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Temple University Blake Days

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NEWS

TEMPLE UNIVERSITY BLAKE DAYS

The Samuel Paley Library at Temple, in cooperation with the Department of English, College of Music, and School of Communications and Theater held a Blake Celebration from 18 February to 1 March 1974. An exhibit of Blake materials was arranged by the Library's Department of Special Collections. On 20 February Michael Horovitz, editor and publisher of *New Departures*, read from his poetry. On 22 February James G. Smith of the English Department at Temple gave an illustrated talk on "Blake's *Job*--the Art and the System." On 26 February Sheldon Brivic, Annette Levitt, and James G. Smith of the English Department gave readings from Blake's works, and on 27 February the same group joined by Richard Beckman and Jim Blackaby gave papers and led discussions on Blake. On 28 February students from the College of Music and the School of Communications and Theater performed Blake-inspired music and dance. And throughout the days of the Celebration Blake films and videotapes were shown.

BERKELEY BLAKE WEEKEND

"William Blake: A Celebration" was the theme of a weekend conference held 1-2 March 1974 at the Berkeley campus of the University of California under the auspices of the University of California Extension. Morton Paley, program coordinator, introduced the program, which included slides, films, and a series of lectures.

David Erdman, State University of New York at Stony Brook, presented the first lecture of the series, "The Burden of the Present," examining some of the contemporary political events that influenced Blake and other Romantic poets. He supplemented his lecture with a number of slides and offered an interpretation of some of the designs in *Milton*. His lecture was followed by the

presentation of three films, *The Vision of William Blake*, *Tyger, Tyger*, and *Holy Thursday*, which concluded the first day of the Celebration.

The Saturday morning session included lectures by Hazard Adams, University of California, Irvine, Robert Essick, California State University at Northridge, and Morris Eaves, University of New Mexico. With particular attention to a passage from *Europe*, Hazard Adams examined some of the influences on "Blake's Symbolism." Blake as etcher and engraver was the subject of lectures by Robert Essick and Morris Eaves. In "William Blake, Book Illustrator," Essick used slides to survey the development of Blake's commercial engraving style and to explore some of the relationships between Blake's work as a commercial engraver and as poet-painter. In a complementary lecture, "Blake versus the Printing Press," Eaves used microphotographs of engravings to explain Blake's rejection of ordinary means of printing and publishing in favor of "illuminated printing."

Anne K. Mellor, Stanford University, opened the Saturday afternoon session of the series with her lecture "The Major Paintings," using slides to show the iconography of Blake's paintings. Taking a cue from the phrase, "I was only making a fool of you" (*Island in the Moon*), Robert Gleckner, University of California, Riverside, speculated that there may be a good deal more humor in Blake's works than his readers are usually inclined to recognize. In "The Shorter Poems," Gleckner pointed to passages in the lyrics where Blake may be using "non-sense" on his readers. In the concluding lecture, "The Longer Poems," Morton D. Paley, University of California, Berkeley, showed slides of some of the plates of *Milton* and *Jerusalem* to illustrate his interpretation of the major designs in both poems.

In addition to the slides and films supplementing the lectures, there were a number of Blake's prints on display at two exhibitions on the Berkeley campus. Among forty Blake prints shown at the University Art Museum from 13 February through 17 March were some of the illustrations to the Book of Job, to Blair's *Grave*, and Young's