

Robert Guthrie Quotes

If you don't sing through your guitar, you're just not worth listening to.

If you get bored while practicing, you're just stupid.

If whatever you're playing feels difficult, you're doing something wrong.

Learn history for self-defense.

Good tone has something more, something deeper.

No one so carefully crafted and executed each and every musical phrase of a piece like Andres Segovia.

If you can't play a piece with a metronome, you can't play the piece.

Play this phrase like an old woman who loses control of her car and runs it through the garage door.

What are you rewarded with if you do good work? More work!

In my experience, most people will do almost anything to not have to think.

Rhythm and tempo educate your nervous system musically.

Freedom is not worth a darn unless the basics have been perfected.

It takes a fairly experienced person to be a good beginner.

Rest stroke thumb gives strong right hand technique.

Your top speed is determined by how quickly you can relax.

Find ingenious ways to connect your technical work to music (compose technical studies).

Learn to love making improvement.

In a problem area, there are probably two or three different problems.

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There's hardly anything that makes a stronger impression on a piece than choosing the most beautiful tempo.

It takes a great deal of willpower to practice well; it takes almost no willpower to practice badly.

The more talent you have, the more responsibility you have.

Most classical music is played too fast, much more often than it is played too slow.

If I hear speed instead of notes – too fast. If I hear notes instead of melody – too slow.

Bring your concentration back ruthlessly.

Quite often there are more problems than we want to know about.

Even if you're practicing the right way, you don't know how long it's going to take. You can't pull a plant out of the ground; you have to let it grow.

Treat yourself like someone who needs extra attention or help.

Put more space in your music. Most pieces need more space than you think.

Become aware of the relaxation gaps rather than the plucked events in guitar playing. This is when playing feels very easy.

Get perfect tempo and rhythms in your blood, where you don't have to think about it; you just feel it.

Fast notes are always pulled towards an ending accented note.

Ida Presti was the perfect combination of flexibility and strength – balanced 50/50.

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Planting with the right hand should be the way you play everything.

Strength is tremendously important. Flexibility is more important.

A player's guitar sound shows:

- artistic ability
- what is important to the player
- level of development
- tone of voice

One of the best things the guitar can do is subtle inflection.

Tone production must be easy. If it's a struggle, all your playing will sound like struggling.

Practice = study. Have a system of studying that is flexible but consistent.

Playing music for people is a gift.

Guitar playing doesn't start in your hands; it ends there.

The study of an instrument is a very strong exercise.

Determination must be converted into proper study.

Practicing is disassembling music and putting it back together at a higher level.

Sometimes a difficult piece can only be achieved at a particular level by improving study habits.

There are three aspects of development: 1.) Technique 2.) Musicianship 3.) Artistry

If something feels "natural" on the guitar, it feels just as easy to play as not to play.

If you want a good lesson, then motivate your teacher.

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All the important things about playing an instrument are the tiny details.

In music, there's pretty, then there's beautiful, then there's profound. Pretty and profound are very far apart.

Geniuses always look for the best in something. Idiots pick on the worst.

Expressiveness must be built on a foundation of rhythm and tempo. Otherwise it's just neurotic confusion.

If you can't overdo something, neither can you do it the right amount.

We must not feel lazy or embarrassed about things that take a lot of work.

If you listen to any player on a very high level, you will never hear a note that is out of control. That would be the same as a mistake. It is the definition of a quality player.

On stage, the tuning process should be one which calms you down.

Don't practice out of control. Ever.

Music without dynamics is like music on life support.

Don't remember the mood you bring to a piece; remember the mood the piece brings to you.

The moment a left hand finger performs a descending slur it must also release pressure to avoid a stiff-sounding slur.

Playing the guitar gracefully is one of the most difficult things a person can do.

Guitar playing is all about angles and geometry.

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If you want to play better than the next guy, you have to have more technique than the next guy.

If at all possible, stay away from people who are negative and suppress you.

In performance, you want the audience to be totally interested in everything you are doing – the exact opposite effect of background music.

Don't wish you were playing faster; control the tempo you are actually playing.

The quieter you play, the more clear the note has to be played.

Play through a piece four times; each time only focus on one finger of the left hand for the entire time.

The most important guitar you play is the one you play in your mind.

Musical intent must be the #1 goal. All technique and aim-directed movement must be driven by it and cannot be a priority above it.

You have to find the way of playing that makes you happy.

Don't punish yourself with more repetitions.

Deconstructing music in practice is like a science experiment. Playing music is a naturally occurring event. You can't occur naturally in a science lab.

Movement up the fingerboard sounds more energetic.

This is a great piece for maintaining tempo...actually, every piece is great for that.

People are looking for the "way" to play. The "way" to play is bigger than you can possibly talk about.

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You must practice rasgueado as if you were playing a percussive instrument.

The limit to how quietly you can play in front of people (not in a recording) is that the top of the guitar must still resonate.

Anything is better than wishy washy.

Once we know a piece, we have to dominate it.

Never underestimate your own hands.

Don't play an ornament that you can't play.

A good study is a good piece of music.

A fast, brilliant passage is all about articulation.

Every guitarist has struggled with barre chords.

I'm not interested in hearing a concert artist play a piece unless they've been playing it for at least three years.

There are so many players who seem to be doing everything right, but are completely missing the point.

I've always just loved to practice.

The people who care about sound the most are the people who find it.

There is so much technique in slow music.

Pepe Romero can play the Aranjuez Concerto as easy as most people can sit and watch TV.

Every guitar has its strengths and weaknesses.

The most important formative skill a musician has to develop is rhythm and tempo.

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If you want to be a good guitarist, play the guitar all the time, and play for people at every available opportunity.

Some people like music. Some people play music. Some people are music.

You're on the right track if the more you improve the less you sound like anyone else.

You should feel like you can bring something to a piece you're playing that no one else can bring.

Few things are as virtuosic as choosing the perfect tempo.

Flamenco music is entirely based on rhythm and tempo. What many people don't realize is that classical music is as well.

A practice schedule is a very difficult thing to come to terms with.

If you make a mistake during performance, you must disregard it like a gnat on a windshield.

I hope that I have been a good enough example to my students.