be learned from beholding this action.'

~Thornton Wilder

I am not interested in the ephemeral - such subjects as the adulteries of dentists. I am interested in those things that repeat and repeat and repeat in the lives of the millions.

~Thornton Wilder

Leadership is for those who love the public good and are endowed and trained to administer it.

~Thornton Wilder

Those who are silent, self-effacing and attentive become the recipients of confidences.

~Thornton Wilder

The comic spirit is given to us in order that we may analyze, weigh, and clarify things in us which nettle us, or which we are outgrowing, or trying to reshape

~Thornton Wilder

There is one regard in which bullies show real perception when compared with their victims; it is their silent good-natured pleasure of the moment.

~Thornton Wilder

A purpose is the eternal condition of success.

~Thornton Wilder

A good writer preserves an air of freedom in his prose, so that the reader won't know how a story will end - even if he's reading a history book.

~Thornton Wilder

Literature is the orchestration of platitudes.

~Thornton Wilder

Nature reserves the right to inflict upon her children the most terrifying jests.

~Thornton Wilder

That's the advantage of having lived sixty-five years. You don't feel the

need to be impatient any longer.

~Thornton Wilder

We live in what is, but we find a thousand ways not to face it. Great theater strengthens our faculty to face it.

~Thornton Wilder

Never support two weaknesses at the same time. It's your combination sinners - your lecherous liars and your miserly drunkards - who dishonor the vices and bring them into bad repute.

~Thornton Wilder

[Whenever] you get near the human race, there's layers and layers of nonsense.

~Thornton Wilder

The best part of married life is the fights. The rest is merely so-so.

~Thornton Wilder

On the stage it is always now; the personages are standing on that razor-edge, between the past and the future, which is the essential character of conscious being.

~Thornton Wilder

Everybody's talking about people breaking into houses but there are more people in the world who want to break out of houses.

~Thornton Wilder

I think I write in order to discover on my shelf a new book that I would enjoy reading, or to see a new play that would engross me.

~Thornton Wilder

There's nothing like mixing with women to bring out all the foolishness in a man of sense.

~Thornton Wilder

But there comes a time in everybody's life when he must decide whether he'll live among human beings or nota fool among fools or a fool alone.

~Thornton Wilder

Only it seems to me that once in your life before you die you ought to see a country where they don't talk in English and don't even want to.

~Thornton Wilder

Life is an unbroken succession of false situations.

~Thornton Wilder

Oh, earth, you're too wonderful for anybody to realize you.

~Thornton Wilder

Many great writers have been extraordinarily awkward in daily exchange, but the greatest give the impression that their style was nursed by the closest attention to colloquial speech.

~Thornton Wilder

Comparisons of one's lot with others' teaches us nothing and enfeebles the will.

~Thornton Wilder

But such occasions of excellence became less and less frequent. As her technique became sounder, [her] sincerity became less necessary.

~Thornton Wilder

Even in the most perfect love one person loves less profoundly than the other.

~Thornton Wilder

you have to love life to have life, and you need to have life to love life

~Thornton Wilder

How do you know what the world is like? Do you know the world is a foul sty? Do you know if you rip the fronts off houses you'd find swine? The world's a hell. What does it matter what happens in it?

~Thornton Wilder

The revival in religion will be a rhetorical problem - new persuasive words for defaced or degraded ones.

~Thornton Wilder

The knowledge that she would never be loved in return acted upon her ideas as a tide acts upon cliffs.

~Thornton Wilder

A dramatist is one who from his earliest years has found that sheer gazing at the shocks and counter-shocks among people is quite sufficiently engrossing without having to encase it in comment.

~Thornton Wilder

A convention is an agreed-upon falsehood, a permitted lie.

~Thornton Wilder

On Friday noon, July the twentieth, 1714, the finest bridge in all Peru broke and precipitated five travelers into the gulf below.

~Thornton Wilder

Imprisonment of the body is bitter; imprisonment of the mind is worse

~Thornton Wilder

Man is not an end but a beginning. We are at the beginning of the second week. We are children of the eighth day

~Thornton Wilder

I am my own judge of what truths I shall tell. The truth can do just as much harm as a lie.

~Thornton Wilder

There is no creation without faith and hope. There is no faith and hope that does not express itself in creation.

~Thornton Wilder

Winning children (who appear so guileless) are children who have discovered how effective charm and modesty and a delicately calculated spontaneity are in winning what they want.

~Thornton Wilder

People were always asking for good sound proofs; doubt springs eternal in the human breast, even in countries where the Inquisition can read your very thoughts in your eyes.

~Thornton Wilder

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