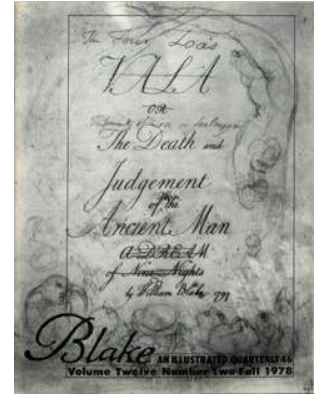


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BLAKE

N E W S

MLA Blake Seminar 1979

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NEWSLETTER

TATE BLAKE GALLERY

A new gallery specially designed for the Tate Gallery's Blake collection is scheduled to open in Autumn 1978. As well as the majority of the Tate's own Blake collection and a section devoted to such artists as Samuel Palmer and George Richmond, the display will include the two panels "Winter" and "Evening" lent by the Vaughan Johnson Trust, the watercolor sketch "Job and His Daughters" lent by Dr. R. E. Hemphill and a group of works from the Bateson Collection. The Bateson Collection, which was previously on long loan to the Honolulu Academy of Arts, includes the four works shown in the large Tate Gallery exhibition earlier in the year, "Pestilence," the color print "Satan exulting over Eve," the sketch for the alternative design for the title page to *The Grave*, and the late book illustration discussed elsewhere in this issue of *Blake*. In addition the collection contains three other works which have also been placed on long loan at the Tate Gallery, a tracing possibly by Blake himself from the drawing of "The Last Judgment" in the Rosenwald Collection, the drawing of "Adam and Eve sleeping" included by Geoffrey Keynes in his first book of *Pencil Drawings by William Blake*, 1927, as no. 35 but later recognized by him as a drawing by Edward Francis Burney, and a pen and wash drawing of "The Expulsion of Adam and Eve" which bears a false signature of Blake and the date "1803" but is certainly not by him. Not all of these works will be on view but those in store can be seen by appointment. MARTIN BUTLIN, KEEPER OF THE BRITISH COLLECTION, TATE GALLERY, LONDON.

MLA BLAKE SEMINAR 1978

The Special Session on "Blake's Concept of Self" is scheduled for the annual meeting of the Modern Language Association in New York this December. Prof. Anne Mellor of Stanford University will be heading the session. An abstract of each paper to be presented follows:

Robert N. Essick, "William Blake: The Printmaker as Poet"

The paper will consider some of the ways in which Blake's profession influences his poetry. Eighteenth-century etching and engraving involved procedures, both mental and physical, that shaped the imagery of the *Illuminated Books*. In *Milton* and *Jerusalem*, Blake's struggles as a printmaker became part of the biographical material he transformed into universal myth. A study of these influences and references offers insights into Blake's habits of mind as a poet and into his conception of himself as an artist.

Christine Gallant, "Blake's Presence as First-Person Voice in *Jerusalem*"
Blake is concerned with the unification of the Self--a Self that includes the unconscious, or Chaos--and he explores the unconscious throughout his poetry. He strongly desires his reader to understand this hidden part of the Self as well, as he leads the reader of *Jerusalem* through day-by-day experiences of "the Chaos of Satan." We can see this in Blake's use of the first-person voice, an unusual tense for him (save in *Milton*). Jung helps to understand the use of this tense as he analyzes the authoritative voice appearing in dreams, a voice seeming to come from outside the dream's context. He says that such a voice may be either a spokesman of the unconscious for the dreamer or (very rarely) a messenger from "the supraordinate Self." The first-person voice functions in *Jerusalem* as does this dream-voice. Blake's use of this tense reveals that in these passages he saw himself as such a spokesman, both for the unconscious and for the unified center of the total personality which is the Self.

John H. Sutherland, "Some Blake Self-Images in *Milton* and *Jerusalem*"

The term "self-images" is used to refer to pictures in which Blake reveals fairly directly something of his own inward state. Five plates from *Milton* (M 10, 32, 37, 40, 47) and three plates from *Jerusalem* (J 1, 6, 100) are discussed (plates numbered here as in *The Illuminated Blake*). It is argued that some of these are pictures connected with peak experiences in Blake's life. A pattern of spiritual autobiography is suggested, and the question is raised as to whether this pattern directly reflects Blake's perception of his own life, or whether the pattern is a partial fiction designed to enhance the structures of his two works. Particular attention is given to J 100, which is taken as an interesting vision, by Blake, of his own spiritual state late in life.

MLA BLAKE SEMINAR 1979

W. J. T. Mitchell of the University of Chicago will be discussion leader for the 1979 Special Session on Blake at the MLA Annual Meeting. The topic will be "Blake on Language and Writing." Those interested in being on a panel should send Mitchell a paper of not more than fifteen pages by 30 March 1979 at the latest, sooner if possible. (This Blake session should not be confused with the one scheduled for MLA December 1978.)

MLA

GUNNAR HARDING

"Song of Innocence" and "An Evening at Home with William Blake" (poems published in the summer 1978 issue) originally appeared in *Ballader* by Gunnar Harding, published by Wahlstrom & Widstrand (Stockholm, 1975); the poems were published in *Blake* with the kind permission of the author and publisher.