

# Bibliotekarstudentens nettleksikon om litteratur og medier

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Om leksikonet: [https://www.litteraturogmedieleksikon.no/gallery/om\\_leksikonet.pdf](https://www.litteraturogmedieleksikon.no/gallery/om_leksikonet.pdf)

## Imagismen

(\_kunstretning) Engelsk: “Imagism”. Et forsøk fra en gruppe diktere i perioden ca. 1912-23 på å bryte med tradisjonell poetisk retorikk, dens besvergelse og sentimentalitet. Retningen gjorde seg sterkest gjeldende i perioden 1912-17 (Borchmeyer og Žmegač 1994 s. 197). Den ga varige impulser til den framvoksende modernistiske lyrikken.

“Imagism, 1909-1917. Anglo-American poets who advocated precise language, clear imagery, and forceful metaphor: T. E. Hulme, “Autumn” (1909); Lionel Johnson, *Post Liminium* (1911); H(ilda) D(oolittlel), “Heat” (1916); Amy Lowell, “Patterns” (1916).” (Eberhart 2006 s. 223)

“The technical and philosophical principles of imagism revolutionized modern literature.” (Timothy Materer i <https://www.encyclopedia.com/literature-and-arts/literature-english/american-literature/imagists>; lesedato 12.04.23)

Innen imagismen var det først og fremst poesi som var det kunstneriske fokuset. Dikt i frie vers skulle inneholde korte og presise dagligdagse ord uten romantisk føleri eller besvergelse. Lederen for bevegelsen var amerikaneren Ezra Pound, og den viktigste fasen var rett før 1. verdenskrig. Pound var sentral både gjennom egen diktning, artikkelen “A Few Dont’s by an Imagiste” (1913) og antologien “Des Imagistes” (1914). Han var lei av dikt med patosfylt, svulmende språk som var pyntet med unødvendige adjektiver og svevende abstraksjoner. De språklige bildene skulle ikke framstå som metaforer eller sammenligninger. Bildene skulle tale for seg selv, og energioverføringen mellom diktets bilder utgjør ifølge Pound det poetiske, og skjer særlig når atskilte ordbilder stilles sammen på overraskende måter. Diktets budskap uttrykkes gjennom bilder.

“The Imagist concern lies with presenting the Real, minimally mediated by a poetic language focused on accurate description, simple lines, divested of the need for exegesis and any lyrical excess.” (Botha 2011 s. 284) Imagistene “seek to make the space between elements a key to some mysterious plenitude.” (Nicholls 1995 s. 285)

Andre sentrale navn enn Pound er Hilda Doolittle, John Gould Fletcher, Amy Lowell, Richard Aldington og Frank Stuart Flint. Det fantes også en gruppe russiske diktere som kalte seg imagister (bl.a. Rurik Ivnev, Alexander Kusikov, Ivan Gruzinov, Matvey Royzman).

“In England and America, roughly between 1912 and 1914, the spirit of the 1908 writings of T. E. Hulme was revived, mostly by Ezra Pound. Other Imagists included the brilliant Hilda Doolittle (H. D.) – termed by Pound “H. D. Imagiste” – Richard Aldington, F. R. Flint, and the cigar-smoking, self-propagandizing Amy Lowell.” (Caws 2001 s. 350)

“Imagism flourished in Britain and in the United States for a brief period that is generally considered to be somewhere between 1909 and 1917. As part of the modernist movement, away from the sentimentality and moralizing tone of nineteenth-century Victorian poetry, imagist poets looked to many sources to help them create a new poetic expression. For contemporary influences, the imagists studied the French symbolists, who were experimenting with free verse (*vers libre*), a form that used a cadence that mimicked natural speech rather than the accustomed rhythm of metrical feet or lines. Rules of rhyming were also considered nonessential. The ancient form of Japanese haiku poetry influenced the imagists to focus on one simple image. [...] T. E. Hulme is credited with creating the philosophy that would give birth to Imagism. Although he wrote very little, his ideas inspired Ezra Pound to organize the new movement. Pound’s “In a Station of the Metro” is often cited as one of the purest of his imagist poems. Amy Lowell took over the leadership role of the imagists when Pound moved on to other modernist modes. Her most anthologized poems include “Lilacs” and “Patterns.” Other important imagist poets include Hilda Doolittle, whose poem “Sea Poppies” reflects the Japanese influence on her writing, and whose “Oread” is often referred to as the most perfect imagist poem; Richard Aldington, who was one of the first poets to be recognized as an imagist and whose collection *Images of War* is considered to contain some of the most intense depictions of World War I; F. S. Flint, who dedicated his last collection of imagist poems, *Otherworld: Cadences* to Aldington; and John Gould Fletcher, whose collection *Goblins and Pagodas* is his most representative imagistic work.” (Timothy Materer i <https://www.encyclopedia.com/literature-and-arts/literature-english/american-literature/imagists>; lesedato 12.04.23)

“As a literary movement, Imagism owes its genesis to the friendship which grew from a rather heated disagreement in 1909 between Hulme and F. S. Flint following a critical review of the formers work by the latter. They soon found themselves in general agreement on the importance of accurate poetic presentation stripped of excess verbal complexity, establishing their own group for discussion. In April of the same year they were joined by a young Ezra Pound, who had arrived independently at a strikingly similar aesthetic position, and who, in 1912, coined the term *Imagiste* to describe their work and, particularly, the poetry of H.D. (Hilda

Doolittle) and Richard Aldington. 1913 saw the publication of two Imagist manifestos – one by Flint, the other by Pound – and in 1914, Pound edited the first anthology of Imagist work, *Des Imagistes*. Amy Lowell joined and rapidly came to dominate the group, advocating a looser definition of Imagism which conflicted strongly with Pound's rigorous poetic discipline. Pound left the group for the more radical Vorticists, and Lowell published the remaining Imagist anthologies under the title *Some Imagists Poets* in 1915, 1916 and 1917. By this point the momentum of the movement was all but spent, although its proclivity for concreteness, objectivity, directness and self-sufficiency would remain influential, and is almost certainly felt in some of the poetry we may legitimately categorise as minimalist. ” (Botha 2011 s. 280)

“As for the later stages of Imagism, between 1912 and 1915, these had a considerable American contingent in them (Pound, Eliot, H. D., John Gould Fletcher) and a deep debt to French sources. It was in part F. S. Flint's magazine reports on the contemporary French movements that produced the notion of having a movement at all, while that movement was itself a synthesis of various Symbolist inheritances from the Anglo-French literary concords of the 1890s, with new novelties: Symons, Laforgue, Corbière, Mallarmé, Valéry, but also Bergson, Remy de Gourmont, *Action Française* and Apollinaire. Yet despite the eclectic cosmopolitan tradition that Pound, that early product of comparative literature studies, amassed behind it, we well know that the indebtedness back to Donne and the Metaphysicals, and the dramatic monologue of Browning, is quite as central.” (Bradbury og McFarlane 1978 s. 176)

“In his essay “Romanticism and Classicism,” [1913] Hulme wrote that the language of poetry is a “visual concrete one... Images in verse are not mere decoration, but the very essence.” Pound adapted Hulme's ideas on poetry for his imagist movement, which began in earnest in 1912, when he first introduced the term into the literary lexicon during a meeting with Hilda Doolittle. After reading her poem “Hermes of the Ways,” Pound suggested some revisions and signed the poem “H. D., Imagiste” before sending it to Poetry magazine in October of that year. That November, Pound himself used the term “Imagiste” in print for the first time when he published Hulme's Complete Poetical Works. A strand of modernism, imagism aimed to replace abstractions with concrete details that could be further expounded upon through the use of figuration. These typically short, free verse poems – which had clear precursors in the concise, image-focused poems of ancient Greek lyricists and Japanese haiku poets – moved away from fixed meters and moral reflections, subordinating everything to what Hulme once called the “hard, dry image.” ” (<https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/text/brief-guide-imagism>; lesedato 18.02.19)

“Pound and the other imagist poets took the meaning of free verse to new ground. They believed that rhythm expressed emotion, and the imagists understood, according to [David] Perkins, that “for every emotional state there is the one

particular rhythm that expresses it.” Therefore, limiting rhythm to the fixed stanzas, meters, and other rhythmic standards of conventional poetry disallowed a full rendering of those emotions. In other words, the individuality of the poet’s emotions would be thwarted by following traditional rules, and thus the overall effect of the poem would become inauthentic or insincere. Thus, the imagists were encouraged to let go of the old standards and open up their emotions to the flow of words that was allowed in free verse. Of the imagist poets, the Americans, more so than their British cohorts, readily took advantage of free verse. The traditional rules of poetry had been created in Europe and therefore had a European character. Through the use of free verse, the American imagists felt that they could compose more individualistic poetry that spoke in an American voice.” (Timothy Materer i <https://www.encyclopedia.com/literature-and-arts/literature-english/american-literature/imagists>; lesedato 12.04.23)

“The great poems of ancient times, Hulme argued, resembled pyramids; the old poetry ‘dealt essentially with big things’, its authors contaminated with the ‘disease, the passion, for immortality’; in Romanticism the pyramidal urge became the craving for a boundless, impertinent, anarchic infinitude. By contrast, the new poem, corresponding to a new or revived metaphysical attitude, which regards man as ‘an extraordinarily fixed and limited animal’, would be that of small, dry things and ‘street emotions’. Like [Maurice] Barrés – a major inspiration to the *Action française* he admired – Hulme saw the shift from absolute to relative as the mark of modern art. To the Symbolists he conceded the significance of metaphor, which alone can represent with any accuracy ‘an object or an idea in the mind’, without having recourse to language’s ever-ready stock of abstract counters and threadbare clichés. Nature, he wrote, ‘presses in on the poet to be used as metaphor’. Since the old, symmetrical verse-forms, in which stanzas were ‘shaped and polished like gems’, had reached inevitable exhaustion, and no efflorescence of verse was possible without a new technique, Hulme went on to advocate an irregular versification, close to but not identical with the specifically French *vers libre*, as the new instrument appropriate to the new sensibility.” (Natan Zach i Bradbury og McFarlane 1978 s. 234)

“While some critics insist on a basic difference between T. E. Hulme’s and Pound’s theories, others see Pound as little more than impresario to Hulme’s speculations. [...] Hulme [...] as art critic and aesthetician was cut short by his death in the war, and – less flatteringly – as an able propagandist for other people’s ideas (Bergson, Georges Sorel, Pierre Lasserre and Wilhelm Worringer were some of his main inspirations).” (Natan Zach i Bradbury og McFarlane 1978 s. 228)

“Pound’s definition of the image was “that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time.” He said, “It is the presentation of such a ‘complex’ instantaneously which gives the sense of sudden liberation; that sense of freedom from time limits and space limits; that sense of sudden growth, which we experience in the presence of the greatest works of art.” [...] In 1914, Des

Imagistes (A. and C. Boni), an anthology assembled and edited by Pound, was published; it collected work by William Carlos Williams, Richard Aldington, James Joyce, and H. D., among others. By the spring of that year, however, disputes had begun to brew among the movement regarding leadership and control of the group. Amy Lowell, who criticized Pound for what she thought was a too-myopic view of poetry, assumed leadership of the movement and from 1915 to 1917 published three anthologies, all called *Some Imagist Poets*, but by then Pound had dissociated himself from imagism, derisively calling it “Amygism”; Pound instead appropriated his imagism into a new philosophy, vorticism, claiming that “the image is not an idea. It is a radiant node or cluster; ... a VORTEX.” By 1917, even Lowell began to distance herself from the movement, the tenets of which eventually became absorbed into the broader modernist movement and continued to influence poets throughout the twentieth century.” (<https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/text/brief-guide-imagism>; lesedato 18.02.19)

“Amy Lowell spent several years in London, meeting imagist poets and eventually taking over the promotion, education, and organization of this movement. When she returned to the United States in 1914, she published her own collection of imagist poetry, *Sword Blades and Poppy Seed*. The poems in this collection reflect many theories and philosophies that had been espoused by the imagists, as well as by the French symbolist poets who greatly influenced the Imagism movement. In the preface of this collection Lowell discusses her interpretation of free verse and what she refers to as polyphonic prose, two concepts that were used by some poets in the imagist movement. [...] Polyphonic prose is a type of free verse that uses alliteration (repetition of consonant sounds), assonance (repetition of vowel sounds), as well as other poetic devices to create a poem that appears like prose, but that reads or sounds like poetry. Although Lowell did not invent polyphonic prose, she is given credit for popularizing it, and it is in this collection that she best displays her ability to use this form. [...] Lowell described this technique in her essay “A Consideration of Modern Poetry,” which she wrote for the *North American Review* (January 1917). She employed this technique for the first time in her collection *Sword Blades and Poppy Seed* (1914), about which Aldington wrote an article in the *Egoist* commending the collection and suggesting that all young poets should read Lowell’s poems to learn the technique. Aldington writes (as quoted in Hughes’s book), “I am not a bit ashamed to confess that I have myself imitated Miss Lowell in this, and produced a couple of works in the same style.” ” (Timothy Materer i <https://www.encyclopedia.com/literature-and-arts/literature-english/american-literature/imagists>; lesedato 12.04.23)

Den engelske imagistiske dikteren Frank Stuart Flint skrev i teksten “Imagisme” i 1913: “Some curiosity has been aroused concerning Imagisme, and as I was unable to find anything definite about it in print, I sought out an imagiste, with intent to discover whether the group itself knew anything about the “movement.” I gleaned these facts. The imagistes admitted that they were contemporaries of the Post Impressionists and the Futurists; but they had nothing in common with these

schools. They had not published a manifesto. They were not a revolutionary school; their only endeavor was to write in accordance with the best tradition, as they found it in the best writers of all time, – in Sappho, Catullus, Villon. They seemed to be absolutely intolerant of all poetry that was not written in such endeavor, ignorance of the best tradition forming no excuse. They had a few rules, drawn up for their own satisfaction only, and they had not published them. They were:

1. Direct treatment of the “thing,” whether subjective or objective.
2. To use absolutely no word that did not contribute to the presentation.
3. As regarding rhythm: to compose in sequence of the musical phrase, not in sequence of a metronome.

By these standards they judged all poetry, and found most of it wanting. They held also a certain ‘Doctrine of the Image,’ which they had not committed to writing; they said that it did not concern the public, and would provoke useless discussion. The devices whereby they persuaded approaching poetasters to attend their instruction were:

1. They showed him his own thought already splendidly expressed in some classic (and the school musters altogether a most formidable erudition).
2. They re-wrote his verses before his eyes, using about ten words to his fifty.

Even their opponents admit of them – ruefully – “At least they do keep bad poets from writing!” I found among them an earnestness that is amazing to one accustomed to the usual London air of poetic dilettantism. They consider that Art is all science, all religion, philosophy and metaphysic. It is true that snobisme may be urged against them; but it is at least snobisme in its most dynamic form, with a great deal of sound sense and energy behind it; and they are stricter with themselves than with any outsider.” ([https://archive.org/stream/jstor-20569729/20569729\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/jstor-20569729/20569729_djvu.txt); lesedato 14.01.16)

“One of Flint’s earliest poems, “The Swan,” follows the imagist practice of conciseness and suggestiveness. The poem consists of several short lines, written in concrete terms that describe the movements of a swan through dark waters. The poem is filled with the colors found in nature, painting a precise image with words. The image of the swan gives way at the end to a symbol of the poet’s sorrow.” (Timothy Materer i <https://www.encyclopedia.com/literature-and-arts/literature-english/american-literature/imagists>; lesedato 12.04.23)

“Even by twentieth-century standards, Imagism was soon over. In 1912 Ezra Pound published the *Complete Poetical Works* of its founder, T. E. Hulme (five short poems) and by 1917 the movement, then overseen by Amy Lowell, had run its course. The output in all amounted to a few score poems, and none of these captured the public’s heart. Why the importance? [...] If ever the (continuing) importance to poets of networking, of being involved in movements from their

inception, is attested, it is in these early days of post-Victorian revolt. Then there are the manifestos of the movement, which became the cornerstones of Modernism [...] The Imagists stressed clarity, exactness and concreteness of detail. Their aims, briefly set out, were that: 1. Content should be presented directly, through specific images where possible. 2. Every word should be functional, with nothing included that was not essential to the effect intended. 3. Rhythm should be composed by the musical phrase rather than the metronome. Also understood – if not spelled out, or perhaps fully recognized at the time – was the hope that poems could intensify a sense of objective reality through the immediacy of images.” (C. J. Holcombe i <http://www.poetrymagic.co.uk/modernism-in-literature.html>; lesedato 08.03.21)

“In January 1913 [tidsskriftet] *Poetry* contained three poems signed H. D., *Imagiste*. In the March number an article by the taxonomist of French schools, F. S. Flint, protracted the illusion that a movement was gathering. Flint drew his information from one “Imagiste,” Pound, and did not specify that there were only two others. He mentioned their models – Sappho, Catullus, Villon, very spare poets – and set forth the famous three criteria:

“The criteria prescribed a technical hygiene. They were also a screen through which some contemporary work could pass. That summer a bundle of poems so screened – 23 by the founding trio, five by Flint, and one apiece by seven other contributors, including Amy Lowell and James Joyce – was shipped to New York, under the title *Des Imagistes*, to constitute the first number of a periodical called *The Globe*. This collection was delayed till the following spring, by which time the trio could no longer pretend to much in common. [...] It had come to mean very little more than a way of designating short *vers libre* poems in English. [...] Imagisme was named for a component of the poem, not a state of the poet, and that its three principles establish technical, not psychic, criteria.” (Kenner 1975 s. 177-179)

Tidsskriftene “*Egoist* in London and *Poetry* in Chicago carried Imagism, largely because Pound infiltrated both” (Bradbury og McFarlane 1978 s. 204).

“The term ‘Imagist’ was conjured by Ezra Pound to characterize the style of recent work by his friends and collaborators, the American Hilda Doolittle (H. D.) and the Englishman Richard Aldington. Pound sent three poems each by H. D. and Aldington to Harriet Monroe, editor of the Chicago-based journal *Poetry*. Pound wrote to Monroe: ‘This is the sort of American stuff that I can show here in Paris without its being ridiculed. Objective – no slither; direct – no excessive use of adjectives; no metaphors that won’t permit examination. It’s straight talk, straight as the Greek!’ Pound would reformulate and develop this manifesto on several subsequent occasions, but in essence all of the central claims are in place. [...] Imagism was first given shape in 1912, and kept going in a series of Imagist anthologies until 1917. Ezra Pound himself, though substantially the creator of the movement, jumped ship and aligned himself with Wyndham Lewis’s Vorticism in

1914, probably because Vorticism offered the seduction of an alliance between painting, sculpture and literature, and because Lewis's movement more resembled Futurism in its confrontational approach to existing aesthetic practices and to what were perceived as being the sedentary bourgeois tastes dominating all of artistic production and consumption." (<http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/content/lesedato> 11.08.15)

"Hilda Doolittle's first collection of twenty-eight imagist poems, *Sea Garden* (1916), has been referred to by J. B. Harner in his *Victory in Limbo: Imagism 1908-1917* as representative of one of two of "the chief memorial[s] of the Imagiste group." The poems in Doolittle's first collection are the most influenced by the imagist movement" (Timothy Materer i <https://www.encyclopedia.com/literature-and-arts/literature-english/american-literature/imagists>; lesedato 12.04.23).

"[T]he aesthetic of glimpses contained possibilities: for note that [Arthur] Symons' "Pastel," but for being rhymed, corresponds exactly to what Imagist poems are often supposed to be. It presents something visual, and does not ruminate nor interpret." (Kenner 1975 s. 183)

Imagismen ble utviklet fra en dyp skepsis til begrepslig tenkning og tro på de konkrete fenomener i den sansbare virkelighet (Hamburger 1985 s. 190). Imagistene "wanted to renew poetry by stripping it of its Romantic-Victorian emotionalism, moral idealism, and diffuse, abstract language. [...] Influenced by the new visual arts, experimental fiction, French Symbolist verse and Japanese haiku poetry, the Imagists proposed to bring poetry back to earth through sharp, direct, and concentrated representation of the subject in the language of common speech. Equally, they shunned decorative frills and indulgence in private feelings. "Objective – no slither; direct – no excessive use of adjectives, no metaphors that won't permit examination," Pound wrote to Harriet Monroe. "It's straight talk, straight as the Greek!". Their emphasis was on a near-scientific concreteness and "hardness" which they hoped would make poetry an effective medium for expressing modern realities. As for form and rhythm, they rejected conventional rhyme and meter, preferring a free and flexible "musical phrase." Nor should the Imagist poem be burdened with symbol, narrative, or reflective comment. Explanatory or connecting elements were to be kept to a minimum, as were grammatical connectives. The poem should present itself as one or a collage of sharp impersonal images flashed before the reader and left to do their magic work. Another of their cardinal rules was the complete freedom of the poet in choice of subject matter." (Ro 1997 s. 143-144)

"The characteristics Pound stated as "imagiste" were a direct treatment of the subjective or objective thing, the rejection of anything unessential, and the rhythm of the musical phrase. What took preeminence was Pound's definition of the image, given here in "A Few Don'ts by an Imagiste" [...], as presenting "an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time." To Symbolist "evocation," Imagism



as Pound conceives of it opposes precision, hardness, clarity of outline; to Symbolist transcendence, the natural world. There was a reformulation of Imagism in 1914, into the Vorticist movement led by Wyndham Lewis, which put the accent on energy and movement.” (Caws 2001 s. 350)

“For Pound, Imagism is that ‘sort of poetry where painting or sculpture seems as if it were “just coming over into speech”’. The *Image* – ‘that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time’ – thus envisages a fusion of spontaneity, intensity and critical discipline. It is also – and here Pound submits an idea which has been credited with fathering Eliot’s *Objective Correlative* – an ‘equation’ for an emotion. The image-equation inheres in a relation between things, and is not the verbal snapshot of A thing. Pound may have read Mallarmé, in the original or in Arthur Symons’s quotation: ‘*Instituer une relation entre les images exacte, et que s’en détache un tiers aspect fusible et clair ...*’ (‘To establish a precise relationship between images to that a third aspect emerges there from which is integrated and clear’). He may also have come across Bergson’s notion that ‘no image can replace the intuition of duration, but many diverse images, borrowed from very different orders of things, may, be the convergence of their action, direct consciousness to the precise point where there is a certain intuition to be seized’. But he must surely have been familiar with Hulme’s Bergson-inspired ideas: “Say the poet is moved by a certain landscape, he selects from that certain images which, put into juxtaposition in separate lines, serve to suggest and to evoke the state he feels ... Two visual images form what one may call a visual chord. They unite to suggest an image which is different to both.” ” (Natan Zach i Bradbury og McFarlane 1978 s. 234-235)

“Pound wrote to Harriet Monroe in America: “My problem is to keep alive a certain group of advancing poets, to set the arts in their rightful place as the acknowledged guide and lamp of civilization.” Contrasting, in 1918, “the Hard and the Soft in French Poetry,” Pound railed against mushy technique and sentimentalism of “emotional slither” in favor of a hard precisionism” (Caws 2001 s. 350).

Pound krevde:

“Use no superfluous word, no adjective which does not reveal something.

Don’t use such an expression as ‘dim lands of *peace*’. It dulls the image. It mixes an abstraction with the concrete. It comes from the writer’s not realizing that the natural object is always the *adequate* symbol.

Go in fear of abstractions. Do not retell in mediocre verse what has already been done in good prose. Don’t think any intelligent person is going to be deceived when you try to shirk all the difficulties of the unspeakably difficult art of good prose by chopping your composition into line lengths ...

Don't imagine that the art of poetry is any simpler than the art of music, or that you can please the expert before you have spent at least as much effort on the art of verse as the average piano teacher spends on the art of music ..." (sitert fra Bradbury og McFarlane 1978 s. 230-231)

De to mest kjente imagistiske diktene er Pounds "In a Station of the Metro" (1916) og William Carlos Williams' "The Red Wheelbarrow" (1923). Mange imagistiske dikt er "ett-bilde-dikt" (Lamping 1991 s. 121). Korte dikt av Pound, som "In a Station of the Metro" og "The Bath Tub" er eksempler. Diktet må være konsentrert, for konsentrasjon er poesiens vesen.

"The apparition of these faces in the crowd:  
Petals on a wet, black bough.

– two lines, five phases of perception. Later typesetters, thinking this queer, have closed up the spaces." (Kenner 1975 s. 197) "In a Station of the Metro" skaper stor avstand mellom den konkrete situasjonen og det billedlige. Menneske, teknikk, storby og natur forenes i det poetiske uttrykket (Lamping 1991 s. 30). Pound var opptatt av de japanske sjangrene haiku og tanka. Begge disse sjangrene er "extremely concise, allusive, and elliptical; they present, they do not comment; they work by images, not concepts; they imply a mood or a complex of feelings, they do not state it. They were at the root of what was to become Imagism, a theory of poetry as presentation divorced from commentary, and not tied down to an imposed metrical form." (Fraser 1960 s. 13)

"In the *Fortnightly Review* of 1 September 1914, Pound's essay titled "Vorticism" explained that he first tried to express his vision of beautiful faces in a Paris metro station in a thirty-line poem, six months later in half that space, and a year later in the "hokku-like sentence" of the final poem (p. 89)." (Timothy Materer i <https://www.encyclopedia.com/literature-and-arts/literature-english/american-literature/imagists>; lesedato 12.04.23)

"The most famous of all Imagist poems commenced [...] with an accidental glimpse. Ezra Pound, on a visit to Paris in 1911, got out of the Metro at La Concorde, and "saw suddenly a beautiful face, and then another and another, and then a beautiful child's face, and then another beautiful woman, and I tried all that day to find words for what they had meant to me, and I could not find any words that seemed to me worthy, or as lovely as that sudden emotion." [...] He tells us that he first satisfied his mind when he hit on a wholly abstract vision of colors, splotches on darkness like some canvas of Kandinsky's (whose work he had not then seen). This is a most important fact. Satisfaction lay not in preserving the vision, but in devising with mental effort an abstract equivalent for it, reduced, intensified. He next wrote a 30-line poem and destroyed it; after six months he wrote a shorter poem, also destroyed; and after another year, with, as he tells us, the

Japanese *hokku* in mind, he arrived at a poem which needs every of its 20 words, including the six words in its title [...] We need the title so that we can savor that vegetal contrast with the world of machines: this is not any crowd, however, but a crowd seen underground, as Odysseus and Orpheus and Koré saw crowds in Hades. And carrying forward the suggestion of wraiths [= ånder], the word “apparition” detaches these faces from all the crowded faces, and presides over the image that conveys the quality of their separation:

Petals on a wet, black bough.

Flowers underground, flowers out of the sun; flowers seen as if against a natural gleam, the bough’s wetness gleaming on its darkness, in this place where wheels turn and nothing grows. [...] this tiny poem, drawing on Gauguin and on Japan, on ghosts and on Persephone, on the Underworld and on the Underground, the Metro of Mallarmé’s capital” (Kenner 1975 s. 183-185).

“In a Station of the Metro” “manipulates the pace of our perception [...]. Like all Imagism it abandons regular metre, but this is not to say it is arrhythmic. The first line divides into three accelerating figures – “the apparition,” “of these faces,” and “in the crowd” – followed by a significant retardation in the second line. The figures of the first line consist respectively of five, four and three syllables. The initial figure begins with an isolated unstressed syllable (“The”) followed by the rapid-fire tetrasyllabic “apparition.” It continues with a second tetrasyllabic foot (“of these faces”), the asymmetrical “of these” followed by a stressed then an unstressed syllable (“faces”). The final unstressed syllable carries its momentum into the anapaest which closes the line (“in the crowd”). The *caesura* here resides in the verbal arrangement of the poem on one level – the colon which punctuates the line-break is strengthened by the slow transition between the heavy, voiced plosive (“d”) at the end of the first line, and unvoiced plosive (“p”) which begins the second. It is also a *poietic* caesura inasmuch as the strength of the *image* is conveyed by the metaphor formalised in the second part of the poem. Somewhat hesitantly, the second line opens with the syncopated iamb, “Petals,” then briefly accelerates in the central anapaestic foot (“on a wet”), ending with a progressive ritardando in the two final stressed syllables (“black bough”).” (Botha 2011 s. 282)

Haikuer preges av bildekonsentrasjon. “In a Station of the Metro” hadde opprinnelig 30 verselinjer, før Pound foretok en “fortetting” av teksten (Geist, Hartinger m.fl. 1992 s. 42). “The brevity of Imagist notation seized phenomena just on the point of mutating, as in the most famous example an apparition of faces turns into petals. Misrepresented as a poetic stasis, it had been a poetic of darting change” (Kenner 1975 s. 367).

“Its manifestos lay out clear objectives for poetry: “[d]irect treatment of the “thing”...absolutely no word that d[oes] not contribute...[and], regarding rhythm: to compose in sequence of the musical phrase, not in the sequence of the metronome.”

Held together by a doctrine of the image – which is conceived by Hulme as an intuition of the Real, and by Pound's as "that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time" – these principles are made manifest in a poetry which, in Hughes' paraphrase, is marked by "[h]ardness of outline, clarity of image, brevity, suggestiveness, freedom from metrical laws." Consider Pound's "In a Station of the Metro," by some way the poet's most austere Imagist poem, an evocative miniature which illustrates these attributes with subtle force:

The apparition of these faces in the crowd:  
Petals on a wet, black bough.

Here is presented a singular instant – one differentiated from a generic multitude; a clarification and intensification of the ordinary; a poetic subtraction which repeats and amplifies Pound's claim regarding the image. In these lines we may trace those microscopic poetic points upon which the haziness of the reader's imagination tips into the crystalline hardness of the image. At this point the represented image is indeed an "apparition," something which leaves the realm of the undifferentiated and enters a space of intense presence, mediating in this *poietic* intuition a deep experience of its concreteness. This is also the point at which the indiscernible part of identity shifts into the specificity of "these faces." Imagist poetry provides clarity – it recognises *those* faces as *these* faces – but not by rendering the strange familiar, or by forcing anonymity into the form of a homonym. The point at which the image seems most intimate, is also the one where the hardness of the poem is reaffirmed: the "petals" are most significant when their ephemeral singularity is rendered almost transparent, stuck against the "bough," a symbol of both stability and a certain inflexibility. The hardness of the poem reaffirms that the world does not give itself over to simple domestication; the image reveals an aspect of the world which is strictly impenetrable and, in this sense, alterity is affirmed as that which guards the Real against the reduction of concrete *poiesis* to prosaic equivalence, to recall Hulme." (Botha 2011 s. 281)

"Williams's most famous poem "The Red Wheelbarrow" is an excellent example of Imagism in the United States, as conceived by Williams in response to the European, classically based imagistic work of Pound and Eliot. In his writing, Williams focuses on everyday objects and events. The central image in this poem is a red wheelbarrow wet after a rain. The wheelbarrow contrasts with white chickens nearby. The power of this poem is the clarity of the image drawn in bold strokes of words carefully chosen and arranged. He was inspired to write this poem after seeing this very scene in the yard of one of his patients." (Timothy Materer i <https://www.encyclopedia.com/literature-and-arts/literature-english/american-literature/imagists>; lesedato 12.04.23)

"Eliot's "objective correlative," William Carlos Williams's slogan "no ideas but in things," and Archibald MacLeish's belief (expressed in the 1926 poem "Ars Poetica") that a poem "should not mean / But be" bear the mark of imagism."

(Timothy Materer i <https://www.encyclopedia.com/literature-and-arts/literature-english/american-literature/imagists>; lesedato 12.04.23)

“Imagism is perhaps best viewed as a doctrine of *hardness*, the commonest, widest-ranging concept in the movement’s vocabulary. On a naïve level, the Imagist’s ‘hardness’ may simply express his preferences in the selection of materials – thus, hard stone or hard bones as against mellow notes of music, soft hues, soft perfumes or the softness of silk, all of which had enthralled the alternately melancholy and hedonistic spirit of the Nineties. More radically, it applies to style, rhythm and emotion. Judging by Imagist pronouncements, verse becomes hard (1) through being concise and paring away all ornamental frills; (2) when, in remaining close to everyday speech, it conveys some of the harshness of quotidian reality; (3) when it tends towards concrete objectivity, thus avoiding sentimental effusions; (4) because, in rendering what purports to be an accurate account of its subject, it approximates the scientist’s ‘hard’ methods, his hard observation of detailed fact; (5) when it ‘dares to go to the dust-bin for its subjects’ (Pound’s praise for Fletcher’s work); (6) when it avoids symmetrical, isochronic metres, which are branded soft, monotonous and soporific, and instead traces in its rhythms the ‘rough’ (i.e. irregular) contours of ‘things’. Even the concentration on the image may be interpreted in terms of the desire for a resistant hardness, the image being one of the least ‘convertible’ elements of poetry. In its preoccupation with hardness, Imagism constitutes a truly twentieth-century movement.” (Natan Zach i Bradbury og McFarlane 1978 s. 238)

“When it aspires to the condition of sculpture rather than to that of music, Imagist work manifests an affinity with the German *Dinggedicht* (the object-poem) and Rilke’s Rodin-inspired work. [...] broadly speaking, one may distinguish two conflicting impulses at work in much of early twentieth-century poetry: the purist aesthetic of the image, with its aversion to rhetoric and non-artistic concerns and its elitist disposition, and a democratic creed of expression and representation, with its emphasis on the human condition, on art as involvement, and its mystically heightened sense of communion. As well as bringing these two closer together, indeed synthesizing them in many cases, the outbreak of the First World War seemed to vindicate Imagism as a philosophy of style. The hardness which the movement required for its modern medium suddenly became the common experience of a generation on both sides of the trenches. The ‘softness’ of late nineteenth-century Aestheticism, itself a reaction from a hardened world, was now being superseded by a state of mind in tune with an even harsher reality. But its ‘Religion of Beauty’ ancestry will always provide characteristic Imagist work with that uneasy ‘soft’ streak which no desired or affected hardness ever manages to eliminate entirely.” (Natan Zach i Bradbury og McFarlane 1978 s. 238-239)

“What Pound learned from his imagist period (and what is perhaps permanently valuable in imagism) was a technique of cleanly isolating an impression or an emotion, cutting it free from comment, and a technique also of shaping verse

cadences, and verse pauses, to the impression or emotion; instead of, as it were, feeding the impression of the emotion into a predetermined verse form.” (Fraser 1960 s. 44)

“[T]he emphasis on *phanopoeia* [...] described in Ezra Pound’s *How to Read* as the projection of images upon the visual imagination” (Baetens og Lits 2004 s. 67). “Phanopoeia: Poundian term to describe a poem which relies upon ‘throwing a visual image on the mind’. He went on to say that this is particularly exemplified by Chinese poetry because the Chinese language is composed of pictograms. See also logopoeia and melopoeia which, according to Pound, make up the tripartite division of poetry.” ([http://www.poetsgraves.co.uk/glossary\\_poetic\\_terms\\_p.htm](http://www.poetsgraves.co.uk/glossary_poetic_terms_p.htm); lesedato 11.12.12) “Pound said that poetry could be divided according to three essential elements: phanopoeia, melopoeia, and logopoeia – the play of image, music, and meaning. In his manifestos for imagism and vorticism he advanced a poetry stripped of all nonessential elements, where every word makes a necessary contribution to the poem, “which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time.”” (Charles Bernstein i <http://wings.buffalo.edu/epc/authors/bernstein/essays/pound.html>; lesedato 20.11.15)

“Pound angriper det symbolistiske bildet fordi det er “mykt” og arbitrært, og bevegelsen selv fordi den forkaster verdenen som vi de facto befinner oss i og fordi den lengter etter evigheten og synestesi. Et bilde er for Pound innhold forstått som form, en forskningsmetode [...]. Imagismen tar nemlig distanse fra symbolistenes synkretistiske selvrefleksjon og korrespondanse-lære. Verden og ordet står i forgrunnen og bevissthet er mindre viktig, bare et iakttagende vesen som forholder seg til fenomenet eller tingen selv, uten at det poetiske bilde eksplisitt krever denne iakttakelse. Subjektet smelter ikke sammen med objektet og prøver ikke å “snakke” med det hinsides ved å behandle objektet som symbol, men tar distanse og bare ser på. Men selv om ordet er viktig ettersom det burde uttrykke objektet nøyaktig, er objektet ikke lenger dets ontologiske modell som i romantikken. Ordet prøver ikke å få en egen essens men nevner bare objektet, peker så å si på virkeligheten, og får dermed en slags enkel materialitet selv. Bare slik, som en slags upretensiøs veiviser i landskapet blir den et passende redskap for subjektets fornemmelse av verden. Naturen plasseres altså på første plass, men det betyr at objektet fremdeles har sin ontologiske overlegenhet i forhold til ordet (og kanskje også subjektet) i imagismen. Det har den til felles med tidligere slags lyrikk som romantikken for eksempel, men hvis vi tar i betraktning noen av tankene ovenfor kan vi i tillegg si at imagismen er representant for upersonlighetspoetikken og at den bruker bilder som har sekundær symbolikk.” (Radoš Kosović i <http://brage.bibsys.no/hia/retrieve/2723/Rados%20Kosovic.pdf>; lesedato 06.06.13)

Symbolismen benekter “ikke subjektet totalt, men den skyver det i andre rekke. Og bildene kan sies å være sekundært symbolske, ikke fordi de blir gradvis symbolske i løpet av diktets tankeprosess som i romantikken, men fordi de godt

kan være symbolske hvis leseren absolutt vil det, selv om det ikke er deres egentlige natur eller funksjon. Imagismens største estetiske kritikk av symbolismen kan sies å være dens utelukkende bruk av primært symbolske bilder. Med Pounds egne ord: “I believe that the proper and perfect symbol is the natural object, that if a man use “symbols” he must so use them that their symbolic function does not obtrude, so that a sense, and the poetic quality of the passage, is not lost to those who do not understand the symbol as such, to whom, for instance, a hawk is a hawk.” (“A Retrospect”, T. S. Eliot, red.)” (Radoš Kosović i <http://brage.bibsys.no/hia/retrieve/2723/Rados%20Kosovic.pdf>; lesedato 06.06.13)

“As the doctrine develops it accommodates not only metaphoric or superpository complexes, but any kind of utterance that is direct, unembellished and economical. Originally focused on brief ‘points of maximum energy’, it is in time extended or converted to allow for larger and more ambitious work. Since logical development is ruled out, and traditional narrative composition discarded, an architectonic of concatenation, sometimes described as *collage*, is rationalized, and the ‘logic of the imagination’ upheld against the ‘logic of concepts’. ‘The reader,’ Eliot instructs the uninitiated in his introduction to St-John Perse’s *Anabase*, ‘has to allow the images to fall into his memory successively without questioning the reasonableness of each at the moment; so that, at the end, a total effect is produced. Such selection of a sequence of images and ideas has nothing chaotic about it.’ Beyond this, ideas of the total or governing image were gaining hold. Dante’s *Paradiso*, Pound wrote, ‘is the most wonderful *image*’; and a whole *Noh* play ‘may consist of one image’. [...] The Vorticist insistence (on movement, energy and intensity, a universal trait of pre-war (Bergson-inspired) art, strengthened Pound’s conviction that the ‘permanent’ or ‘absolute’ image-complex-juxtaposition must be active rather than static and fixed” (Natan Zach i Bradbury og McFarlane 1978 s. 236).

“Pound joined with Wyndham Lewis, a painter, in founding another even shorter-lived movement, vorticism. In restating imagist principles as vortices, he clarified the original imagist tenets. Vorticism believed in using the “primary pigment” of an art: in painting, color and form (often nearly abstract); in poetry, the image. As the vorticist artist juxtaposes geometric forms, the poet juxtaposes images. [...] In his 1914 “Vorticism” essay he defined the vorticist image as a “radiant node or cluster ... from which, and through which, and into which, ideas are constantly rushing” (p. 92). [...] In the vorticist magazine *Blast* (1914), Pound quotes from H.D.’s “Oread” to exemplify the proper use of the image. In what seems a reference to “Oread” in the “Vorticism” essay, he writes that its juxtaposed images are “not an equation of mathematics . . . having something to do with form but about *sea, cliffs, night*, having something to do with mood” (p. 92). The poem does not literally describe a seacoast or explicitly state that a crashing wave resembles a pine tree. Images are abstracted from the scene, acting as equations or formulas for the emotions the artist finds within it.” (Timothy Materer i <https://www.encyclopedia.com/literature-and-arts/literature-english/american-literature/imagists>; lesedato 12.04.23)

“Imagismen er kort sagt “hardhetens” retorikk. I mest bokstavelig forstand betyr det at man foretrekker stein, ben og de ovenfor nevnte gatefølelsene istedenfor musikk, silke og dekadens. Det er flere måter et bilde blir “hardt” på: ved å være kortfattet og uten pynt, ved å være nær hverdagslivet og hverdagsspråket, ved å ha en tilbøyelighet til konkret objektivitet uten sentimentalitet og ved å uttrykke detaljer og fakta på en nesten vitenskapelig måte. Kort sagt må bildet være så plastisk som mulig, så at det skal uttrykke omverdenen på den beste mulige måten, ettersom objektet og naturen uten menneskelig forstand og tolkning står på første plass. Dette er i skarp motsetning til romantikkens luftmetaforer. Man forkaster himmelens, stjernenes og fuglenes immaterielle materialitet og bevisst betoner det materielle mest mulig, med stein og jord. Ordets håp om en transcendental status er uvesentlig, og et ord kan kalles poetisk bare hvis det uttrykker det rene objektet uten bevissthet, dvs. hvis den blir materiell selv i så stor grad som det er mulig. Ifølge Zach burde et perfekt imagistisk dikt ha mer til felles med en skulptur enn med en symfoni.” (Radoš Kosović i <http://brage.bibsys.no/hia/retrieve/2723/Rados%20Kosovic.pdf>; lesedato 06.06.13)

“In Pound’s art there is, almost paradoxically, a distrust of language, especially of writing, which extended into a similar distrust of money. Money, like language, circulates with no real certainty that the object which it ‘represents’ will ever be restored. Like language, money is peculiarly groundless. Pound’s long anti-Semitic campaign in his work takes root in his developing theory, throughout the later 1920s and 1930s, that corruption of the meaning of words and corruption of the value of money could be blamed on Jews. How possible is it to read the early poetry of Pound without making mental reference to the politics he developed?” (<http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/content/>; lesedato 11.08.15)

Den franske dikteren Pierre Reverdys proklamasjon “The Image” fra 1918 har blitt regnet med til de imagistiske manifestene (Caws 2001 s. 351), selv om Reverdy ikke tydelig tilhørte verken denne bevegelsen eller noen annen. Manifestet er slik:

“The Image is a pure creation of the mind. It cannot be born from a comparison, but from the coming together of two more or less distant realities. The more the relation between the two realities is distant and accurate, the stronger the image will be – the more it will possess emotional power and poetic reality. Two realities that have no relation whatever cannot come together effectively. No image is created. Two contrary realities will not come together. They will stand in opposition. Such an opposition will only rarely generate power. An image is not strong because it is brutal or fantastic – but because the association of ideas is distant and accurate. It is only in the result that the accuracy of the association can be immediately measured. Analogy is a method of creation – it being a similarity of relations; however, the strength or weakness of the image created will depend on the nature of these relations. That which is great is not the image, but the emotion which it provokes; one measures the greatness of the image by the greatness of the emotion.



The emotion thus provoked is poetically pure, because it is born beyond all imitation, all comparison. There is within it the surprise and joy of finding oneself before a new state of affairs. An image cannot be created by comparing (always feebly) two disproportionate realities. On the contrary, a strong image, new to the mind's eye, is created by bringing together two distant and incomparable realities between which only the mind has grasped a relation. The mind should grasp and savour an image thus created in its unalloyed purity.

The creation of an image is thus a powerful poetic technique and one should not be surprised by the importance of this technique in a poetics of creation. To remain pure such a poetics demands that all its techniques converge on the creation of a poetic reality. One cannot allow methods of direct observation to intervene, since this will only serve to destroy the whole by introducing a discord. Such methods have a different origin and a different aim. Aesthetic techniques which differ in this way cannot converge within a single poem. It is only the purity of technique which requires the purity of the poem. The purity of an aesthetic has the same source.” (oversatt av Jonah Wilberg i <http://www.jonahwilberg.net/reverdy.html>; lesedato 11.01.16; teksten er her satt sammen til to avsnitt og noen franske ord satt i klammer av Wilberg er fjernet)

“The single most familiar characteristic of Imagism today was probably most persuasively described in the forward to the last (revivalist) book-length anthology of original imagist verse in 1930 when Ford Madox Ford (quoted in Brophy 2009: 54) observed simply that “poetic ideas are best expressed by the rendering of concrete objects”. However, it is critical to recognize that not every, especially a mere visual, object-oriented *natural* image will make a viable and effective *poetic* image. The difference, as Wallace Stevens convincingly spelled it out later on behalf of the movement, as it were, is between the image without meaning (what he called the ‘bare’ image) and the image not simply ‘with’ or ‘of’ a certain meaning, but the image as meaning (Stevens 1958: 161). Imagism was not just a radically innovative aesthetic. It was both a reflection of and a response to the rather peculiar early-20th-century all-pervading sense of fragmentation and disconnectedness. The new poetics offered a response not merely to the modern collapse of the grand cultural narrative (telos) but of paraphrasable narrative (proiaretic code) as such. To adapt Robert Frost’s memorable phrase, the poetic image (and on a larger scale, *images successive*) offered a momentary stay against confusion as a perceptual, phenomenological, and existential anchorage in the confrontation with the ever-growing complexities, entanglements, and contingencies of life. Although the founders of the movement did not entertain quite such huge ambitions, the modern state of mind was to find here an enduring articulation” (Janusz Semrau og Marek Wilczyński i [http://www.peterlang.com/download/extract/83280/extract\\_265696.pdf](http://www.peterlang.com/download/extract/83280/extract_265696.pdf); lesedato 21.12.15).

“Imagism favors the dense, the terse, the definite, the energy of vision held in a moment. Writing also in *Poetry*, the painter-poet Marsden Hartley means the same

kind of hard-edged poetic business. This density will carry over into the essays of such major figures as Marianne Moore, with her emphasis on “compacity” and precision, and Cynthia Ozick, in her thinking about *particularism* as the defining characteristic of what makes literature last.” (Caws 2001 s. 350)

Den amerikanske poeten og maleren Marsden Hartleys tekst “The Business of Poetry” (1919) begynner slik: “I am riding through Arizona in the Pullman. I am thinking of the business of poetry. Every other man attends to the details of business, if he is a good business man. A train is mostly business men. ... Poets must, it seems to me, learn how to use a great many words before they can know how to use a few skilfully. Journalistic verbiage is not fluency. Alfred Kreymborg agrees with me that poets do not write prose often enough. I speak mostly of the poets who do not write with the sense of volume in their brevities. Brevity of all things demands intensity, or better say tensity. Tensity comes from experience. The poet must see the space for the word, and then see to it the word occupies it [sic]. It is almost mechanical science these days, it would seem – the fitting of parts together so the whole produces a consistent continuity. Subjects never matter, excepting when they are too conspicuously auto-biographical. “Moi-même, quand même” is attractive enough, but there are so many attractive ways of presenting it. Personal handling counts for more than personal confessions. We can even learn to use hackneyed words, like “rose” and “lily,” relieving them of Swinburnian encrustations. We can relieve imagery from this banality. Poets cannot, as aspiring poets, depend, it seems to me, ever upon the possible natural “flow” that exists in themselves. Poets have work to do for the precision of simplicity, and for the gift of volume in simplicity. It is the business of good poetry to show natural skill as well as natural impetus. Some poets would like to say the former is more important. It surprises one a deal how much even the better poets effuse, or rely upon their momentary theories. The subject calls for handling, not for enthusiasm.” (sitert fra Caws 2001 s. 353)

“The Imagist programme, too, seemed to have burned itself out by 1917, when Amy Lowell, who had taken lead of the movement after Ezra Pound’s defection to Vorticism (‘Every kind of geyser from jism bursting up white as ivory, to hate or a storm at sea’), ceased publication of the annual anthologies that had appeared since 1914. [...] Yet May Sinclair (1863-1946) proved that the tenets of Imagism could be put to use for a longer project [...] What May Sinclair showed in her underrated and overlooked verse-novel of 1924, *The Dark Night*, was that the mode and techniques of Imagism could be co-opted for a longer, book-length work, and need not be confined to one-page meditations on the moon or a rock-pool. One could write using the *vers libre* of much Imagist verse and yet cover the romance, plot-twists, and soul-searching one tends to find in a full novel. This is what Sinclair gives us in *The Dark Night*. [...] Sinclair’s fiction often looks for new ways of depicting character with a greater emphasis on interiority, on the vagaries of psychological perception. [...] and writing an important defence of Imagism, as distinct from Symbolism, in 1915 [...] *The Dark Night* is narrated by Elizabeth, a

young woman who falls in love with a poet named Victor, whom she subsequently marries. The poem charts her troubled marriage to him (he has an affair with Monica, Elizabeth's young ward) and her relationship with God. Parts of *The Dark Night* seem to echo the free-verse Imagist poems of Aldington and F. S. Flint:

London:

The small house stands  
In a wide street of small houses,  
White and clean,  
So low that above them  
You can see all the sky,  
Blue over purple roofs  
And green tree-tops;  
Shallow roofs dropping broad eaves  
Above the black windows.  
Round my garden a low white wall,  
Topped by a screen of espalier limes,  
Black boughs stretched out, laced and knotted,  
Carrying round bunches of green leaves,  
Making a black and green pattern  
Against the white house.

But other sections of the poem recall the Imagism of H. D. in, for instance, 'Oread' or 'Sea Rose':

Oh hold me up,  
Keep me within your walls of light,  
Oh crystal soul, oh hard and clear,  
Unbreakable,  
Swinging your light in darkness,  
Shine through me,  
Shine through me lest I lose the sight of God.

But the poem is noteworthy also for Sinclair's treatment of unhappy marriage and adultery (Elizabeth's husband's affair, and fathering of a child, with Monica) and other taboo issues: it contains what has to be one of the first explicit descriptions of breastfeeding in English poetry." (Oliver Tearle i <https://interestingliterature.com/2017/07/may-sinclairs-the-dark-night-the-imagist-verse-novel/>; lesedato 28.01.21)

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