John Keats as a poet

Despite his brief career as a poet, Keats' poetic brilliance stands out extraordinaire. No wonder, Keats's work is appreciated and read widely even today bears testimony to the fact that he was one of a kind. His poetry is remarkable for its vividness, sensual imagery, and its ability to transcend the realm of physical. Twentieth century broadened the perception of Keats's poetry as he is appreciated for his thoughtfulness and seriousness, for his dealing with difficult human conflicts and artistic issues, and for his impassioned mental pursuit of truth. The publication of Keats's letters, with their keen intellectual questioning and concern with moral and artistic problems, led to the reassessment of his work.

Keats belonged to the literary movement of romanticism of the 18th century.Commenting on Keats's poetry, Douglas Bush says, "Keats's important poems are related to, or grow directly out of … inner conflicts." The embeddedness of pain and pleasure is noticeable in "Ode to a Nightingale" and "Ode on a Grecian Urn"; love is intertwined with pain, and pleasure in "La Belle Dame Sans Merci." His poems such as "Ode to the Nightingale", portrays the escape from the physical world into the world of imagination only to be back to the humdrum of mundane. The conflicting themes of keats's poetry are real vs imaginary, mortal vs immortal, joy vs melancholy, separation vs connection.

Keats' imagery touches across all the senses of sight, smell, hearing taste, hunger, sexuality and movement. His imagination to combine one sexual image onto another lends his poems a characteristic sensuality and vividness which is Keats'

own. Richard H, Fogle calls these images the product of his “ unrivalled ability to absorb, sympathize with and humanize natural objects.”