

AN ILLUSTRATED QUARTERLY
BLAKE

N E W S

Golgonooza

Aethelred Eldridge

Blake/An Illustrated Quarterly, Volume 10, Issue 2, Fall 1976, p. 47



one of the most important. I refer not to Romney's public, portrait art, with its many representations of Lady Hamilton, but to the private, highly subjective, and emotional art that one finds in the drawings and sketches. I shall argue that this art was known to Blake and transmitted to him through personal contact. Although I shall take note of and even illustrate the "sublime" side of Romney's drawings, I shall "feature" the ones that embody that great and complex eighteenth-century quality of *delicacy*. My argument is that these works by Romney lie back of Blake's *Firiel*, the *Book of Thel*, and the *Songs of Innocence*--and also the great illustrations to the poetry of John Milton.

David Irwin, Dept. of Art History, Aberdeen University
"Scottish Contemporaries and Heirs of William Blake"

The paper will examine the work of Scottish painters whose art runs parallel to that of Blake, and who also encountered similar neglect by their contemporaries. The discussion will be concerned primarily with two artists who spent most of their working lives in Edinburgh. Firstly, Alexander Runciman, who was 20 years senior to Blake and was producing the main body of his work in the 1770's and 80's; and secondly, David Scott, a true heir to Blake, born in 1806, and producing his mature works in the days of early Victorian Britain. The work of both artists is not as well known as it should be. Runciman, after all, was highly praised by Henry Fuseli, who was not a man to waste words in unnecessary flattery, when he described him as "the best painter of us in Rome." Scott, brother of the Pre-Raphaelite painter and poet, William Bell Scott, was admired by Rossetti for his independence and lack of compromise, and by Emerson for his genius.

SESSION EIGHT: Moderator, Seymour Howard, University of California, Davis

Morris Eaves, Dept. of English, University of New Mexico
"Blake and the Artistic Machine"

Rubens hired a phalanx of specialists to execute hundreds of commissions under his trademark; following in the same artistic-commercial tradition, Reynolds customarily painted only the faces of his portraits and left the rest to the "drapery men"; printseller Rudolph Ackermann fitted emigrés into a system of manufacture efficient enough to produce hundreds of thousands of colored prints for the *Miraculum of London*. This organization of production in the graphic arts and its associated technology are the right context for Blake's most important artistic principles, which have more often been described--usually with apologies for his paranoid tone and narrow tastes--than understood. Against the proper background, with the transitions in the proper places, Blake's aesthetic comes together in a lively coherence that does not disintegrate even in the face of the magisterial Enlightenment common sense of Reynolds' *Discourses*, where Blake learned, if he had not known it before, that principles of manufacture can become aesthetic principles, and that in a commercial empire the approved art is at many points an allegory of commerce. Why was Reynolds a "plagiarist"? Why did Venetian and Flemish painters "cause that every thing in art shall become a Machine"? Why is the sign of the Machine "broken lines, broken masses, and broken colours"? Why did Pope rewrite Donne's satires? The answer is the same in each case, and it lurks in Blake's cryptic assertion that "Execution is only the result of invention." How that might be so we shall discover from the lesson variously taught by the modern dishwasher, Washington's face on the dollar bill, and decorum, the prissy but conventional word in criticism for the relation of form to content.

G. E. Bentley, Jr., Dept. of English, University of Toronto
"A Jewel in an Ethiope's Ear" (Read by Morton D. Paley)

The apocryphal *Book of Enoch*, a miscellaneous collection of prophetic texts including The Book of the Watchers, The Vision of Noah, The Book of Astronomy, seems to have been written down in its present form about the First Century before Christ. Its first complete printing was the English translation made by the Reverend Professor Richard Lawrence in 1821. The new publication made hardly any impression on thinking contemporaries; even theologians showed little interest in it for a time. However, within a few years its divine eroticism had attracted the attention of five major artists and poets: William Blake, John Flaxman, Thomas Moore, Richard Westall, Lord Byron.

It is the purpose of the present paper to indicate briefly when and how *The Book of Enoch* came to be known in Europe, then

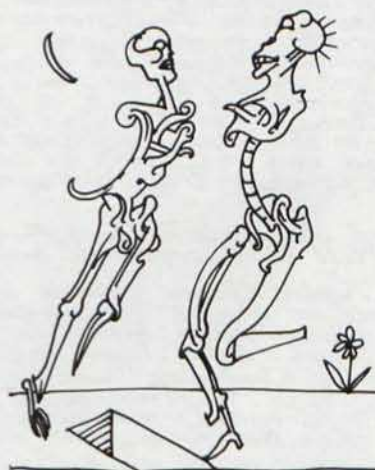
to examine and compare some of the ways in which Blake, Flaxman, Moore, Westall and Byron responded to it--in particular the section called The Book of Watchers, with its account of how angels (called the Watchers of Heaven) fell in love with the daughters of men and propagated a race of giants. In *The Book of Enoch* Blake found confirmation of his own prophetic visions--hence the gusto with which he began to illustrate it, a gusto that makes the illustrations for it of Flaxman and Westall seem "earth-bound and immature" by comparison.

FRIDAY EVENING: Reception, Art Gallery, Santa Barbara Museum of Art, 1130 State Street. Visiting Blake scholars in Art and English are cordially invited to the reception and to the exhibition, *The Followers of William Blake*: numerous original works by Palmer, Richmond, Varley, Calvert, et al. Organized by Larry Gleason, University of East Texas.

CONCURRENT PUBLIC EVENTS

1. UCSB Art Galleries. Daily, Feb. 24-Mar. 28.
Blake in the Art of His Time, organized by Corlette Walker. 100 original paintings and drawings by Blake, Flaxman, Fuseli, Barry, Mortimer and others.
2. The Santa Barbara Museum of Art, 1130 State Street. Daily, Mar. 2-5.
The Followers of William Blake: paintings by Samuel Palmer, George Richmond, John Varley, John Linnell. Organized by Larry Gleason, University of East Texas.
3. UCSB Main Library. Daily, Feb. 26-Mar. 26.
Two related exhibitions, organized by Robert Essick and Donald Fitch:
 - (a) *William Blake, Book Illustrator*. Blake's illustrations for various projects, narratives, encyclopedias, commercial works, etc.
 - (b) *Blake's Illuminated Books: A Historical Survey of Facsimiles*. The evolution of facsimiles of Blake's colored books from 1860 to the recent Trianon Press editions. Rare items of great pictorial and bibliographic interest.

Albion There is only one endangered Species; Me!
And I have sent Arrows pursuing in attempt upon the
Individual's life--which return, for the most part, bloodied.
BLAKE published to the Angels--a mean Selepath, He--
They bereft of Messages selecting furtherance upon the
Certain Sons of Steadfast Mak. Hear the Devils; Jeru-
Salem, yet awake, lies in ruins. And hear again what will
Be seen; The Serpent Temple writing in the Dusty
Clouds of ALBION comes--though the invisible pricking-
Up of Angelic ears must fail to catch the dronish
Histor's hum--Sleep yet, my darlings; 'til the awful Hand.



Golgonozza

What a Secret! Nothing is of Consequence! Health and
Beauty aids, rainbow's hand upon the Midnight meal--
Go! And what is left? No one hears a knock upon
The Door without its apprehension. How many cells
In your Body take stock, believing in their Flesh?
Albion is not a Corporate Entity. Awake! I am buried
Literally in one sportive Cell--that the children of
Jerusalem, may become the Children of Los.