

Basic Detail Report

The poet Ezra Pound

Date

1969-1972

Primary Maker

Grazia Neri

Medium

gelatin silver print

Description

Ezra Pound was an expatriate American poet and critic who was a major figure in the early modernist movement. His contribution to poetry began with his development of Imagism, a movement derived from classical Chinese and Japanese poetry, stressing clarity, precision and economy of language. During World War II he was paid by the Italian government to make hundreds of radio broadcasts criticising the United States, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Jews, as a result of which he was arrested by American forces in Italy in 1945 on charges of treason, after which he spent months in detention in a U.S. military camp in Pisa, including three weeks in a six-by-six-foot outdoor steel cage that he said triggered a mental breakdown, "when the raft broke and the waters went over me". Deemed unfit to stand trial, he was incarcerated in St. Elizabeth's psychiatric hospital in Washington, D.C., for over 12 years. While in custody in Italy, he had begun work on sections of The Cantos that became known as The Pisan Cantos (1948), for which he was awarded the Bollingen Prize in 1949 by the Library of Congress, triggering enormous controversy. He was released from St. Elizabeth's in 1958, thanks to a campaign by his fellow writers, and returned to live in Italy until his death.

Dimensions

Overall: 30.3 x 21.2 cm (12 x 8 3/8 in.)