

Tony Kushner Quotes

*Writing, Thinking, People, Play, Art, Artist, Historical, Drama, New York, Kind,
Gay, Mean, Believe, Angels In America, Love Is, Heart, Way, Forever, Political,
Dream*

As a playwright, you are a torturer of actors and of the audience as well. You inflict things on people.

~Tony Kushner

People shouldn't trust artists and they shouldn't trust art. Part of the fun of art is that it invites you to interpret it.

~Tony Kushner

I make my living now as a screenwriter! Which I'm surprised and horrified to find myself saying, but I don't think I can support myself as a playwright at this point. I don't think anybody does.

~Tony Kushner

The smallest indivisible human unit is two people, not one; one is a fiction. From such nets of souls societies, the social world, human life springs.

~Tony Kushner

In this world, there is a kind of painful progress. Longing for what we've left behind, and dreaming ahead.

~Tony Kushner

I tend to be sort of quiet and shy and awkward in social situations.

~Tony Kushner

Don't be afraid; people are so afraid; don't be afraid to live in the raw wind, naked, alone...Learn at least this: What you are capable of. Let nothing stand in your way.

~Tony Kushner

Torture yourself about your failures. And then get back to work.

~Tony Kushner

The white cracker who wrote the National Anthem knew what he was

doing. He set the word "free" to a note so high nobody could reach it. That was deliberate.

~Tony Kushner

There's a kind of a fundamental irresponsibility in playwriting, and the strength of playwriting comes from that irresponsibility.

~Tony Kushner

You have a strange relationship with calamity when you're a writer: you write about it; as an artist, you objectify and fetishize it. You render life into material, and that's a creepy thing to do.

~Tony Kushner

A play should have barely been rescued from the mess it might just as easily have been.

~Tony Kushner

Justice precedes beauty. Without justice, beauty is impossible, an obscenity. And when beauty has gone, what does a cameraman do with his eye?

~Tony Kushner

It isn't easy, it doesn't count if it's easy, it's the hardest thing. Forgiveness. Which is maybe where love and justice finally meet.

~Tony Kushner

Love is the world's infinite mutability; lies, hatred, murder even, are all knit up in it; it is the inevitable blossoming of its opposites, a magnificent rose smelling faintly of blood.

~Tony Kushner

We all romp about, grieving, wondering, but with rare exception we mostly remain suspended in the Rhetorical Colloidal Forever that agglutinates between Might and Do.

~Tony Kushner

Respect the delicate ecology of your delusions.

~Tony Kushner

Artists know that diligence counts as much, if not more, as inspiration; in art, as in politics, patience counts as much as revolution.

~Tony Kushner

I've always been drawn to writing historical characters. The best stories are the ones you find in history.

~Tony Kushner

One has to have a complicated kind of optimism. You can't refuse to look at how horrible things are.

~Tony Kushner

It's the fear of what comes after the doing that makes the doing hard to do.

~Tony Kushner

The work of artists is to find what's humanly possible - possibility's furthest reaches.

~Tony Kushner

I think I'll always be a better playwright than a pundit, but I believe that writers should be public intellectuals and that theater, even more than film, is a place of public debate.

~Tony Kushner

A play is never finished. You'll find out how much I mean that when you read my Last Will and Testament.

~Tony Kushner

You learn that existence is legible but that you have to have a critical mind if you're going to read it.

~Tony Kushner

I'm not religious, but I like God and he likes me.

~Tony Kushner

I don't understand why I'm not dead. When your heart breaks, you should die

~Tony Kushner

Theater really gets damaged when there is a paucity of good criticism around.

~Tony Kushner

I don't write political plays in the sense that I'm writing essays that are kind of disguised as plays. I would really defy anyone to watch any of my plays and say 'Well, here's the point.'

~Tony Kushner

If you [c]annot find your [h]eart's desire in your own backyard, you never lost it to begin with

~Tony Kushner

Real love isn't ever ambivalent.

~Tony Kushner

I find writing very difficult. It's hard and it hurts sometimes, and it's scary because of the fear of failure and the very unpleasant feeling that you may have reached the limit of your abilities.

~Tony Kushner

I love reading; it's a great way to avoid writing.

~Tony Kushner

I work best after the deadline has passed, when I'm in a panic.

~Tony Kushner

The fear of a work becoming dated is one of the most effective tools for keeping people from writing political work.

~Tony Kushner

Unions are susceptible to the same ills that befall all human societies.

~Tony Kushner

You don't go to the movies to do historical research, unless it's historical research about the movies.

~Tony Kushner

There's a way in which 'The Illusion' is a play about the theater.

~Tony Kushner

The computer, the noise of the computer feels like impatience. It's sort of the sound of impatience to me.

~Tony Kushner

I've never seen a great actor do a major role that didn't cost a lot. They're sacrificial animals of a sort.

~Tony Kushner

As much as I hate his movies, Oliver Stone has an aspiration I admire, and that is that he wants his art to be part of what makes and changes public policy and cultural practice.

~Tony Kushner

We can't just stop. We're not rocks-progress, migration, motion is... modernity. It's ANIMATE, it's what living things do. We desire. Even if all we desire is stillness, it's still desire for.

~Tony Kushner

You'll find, my friend, that what you love will take you places you never dreamed you'd go.

~Tony Kushner

In some ways [the Internet]'s definitely an enemy.

~Tony Kushner

In a way, film and television are in the same sort of traumatic trance that print journalism is. The technology has outpaced our comprehension of its implications.

~Tony Kushner

I'm not a poet. I wish I was a poet but I'm not. I'm a playwright. And so I have a different set of antecedents.

~Tony Kushner

The big influence on me was Robert Altman, who, especially in 'Nashville,' transformed my sense of dramatic structure and showed how you could handle overlapping stories.

~Tony Kushner

The way you give love is the most profoundly human part of you. When people say it's ugly or a perversion or an abomination, they're attacking the center of your being.

~Tony Kushner

I don't know what will happen to me without you. Only you. Only you love me. Out of everyone in the world.

~Tony Kushner

I wish you would be more true to your demographic profile. Life is confusing enough.

~Tony Kushner

Gay writers now have both a sense of history and the fables that allows them to dwell in the realms of the ridiculous and at the same time talk seriously about things.

~Tony Kushner

It has always seemed to me that Barack Obama has studied intensely and learned a great deal from Lincoln.

~Tony Kushner

I don't feel, finally, that my politics are entirely determined by the fact that I'm a gay man.

~Tony Kushner

God knows I've had productions where there were actors in my plays who were making more money per week than I was.

~Tony Kushner

The body is the garden of the soul.

~Tony Kushner

Here's another piece of advice, only date people who have read a different set of books than you have read, it will save you lots of time in the library.

~Tony Kushner

My whole life has conspired to bring me to this place, and I can't despise my whole life.

~Tony Kushner

Gay TV has been immensely important in transforming American culture in a more gay-positive direction.

~Tony Kushner

I'm not an experimental artist. I have no talent for that. I need a certain

kind of antecedent form to follow.

~Tony Kushner

I have kind of an almost religious feeling about poets. I usually refuse to meet them because I admire them so much. Except for Poe.

~Tony Kushner

Constitutional democracy has created astonishing and apparently irreversible social progress. All we're interested in is talking about when government doesn't work.

~Tony Kushner

One of the things I love about my job as a playwright or as a screenwriter is that I get to do a lot of research and a lot of thinking and taking a lot of notes before I turn it in.

~Tony Kushner

A handful of works in history have had a direct impact on social policy: one or two works of Dickens, some of Zola, 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' and, in modern drama, Larry Kramer's 'The Normal Heart.'

~Tony Kushner

I'm a sort of political person, and I feel that there's a kind of ineradicably political dimension to theater, to all theater, whether it's overtly political or not.

~Tony Kushner

I'm fairly certain when I die that the obituary will say, 'Author of 'Angels in America' dies.' Unless I'm completely forgotten, and then it won't say anything at all.

~Tony Kushner

The act of thinking and interpreting is so central to Judaism that it makes more sense that we've become people like Woody Allen -

thinkers and talkers and drafters of law.

~Tony Kushner

Nothing's lost forever.

~Tony Kushner

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