

QUOTES FROM PLAYWRIGHT YASMINA REZA

A friend of mine bought an all-white painting for a lot of money. When I saw it, I laughed. He is my very best friend, and our friendship survived. He loves the play [Art]. He was the first to read it. I asked him if I should correct anything in the way Serge speaks. He said, 'No, unfortunately it's accurate.'

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My father never bought anything extravagant or expensive - not a country house, not expensive goods - except art, when he had the means. From him I got the sense that 'in this valley of tears, all is lent us.'

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New York audiences are out there in the house because they want to be there. So they're really there. In Paris, half of the audience is there and the other half came because somebody told them they had to see it or because their wives forced them to come. People cough, they're only half paying attention. Whatever the play, if you really look at the house, at least a third of the audience is bored. It's not like that [in New York] at all. The audience laughs a lot - perhaps a bit too much - but they usually stop laughing right away and listen. They don't cough, and during the silences they're completely silent. They pay a lot for tickets, but they're happy to be out there.

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American English is much closer to French than British English is. English is a beautiful language, but in England it's very formal and doesn't allow invention. American English is informal, keen to take influences, to invent words, just as I write in French.

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I don't write a lot, but I can write anywhere, on anything. It's a strength. I'm always available for people and ideas. But I don't feel writing is my profession. I don't know what my profession is. I loved the theatre, and I loved words, so it was logical to write for theatre.

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My way of writing is very intuitive, not intelligent, though it might look intelligent. I write from my intuition, my sense of freedom, my feeling for words and rhythm. Sometimes from my heart, but not very much.

Most writers don't know that actors are never better than in the pauses or in the subtext. They give the actors too many words. Writers who've never acted tend to write 'full up.' All the writers who have flat spots and empty places in their dialogue are writers who've been on stage, like Pinter. In a play, words are parentheses to the silences. They're useful for the actors, but only that; they aren't the whole story.

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I love to laugh, but that has nothing to do with being happy. Writing helps me survive. I don't believe in happiness. One can be content, but the moment I'm content, I don't write. I don't need to. I write when life is not enough.

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I was an unhappy child, for some reasons I know and some I don't know. It's nothing to do with my family. I've always known somehow that life is not easy. I was born feeling that life was sad.

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I fear aging. I don't know what it will do to my dreams and desires. I fear everything that is a victory for time.