

1913

COMMISSION From Lustra

Ezra Pound

Pound, Ezra (1885-1972) - Controversial American poet, editor, and critic who had a major influence on 20th century literature. After making hundreds of broadcasts for the Italian Fascist regime, he was tried for treason, judged insane, and held in a mental hospital for over ten years. Commission (1913) - Published initially in 1913 and later collected in "Lustra," it is an expression of the importance of individual freedom. Opening line: Go, my songs, to the lonely and the unsatisfied, ...

COMMISSION

GO, my songs, to the lonely and the unsatisfied, Go also to the nerve-wracked, go to the enslaved-by-convention, Bear to them my contempt for their oppressors.

Go as a great wave of cool water, Bear my contempt of oppressors.

Speak against unconscious oppression, Speak against the tyranny of the unimaginative, Speak against bonds.

Go to the bourgeoisie who is dying of her ennui, Go to the women in suburbs.

Go to the hideously wedded, Go to them whose failure is concealed, Go to the unluckily mated, Go to the bought wife, Go to the woman entailed.

Go to those who have delicate lust, Go to those whose delicate desires are thwarted, Go like a blight upon the dulness of the world; Go with your edge against this, Strengthen the subtle cords, Bring confidence upon the algae and the tentacles of the soul.

Go in a friendly manner, Go with an open speech.

Be eager to find new evils and new good, Be against all forms of oppression.

Go to those who are thickened with middle age, To those who have lost their interest.

Go to the adolescent who are smothered in family Oh how hideous it is To see three generations of one house gathered together!

It is like an old tree with shoots, And with some branches rotted and falling.

Go out and defy opinion, Go against this vegetable bondage of the blood.

Be against all sorts of mortmain.

THE END