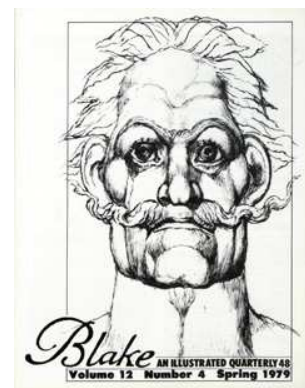


AN ILLUSTRATED QUARTERLY
BLAKE

N E W S

Recent Exhibitions of Interest

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at least to me, the inexplicable re-issue of Blake's designs for Robert Blair's *The Grave* to accompany a completely new text in Spanish by José Joaquín de Mora (1783-1864). This was the *Meditaciones Poeticas* published in 1826 by "R. Ackermann, No. 101, Strand: y en su Establecimiento en Megico: asimismo en Colombia, en Buenos Ayres, Chile, Peru, y Guatamala." As Mora explained in his preface, he had written new poems to complement and throw light on the magnificent designs of "Guillermo Black."

Robert N. Essick and Morton D. Paley, in their article on "The Printings of Blake's Designs for Blair's *Grave*" (*The Book Collector*, winter 1975, pp. 545-57), have supplied a considerable amount of information on Mora, this edition of Blake's designs, and Ackermann's Spanish-language publications. But Dr. Schwartz has demonstrated that Mora played a major role in Ackermann's Spanish publications, a fine example of enlightened self-interest. Already in 1815 Ackermann was assisting Spanish exiles in England. In 1820 the Spanish troops sent to quell a rebellion in South America themselves rebelled and established a liberal constitution including the freedom of the press, hitherto subject to the Inquisition in its most restrictive form. This led Ackermann, in 1822, to establish a Spanish-language journal similar to his *Repository of Arts*. This was first edited by the lapsed priest Joseph Blanco White (1775-1841) but in 1826, under a new title, its editorship passed to Mora, who had already edited other publications for Ackermann including a Spanish-language equivalent of the annual *Forget me not*, translations of Sir Walter Scott, and works on history and geography. The re-issue of Blake's designs, bought by Ackermann from Cromek's widow and already re-issued with the original text in 1813, thus falls into place as part of Mora's literary work for Ackermann's Spanish-American ventures during the years 1824-7. MARTIN BUTLIN, TATE GALLERY, LONDON

RECENT EXHIBITIONS OF INTEREST

The David and Alfred Smart Gallery of The University of Chicago held an exhibition from 4 October to 26 November 1978 of thirty-one of the large plates published by John and Josiah Boydell to accompany *The Dramatic Works of William Shakspeare* (1791-1803). Accompanying the exhibition was a catalogue:

Alderman Bodyell's Shakspeare [sic] Gallery: An Exhibition of a Selection of the Engravings Made After the Paintings Comissioned by Alderman John Boydell, Organized by the David and Alfred Smart Gallery. With an Introduction Written Expressly for this Catalogue by Richard W. Hutton and Catalogue Entries Prepared and Written By Laura Nelke. The David and Alfred Smart Galler, The University of Chicago [1978].

The useful, unpretentious catalogue reproduces fifteen of the plates. The author of the introduction is preparing a doctoral dissertation on Robery Boyer's Historic Gallery and its illustrations to Hume's *History of England* (1806).

The Smart Gallery, itself a very new institution, had been given the 100 large separate plates in 1976.

The Boydell Shakspeare, the Bowyer Hume, and the Macklin Bible (1800) were the most ambitious illustrated editions undertaken at that or perhaps any other time in England, but Blake had a hand only in the first, and that in a minor way, and he felt the neglect bitterly. On 11 December 1805 he wrote: "I was alive & in health & with the same Talents I now have all the time of Boydells Macklins Bowyers & other Great Works. I was known by them & was lookd upon by them as Incapable of Employment in those Works." Or, more outrageously,

Was I . . . angry with Macklin or Boydel or
Bowyer
Because they did not say O what a Beau ye are
[Notebook, p. 23]

It is appropriate and gratifying that these great works are geing exhibited and seriously studied once more. G. E. BENTLEY, JR., UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



19. John Flaxman

The Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery held an exhibition of "English Book Illustration circa 1800" during January and February 1979. The exhibition was organized by Shelley Bennett and Patricia Crown under the headings of the Sublime, the Beautiful, the Picturesque, and the Comic. The works on exhibition--forty-one altogether--included illustrations by Blake, Stothard, Flaxman, and Fuseli, among others. There is a catalogue of the exhibition, also by Bennett and Crown.

During February and March 1979 the Yale Center for British Art held a special exhibition of drawings by George Romney, organized by the Fitzwilliam Museum in 1977, and with an illustrated catalogue by Patricia Jaffe. Scheduled for 12 September-11 November 1979 is an exhibition on "The Fuseli Circle in Rome: Early Romantic Art of the 1770's," with illustrated catalogue published by the Center.



Henry Fuseli, R.A. (1741-1825)