

AN ILLUSTRATED QUARTERLY
BLAKE

N E W S

Erdman Lectures

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Night Thoughts. This exhibition was organized by Museum Registrar Joy Feinberg and Morton Paley. The prints displayed were from the University Art Museum and other Bay Area collections, including the collection of Robert Essick. Materials for an exhibition of Blake books presented in the Main Library at Berkeley, 23 February-31 March, were from the Bancroft Library, Biology Library, the collection of Mrs. Charles C. Cushing, and the University Art Museum. Leslie Clark, Rare Books Librarian at the Bancroft Library, assisted Morton Paley with the arrangement of and commentary for this exhibition. (*Our thanks to Donna Rix of the University of New Mexico for this item. Eds.*)

BLAKE-MODERNS SEMINAR

Despite its setting amidst the awkward clutter of bare wood tables left over from a previous night's dinner, the MLA Seminar on Blake and the Moderns held the attention of some fifty participants well past its scheduled closing.

Intended to explore the extent and diversity of Blake's influence on twentieth-century writing, the seminar ranged in its papers and discussion from specific textual parallels between Blake and his "descendants" to the more general controversy between the view which sees Blake as a unique force on modern literature and that which contends that he is simply a part of the Romantic or visionary traditions re-emerging in our time. Indeed, the latter issue may become the focus of the 1974 Seminar on Blake and the Moderns.

Annette Levitt's introduction to the Seminar gave a sense of Blake's multifaceted appeal to modern writers, the variety of their responses to him, and, finally, the diversity of approaches adopted by critics in reaction to Blake and his twentieth-century followers. The panelists, speaking from their own critical stances, revealed richly the value of such explorations for an understanding of both Blake and modern literature.

Kay Parkhurst Eason, talking on "Books of Blakeends Jined: Towards a Sense of Structure in Blake and the 20th Century," offered a broad but detailed view of Blake's attacks on the limits of traditional structure in order to change the perceptions of his audience--and the ways in which such novelists as Joyce, Beckett, Woolf, and Nin pursue similar routes to achieve similar effects. The kinship between Blake and the modern novel was then narrowed in focus somewhat, as Barton Friedman, in "Rapes and Robbers: Preludic Myth and Narrative History in *America*, *Europe*, and *Nostramo*," developed Toynbee's view that myths grow out of cultural crises and in crucial respects shadow history; Friedman discussed the preludia to *America* and *Europe* and Conrad's "tale of the gringos" as each orders our reading of the main body of the work--and of history itself. Finally, to narrow and intensify the focus still further, Alicia Ostriker, speaking on "Blake, Ginsberg, and Madness," analyzed the role of the poet-prophet as shaman, by describing Blake's varied uses of "madness," ultimately seen as the poet's absorbing of the ills of society in order to cleanse it; she illustrated her view with close readings of Blake and Ginsberg, primarily from *The Four Zoas* and *Howl*.

The questions and discussion which followed centered on such issues as the role of Whitman and other American writers in continuing the Blake tradition, the need to study such poets as Robert Duncan as heirs of Blake, and the possible subsuming of Blake's influence on modern literature under the more general relationship among modern literature, Romanticism, and the visionary tradition. One felt--after more than two hours of stimulating talk--that still more could be said. Perhaps it will be, in 1974. (*Our thanks to Annette S. Levitt of Temple University for this item. Eds.*)

ERDMAN LECTURES

Several people have written to tell us of visits paid to their campuses in recent months by

David Erdman (State University of New York, Stony Brook), so in turn we wrote to him for a complete inventory. From December 1973 through March 1974 he tells us that he visited eleven campuses and gave sixteen talks. The talks were "Blake's *Milton*," "Blake's *Song of Los*," "Blake and the Burden of the Present," "Blake in and out of His Perishing Body," and "Coleridge as Concerned Spectator [i.e., as news commentator]," and "Wordsworth's *Prelude* as Ark." The talks were given in various combinations at the following places and times: Brown University (13 December), University of Minnesota and University of Alberta (16 January), University of Iowa (23-24 January), University of Chicago (28 January), University of Puget Sound (26 February), University of Oregon (27 February), University of California, Berkeley (1 March, 4 March), University of California, La Jolla (11 March), University of Southern California (13 March), Claremont Graduate School (14 March).

Uncut. Pages mended. Bound by the Hampstead Bindery (Gild of Women Binders). Explanation of the Engravings, reduced and inlaid, between the Advertisement and the title page of *Night the First*. Eleven pages watermarked. Title page measures 16.4 in. (41.8 cm.) x 12.5 in. (31.7 cm.).

- This copy lacks the engraved design for p. 24 [45E]. The text, however, is present.
- (1) Acquired by Lionel Phillips, a South African collector. He added his bookplate, dated 1905, inside front cover.
 - (2) Offered for sale August 1972 by Charles J. Sawyer, bookseller, of London, for £2500.
 - (3) Acquired by University of Alberta Library, February 1973. In Special Collections Room. f NC 1115 B6N6 1797.

(Our thanks to E. J. Rose of the University of Alberta for this item. Eds.)

NIGHT THOUGHTS

A previously unknown copy of the colored *Night Thoughts* engravings has been discovered. The copy will be included in a new census of the colored copies in the complete Clarendon Press edition of *William Blake's Designs for Young's Night Thoughts*, edited by John Grant, E. J. Rose, and Michael Tolley in association with David Erdman, with the first two volumes scheduled for publication in 1974. The newly discovered copy of the colored engravings was first brought to the attention of the editors by Robert N. Essick. A description follows:

Bound in crimson crushed Levant morocco, the covers gilt tooled with a quadruple line centre panel at the corners of which are inlaid a flower ornament of three blossoms in white vellum on a scrolled background of closely spaced gilt dots with a surround of birds in flight, panels of the spine inlaid with blue morocco tooled with flying birds on dotted background. Marbled end papers.

BLAKE IN VERACRUZ

On 31 July 1973 the University of Veracruz and the University of the Americas presented *El Matrimonio del Cielo y del Infierno*, adapted and directed by Guillermo Garza Balandrano.

GOLGONOOZA NEWS

For the past few months we have been on the mailing list of *News from Golgonooza*, published "semi-monthly" by "the Church of the Blake Recital," R.R. #1, Millfield, Ohio 45761 ("Fourfold London in Ohio"). The author of the *News* is Aethelred Eldridge: "Meat hoodwinked or any relic thing resembling sick-bed prayer / Could begin again with