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Quotes by Stevens, Wallace

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If some really acute observer made as much of egotism as Freud has made of sex, people would forget a good deal about sex and find the explanation for everything in egotism.

- Stevens, Wallace

Democritus plucked his eye out because he could not look at a woman without thinking of her as a woman. If he had read a few of our novels, he would have torn himself to pieces.

- Stevens, Wallace

To regard the imagination as metaphysics is to think of it as part of life, and to think of it as part of life is to realize the extent of artifice. We live in the mind.

- Stevens, Wallace

The imagination is man's power over nature.

- Stevens, Wallace

Intolerance respecting other people's religion is toleration itself in comparison with intolerance respecting other people's art.

- Stevens, Wallace

How has the human spirit ever survived the terrific literature with which it has had to contend?

- Stevens, Wallace

As life grows more terrible, its literature grows more terrible.

- Stevens, Wallace

Nothing could be more inappropriate to American literature than its English source since the Americans are not British in sensibility.

- Stevens, Wallace

One cannot spend one's time in being modern when there are so many more important things to be.

- Stevens, Wallace

They said, You have a blue guitar, you do not play things as they are. The man replied, Things as they are changed upon a blue guitar.

- Stevens, Wallace

All the great things have been denied and we live in an intricacy of new and local mythologies, political, economic, poetic, which are asserted with an ever-enlarging

incoherence.

- Stevens, Wallace

How full of trifles everything is! It is only one's thoughts that fill a room with something more than furniture.

- Stevens, Wallace

The philosopher proves that the philosopher exists. The poet merely enjoys existence.

- Stevens, Wallace

Perhaps it is of more value to infuriate philosophers than to go along with them.

- Stevens, Wallace

Most modern reproducers of life, even including the camera, really repudiate it. We gulp down evil, choke at good.

- Stevens, Wallace

The poet is the priest of the invisible.

- Stevens, Wallace

I can't make head or tail of Life. Love is a fine thing, Art is a fine thing, Nature is a fine thing; but the average human mind and spirit are confusing beyond measure. Sometimes I think that all our learning is the little learning of the maxim. To laugh at a Roman

awe-stricken in a sacred grove is to laugh at something today.

- Stevens, Wallace

The genuine artist is never true to life. He sees what is real, but not as we are normally aware of it. We do not go storming through life like actors in a play. Art is never real life.

- Stevens, Wallace

What our eyes behold may well be the text of life but one's meditations on the text and the disclosures of these meditations are no less a part of the structure of reality.

- Stevens, Wallace

Poor, dear, silly Spring, preparing her annual surprise!

- Stevens, Wallace

Style is not something applied. It is something that permeates. It is of the nature of that in which it is found, whether the poem, the manner of a god, the bearing of a man. It is not a dress.

- Stevens, Wallace

The day of the sun is like the day of a king. It is a promenade in the morning, a sitting on the throne at noon, a pageant in the evening.

- Stevens, Wallace

Thought is an infection. In the case of certain thoughts, it becomes an epidemic.

- Stevens, Wallace

Perhaps the truth depends on a walk around the lake.

- Stevens, Wallace

It is the unknown that excites the ardor of scholars, who, in the known alone, would shrivel up with boredom.

- Stevens, Wallace

Union of the weakest develops strength not wisdom. Can all men, together, avenge one of the leaves that have fallen in autumn? But the wise man avenges by building his city in snow.

- Stevens, Wallace

To be young is all there is in the world. They talk so beautifully about work and having a family and a home (and I do, too, sometimes) --but it's all worry and head-aches and respectable poverty and forced gushing. Telling people how nice it is, when, in reality, you would give all of your last thirty years for one of your first thirty. Old people are tremendous frauds.

- Stevens, Wallace

Civilization must be destroyed. The hairy saints of the North have earned this crumb by their complaints.

- Stevens, Wallace

Everything is complicated; if that were not so, life and poetry and everything else would be a bore.

- Stevens, Wallace



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