

Wole Soyinka Quotes

*Thinking, Writing, People, Believe, World, Men, Mean, Play, Children, Fighting,
Reading, Struggle, Creative, Creativity, Numbers, Space, Culture, Doe,
Sometimes, Corruption*

You cannot live a normal existence if you haven't taken care of a problem that affects your life and affects the lives of others, values that you hold which in fact define your very existence.

~Wole Soyinka

The greatest threat to freedom is the absence of criticism.

~Wole Soyinka

Don't take shadows too seriously. Reality is your only safety. Continue to reject illusion.

~Wole Soyinka

Be yourself. Ultimately just be yourself.

~Wole Soyinka

I don't know any other way to live but to wake up everyday armed with my convictions, not yielding them to the threat of danger and to the power and force of people who might despise me.

~Wole Soyinka

Books and all forms of writing are terror to those who wish to suppress the truth.

~Wole Soyinka

We live in a materialist world, and materialism appeals so strongly to humanity, no matter where.

~Wole Soyinka

Looking at faces of people, one gets the feeling there's a lot of work to be done.

~Wole Soyinka

I cannot accept the definition of collective good as articulated by a privileged minority in society, especially when that minority is in power.

~Wole Soyinka

But theater, because of its nature, both text, images, multimedia effects, has a wider base of communication with an audience. That's why I call it the most social of the various art forms.

~Wole Soyinka

I am convinced that Nigeria would have been a more highly developed country without the oil. I wished we'd never smelled the fumes of petroleum.

~Wole Soyinka

The writer is the visionary of his people... He anticipates, he warns.

~Wole Soyinka

Intolerance has become, I think, the reigning ideology of the world today, the intolerance versus intolerance and it's taken on lethal proportions.

~Wole Soyinka

But the ultimate lesson is just sit down and write. That's all.

~Wole Soyinka

The hand that dips into the bottom of the pot will eat the biggest snail.

~Wole Soyinka

Religion has really spawned some monsters. It always has, historically. Go all the way back to the Inquisition, you know, the Crusades, the Jihad and so on.

~Wole Soyinka

The man dies in all those that keep silent.

~Wole Soyinka

It is the human potentials that interest me. I travel and everywhere I go I am amazed at the presence of Nigerians. The intelligence, integrity, productivity, initiative.

~Wole Soyinka

Romance is the sweetening of the soul With fragrance offered by the stricken heart.

~Wole Soyinka

I consider the process of gestation just as important as when you're actually sitting down putting words to the paper.

~Wole Soyinka

When a leader encourages the culture of impunity, the society is lost and it makes the work harder for the rest of us.

~Wole Soyinka

Governance can dig itself into a huge hole and not even know it's in there.

~Wole Soyinka

Well, some people say I'm pessimistic because I recognize the eternal cycle of evil. All I say is, look at the history of mankind right up to this moment and what do you find?

~Wole Soyinka

See, even despite pious statements to the contrary, much of the industrialized world has not yet come to terms with the recognition of the fallacy of what I call the strong man syndrome.

~Wole Soyinka

But when you're deprived of it for a lengthy period then you value human companionship. But you have to survive and so you devise all kinds of mental exercises and it's amazing.

~Wole Soyinka

I never hesitated, as a student, in embracing the necessity of violence. In South Africa, I didn't just accept it; I looked forward to it as a mission.

~Wole Soyinka

We do not ask the mountain's aid to crack a walnut.

~Wole Soyinka

I think that feeling that if one believed absolutely in any cause, then one must have the confidence, the self-certainty, to go through with that particular course of action.

~Wole Soyinka

Each time I think I've created time for myself, along comes a throwback to disrupt my private space.

~Wole Soyinka

Let's say there are prospects for a new Nigeria, but I don't think we have a new Nigeria yet.

~Wole Soyinka

Power is domination, control, and therefore a very selective form of truth which is a lie.

~Wole Soyinka

I'm not one of those writers I learned about who get up in the morning, put a piece of paper in their typewriter machine and start writing. That I've never understood.

~Wole Soyinka

And I believe that the best learning process of any kind of craft is just to look at the work of others.

~Wole Soyinka

I can look violence in the face and either reject or accept it.

~Wole Soyinka

When you are looking for corruption, you should look at the entire stratum of the society, while some forms of corruption are direct, others are indirect.

~Wole Soyinka

You have the entire gamut of human experience captured in the mythology of the Yoruba. This is what makes the Yoruba mythology a natural source material for me in my creative endeavours.

~Wole Soyinka

We all have our individual artistic temperaments as well as partisanship in creative directions. And we have strong opinions on the merits of the products of our occupation.

~Wole Soyinka

As a global citizen, I sometimes feel like denying my identity.

~Wole Soyinka

Some of us - poets are not exactly poets. We live sometimes - beyond the word.

~Wole Soyinka

I don't really consider myself a novelist, it just came out purely by accident.

~Wole Soyinka

The media must be used effectively to reach the masses. You have to find a new language in which to address the people and demonstrate what is possible.

~Wole Soyinka

I am a very curious person; I'll always ask: is this thing true, is it not true? And I use my own means to investigate and come to my conclusion.

~Wole Soyinka

Colonialism bred an innate arrogance, but when you undertake that sort of imperial adventure, that arrogance gives way to a feeling of accommodativeness. You take pride in your openness.

~Wole Soyinka

History teaches us to beware of the excitation of the liberated and the injustices that often accompany their righteous thirst for justice.

~Wole Soyinka

There's something about the theater which makes my fingertips tingle.

~Wole Soyinka

Writers are human. I shudder to think how I must sometimes appear to others.

~Wole Soyinka

I believe that each writer must decide in which language he or she is most comfortable.

~Wole Soyinka

One, a mass movement from within, which, as you know, is constantly being put down brutally but which, again, regroups and moves forward as is happening right now as we are speaking.

~Wole Soyinka

Next to the commodities of corruption, and religion, however, Nigeria is the world capital of rumour mongering.

~Wole Soyinka

One thing I can tell you is this, that I am not a methodical writer.

~Wole Soyinka

I grew up in an atmosphere where words were an integral part of culture.

~Wole Soyinka

It's the place to begin, always -- to return to home, literally.

~Wole Soyinka

I have no money to give to you but I have ideas and organizational capacity.

~Wole Soyinka

Sadness is twilight's kiss on earth.

~Wole Soyinka

The idea of having to make constant reference to politics is anathema to my calling as a writer.

~Wole Soyinka

There is something really horrific for any human being who feels he is being consumed by other people.

~Wole Soyinka

To achieve any change in the minds of the youth, there must be reorientation in terms of materialistic tendencies, corruption and crime generally.

~Wole Soyinka

My definition of slavery is the deprivation of human volition, any form of relationship between two peoples which is based on the deprivation of

volition of one side.

~Wole Soyinka

The media owes the responsibility to constantly tell the public the truth.

~Wole Soyinka

The youth should come together to challenge the status quo. They must not give up.

~Wole Soyinka

Society itself is responsible for the degradation.

~Wole Soyinka

When I say war, I'm not talking about mental war; I'm talking about totally eliminating the obstacles to transformation of our children.

~Wole Soyinka

I have one abiding religion-human liberty.

~Wole Soyinka

A tiger does not proclaim his tigritude, he pounces.

~Wole Soyinka

For me, justice is the prime condition of humanity.

~Wole Soyinka

Suddenly the world has run amok and left you alone and sane behind

~Wole Soyinka

There are different kinds of artists and very often, I'll be very frank with you, I wish I were a different kind.

~Wole Soyinka

The novel, for me, was an accident. I really don't consider myself a

novelist.

~Wole Soyinka

I am a glutton for tranquility.

~Wole Soyinka

Under a dictatorship, a nation ceases to exist. All that remains is a fiefdom, a planet of slaves regimented by aliens from outer-space.

~Wole Soyinka

Well, first of all I'll say that I come alive best in theater.

~Wole Soyinka

Even when I'm writing plays I enjoy having company and mentally I think of that company as the company I'm writing for.

~Wole Soyinka

I am disturbed for instance when I read that a candidate said, 'I will not probe anybody or something like that'. You don't fight corruption by sweeping everything under the carpet, you don't.

~Wole Soyinka

Sadly however, I discovered in one particular case that a colleague went and paid the bribe on my behalf, just to get our mission fulfilled. That was painful, and it strained our friendship.

~Wole Soyinka

I tend to work best as a one-man Task Force, including even the roles of messenger, coffee maker and office cleaner.

~Wole Soyinka

If you are corrupt and you have extra cash you are able to shut the mouth of your accuser and they will be silenced.

~Wole Soyinka

How do I feel when I am invited to a congregation of scientists? I feel quite at home. When they break into their cultic scientific argot, I know when I'm not wanted and step out for a drink.

~Wole Soyinka

When I tried to create a new political party, which I stressed that this is not my party. I believe very much that there has to be a revolution and this is a party for the young.

~Wole Soyinka

My mind immediately shot to South Africa the moment I sat down to think what I was going to write, what I was going to say. There was no other choice.

~Wole Soyinka

Writers who open up horizons for other people are performing a function every bit as important as a consciously politicized writer.

~Wole Soyinka

African film makers are scraping by on a mere pittance.

~Wole Soyinka

It is not fair to those who fight corruption that they have to fight the aggressiveness, the impunity of the corrupt.

~Wole Soyinka

Writers - human. I shudder to think how I must sometimes appear to others.

~Wole Soyinka

Pity you can't be present during my periodic fault-finding sessions with my image in the mirror!

~Wole Soyinka

We live in the real world - we live within a certain history of the plague that has landed on us.

~Wole Soyinka

There is not a special imposition on writers to be activists. All that does is encourage writers to write propaganda.

~Wole Soyinka

I think most writers would like a quiet space, complete isolation, in which they control their own time. Spaces of creativity in which there's very little interruption.

~Wole Soyinka

You go to conferences, and your fellow African intellectuals - and even heads of state - they all say: 'Nigeria is a big disappointment. It is the shame of the African continent.'

~Wole Soyinka

For me, a writer is already being the deuce of his mission, his occupation to society.

~Wole Soyinka

A human feast is an indifferent morsel to a god.

~Wole Soyinka

Alfred Nobel regretted that his invention, dynamite, was converted to degrading use, hence his creation of the Nobel Prize, as the humanist counter to the destructive power of his genius.

~Wole Soyinka

If man cannot, what god dare claim perfection?

~Wole Soyinka

Mythology can be used, and has been used, even to re-state, you

know, the very urgent problems of the world.

~Wole Soyinka

You accept whoever you are interacting with, directly, or indirectly.

~Wole Soyinka

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