

John Keats

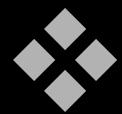
1795-1821

- (born October 31,
1795, London,
England— died February
23, 1821, Rome, Papal
States [Italy]),

- lyric poet who devoted his short life to the perfection of a poetry marked by vivid imagery, great sensuous appeal, and an attempt to express a philosophy through classical legend.

- Among all the Romantics, Keats was the last to born and first to die.
- But quite surprisingly he achieved in 26 years what other could not get ever the whole of their life. Keats is also said to be the most romantic of all the romantics.

- Keats is a pure romantic poet. He writes poetry for the sake of poetry.



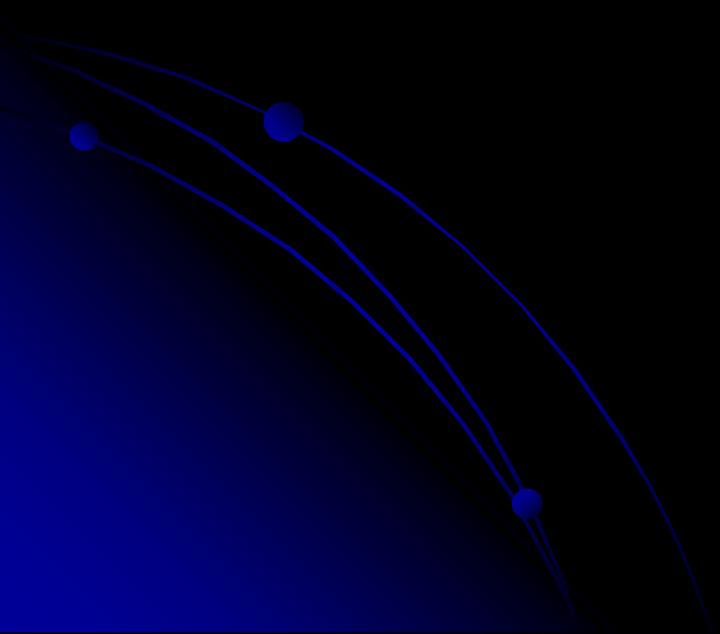
He believes in art for
art's sake. He does not
write poetry for any
palpable design or any
propaganda.



❖ His major
concern is to
give pleasure.



❖ Keats is least concerned with the social issues of life.



❖ Love for nature is the chief characteristic of all the romantics. Keats also loves nature but he loves nature for the sake of nature.



He only
admires the
beauty of
nature.

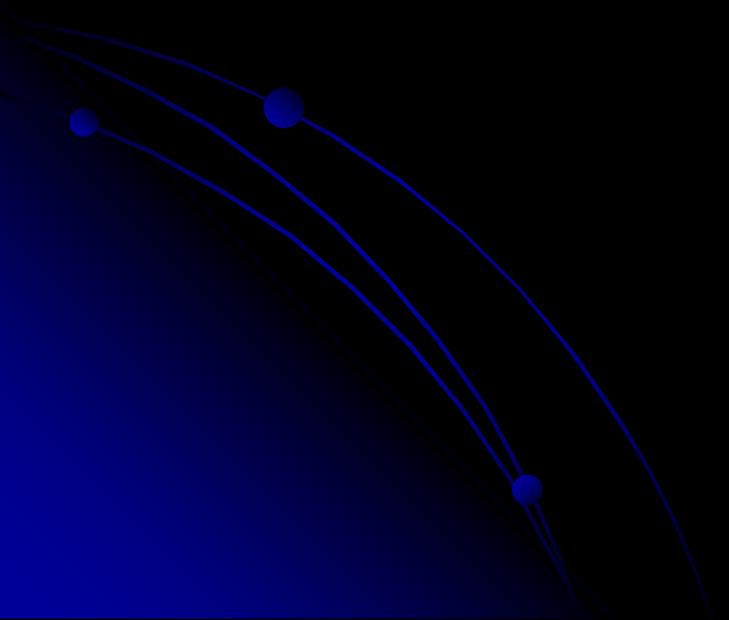


❖ Keats was a pure poet as he does not project any theory in his poetry.

Keats believes in
Negative Capability –
the capability of being
impersonal.

- ❖ Keats does not involve his personal feelings in his poetry. He writes poetry only for pleasure but Shelley lacks Negative Capability.

❖ Shelley lends his personal sorrow and feeling in his poetry. He could not be impersonal and writes about his feelings and sorrows.



❖ Keats is a
sensuous poet.

❖ It means that he
writes his poetry
with his penta
senses.



❖ The whole of our
body is involved
in his poetry
when we read
him.



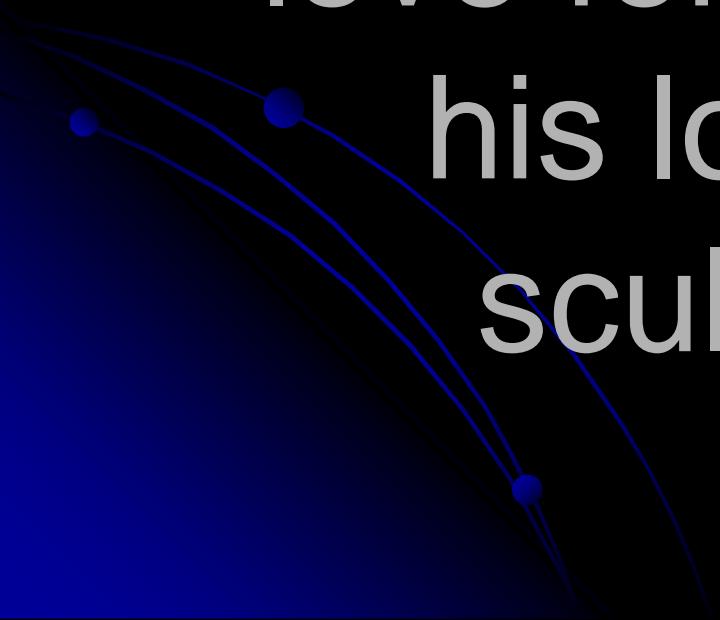


❖ Keats' imagery
shows the
calmness of
Keats' mind.

❖ Keats was also Hellenistic like all romantics. He was inspired by Hellenism.



❖ There are many Hellenistic features in his poetry such as his love for Greek literature, his love with Greek sculpture and art.



Ode to a Nightingale

BY JOHN KEATS

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
 My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
 One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
 But being too happy in thine happiness,—
That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees
 In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
 Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

O, for a draught of vintage! that hath been
 Cool'd a long age in the deep-delved earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
 Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth!
O for a beaker full of the warm South,
 Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
 And purple-stained mouth;
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
 And with thee fade away into the forest dim:

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
 Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
 Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
 And leaden-eyed despairs,
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
 Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,

Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,

But on the viewless wings of Poesy,

Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:

Already with thee! tender is the night,

And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,

Cluster'd around by all her starry Fays;

Major Themes: Death, immortality, mortality and poetic imaginations are the major themes of this ode.

Keats says that death is an unavoidable phenomenon. He paints it in both negative and positive ways. On the one hand, its presence decays the human spirit, while on the other hand, it offers the realm of free eternity.

❖ The poet also presents the life and melodious song of the nightingale; to him, life is mortal, but the song of the nightingale is immortal.