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# BLAKE

N E W S

## Blake on Exhibition in London

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## News.

### BLAKE DAY AT UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

"Blake Day" was held as part of the Graduate Colloquium for the Winter Term of 1972 at the University of Sussex. The Graduate School in Arts and Social Studies arranged four meetings for 27 October. Following a discussion of Blake with slides, led by David Bindman and Morton Paley, there were three lectures: "Blake's Early Poetry" by Michael Phillips, "Blake's Illustrations to Young's *Night Thoughts*" by Deirdre Toomey, and "Blake and Revolution" by Geoffrey Carnall. Bindman is a Lecturer in the History of Art at Westfield College, London; Paley an Associate Professor of English at the University of California, Berkeley; Phillips a Lecturer in English at the University of Edinburgh; Toomey a graduate student at the University of London; and Carnall a Reader in English at the University of Edinburgh.

### BLAKE COURSE AT UCLA EXTENSION

The Department of Arts and Humanities of the UCLA Extension, in cooperation with KPFK Pacifica, is presenting *William Blake: Poet, Painter, Visionary*, a series of four lectures by Everett Frost. Frost is an Assistant Professor of English at California State University, Fresno, and Director of Literature and Drama for KPFK. The lectures will concentrate on Blake's works in illuminated printing, from the *Songs* to the shorter prophecies to *Milton* and *Jerusalem*, presented by means of slides and dramatic readings. The lectures will be held on four Monday evenings beginning 22 January 1973 in room 1200 of Rolfe Hall at UCLA. The series will cost \$25; the course taken for credit (which will include two additional sessions), \$40. If space permits, tickets for single lectures will be sold at the door. For further information call the office of UCLA Extension.

### THE MAKING OF THE MELLON CENTER AT YALE

In February 1972 Yale University unveiled the architect's model and plans for construction of the new building for the Paul Mellon Center for British Art and British Studies, which will house the Mellon collections of British art and rare books that have been promised to the University.

The first story of the four-story structure designed by Louis I. Kahn will be given over mostly to commercial use. The upper three stories will include extensive public exhibition space for paintings, watercolors, and drawings; a rare book library of about 30,000 volumes; a print room housing about 20,000 drawings and prints; a research library of about 10,000 volumes with a reading room

and a photographic archive; a lecture room seating 200 people; a conservation laboratory for paper; and various seminar rooms, offices, work areas, a lunchroom and a photographic studio. The Center will be located across the street from the Yale Art Gallery, also designed by Kahn and constructed twenty years ago.

Professor Jules D. Prown, art historian on the Yale faculty, was appointed the Center's director in 1968 and has been supervising the architectural designs and the plans for the educational and cultural programs. The academic program recommended for the Center by the committee that planned it seeks "to unify various disciplines now usually segmented into departments of study. . . . We would hope to bring together a group of scholars whose interest in British art, from various points of view, would lead to a cross-fertilization of minds. Such a program, for example, would have particular value for scholars trained in the fields of literature and history who wish to broaden their knowledge through a period of study in the field of British art." Consequently, the committee has called for the establishment of a professorship in British art and a new undergraduate major in British Studies. Under study is a program of fellowships and grants-in-aid for visiting scholars, including funds for one or two distinguished scholars, several young scholars working on post-doctoral projects, and a number of grants-in-aid for short-term visitors. Henry Berg, Assistant Director of the Center, says that the future program is still under discussion, and that "the main thrust of the Center will be to combine the study and enjoyment of the works of art and rare books in Mr. Mellon's collection with the pursuit of studies in related non-art-historical fields. We hope the Center will be an interdisciplinary one, weaving together literature, history, art and other fields of interest in a new way."

### BLAKE ON EXHIBITION

*The Age of Neo-Classicism*, the fourteenth Exhibition of the Council of Europe that was held in London from 9 September to 19 November 1972, included eight pictures by Blake, as compared to twenty-two items by Flaxman besides sculpture, thirteen by Fuseli, and ten by Romney. Here was an opportunity to show some seldom-seen Blakes, such as the Arlington Court picture, but the organizers of this part of the Exhibition seem to have had trouble getting out of London. Seven of the Blakes were loaned by the British Museum, one by the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. And one of the eight, "Letho Similis," is almost certainly not by Blake. The catalogue notes that the authorship "has been disputed" but "was accepted as Blake's work by Binyon." It would be interesting to know whether any reputable scholar would agree today, and even more interesting to learn why this undistinguished drawing of disputed origin was selected at all. The catalogue entries, numbers 506-513 (pp. 310-14), add nothing to the existing literature on these pictures. "Male Nude" and "The Judgment of Paris" are reproduced as plates 91 and 92. It is a pity that in an exhibition of

such great scope and magnitude Blake could not have been represented more intelligently. Paradoxically, visitors to the British Council exhibition in Paris (see *Blake Newsletter* 19, p. 163) saw a far more interesting selection of Blake pictures. Though there were only twelve, they were chosen from nine different collections and represented a much more characteristic range of Blake's art.

*Original Printmaking in Britain, 1600-1900* was held 2 November-1 December 1972 at P. and D. Colnaghi and Co. The Blakes, with their prices, were

- No. 108 *Job*, pl. ix (3rd state of 3, Binyon 114), £240
- No. 111 "The Fly" from *Songs of Experience* (Binyon 219), £1,200
- No. 112 "Enoch" lithograph (Keynes 14), £5,000
- No. 127 "The Canterbury Pilgrims" (posthumous impression, 4th state of 5, Keynes 17), £120

This superb exhibition and fine catalogue included, with minor exceptions, only prints designed and executed by the same artist. The prices of numbers 111 and 112 are not typographical errors!--and all had been sold by the third day of the exhibition. "The Fly" is reproduced as plate xxv, "Enoch" as plate xxvii.

*The Art of Drawing* is the title of this winter's exhibition in the splendid new gallery of the British Museum's Department of Prints and Drawings. The show is magnificent, featuring both Oriental and Western material--an enormous Raphael cartoon and sketches by Leonardo among other things. There are two Blakes, "Jacob's Ladder" and a Dante illustration.

### 3 BLAKE WATERCOLORS NOW IN PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

According to Martin Butlin of the Tate Gallery, three Blake watercolors from the Esmond Morse collection have been given to British public collections by the Morse family. The Victoria and Albert Museum has received "The Angels hovering over the body of Jesus in the Sepulchre" and "The Angel rolling the stone from the Sepulchre," two of the Biblical subjects painted for Thomas Butts circa 1800-1805. Butlin remarks that "These are two of the best and most moving examples [of the Biblical subjects painted by Blake for Butts], very sensitive in their quiet emotion and delicate symmetry, and seem to form a group within the main group together with 'The Resurrection' in the Fogg Museum, 'The Magdelene at the sepulchre' belonging to the Mount Trust, and the two watercolors at the Tate Gallery, 'The Crucifixion' and 'The Entombment.' It is perhaps a pity that the new gifts cannot be seen together with the works at the Tate Gallery, but that is typical of the illogicalities of the London art scene!" The third gift, "And the Waters prevailed upon the Earth an hundred and fifty days," has gone to the Abbot Hall Art Gallery at Kendal in Westmorland. On the back, according to Butlin, is "a drawing of a humanoid elephant dangling an infant

on its foot which has sometimes been seen as a caricature of John Varley."

### TATE CLEANS "THE PENANCE OF JANE SHORE"

When the Tate Gallery cleaned its version of "The Penance of Jane Shore" recently, an old question about the picture was answered, and a new fact discovered. According to Martin Butlin of the Tate, the Jane Shore picture "was hitherto known as a varnished watercolor and there has been some debate as to whether the varnish was added by Blake himself, but in fact the varnish proved to have been applied in the mid-nineteenth century and cleaned off without difficulty. Underneath there is, however, a thin application of size which may well be Blake's own, added to enrich the tones of the watercolor beneath, as was common among other artists of the period. The original freshness of color can now be seen and the appearance of the watercolor has also been improved by re-framing."

### COPIES OF BLAKE LIFE MASK AVAILABLE

The American Blake Foundation is now taking orders for copies of the Deville life mask for which Blake sat in 1824. The copies are cast by hand in England. The price is \$50 plus \$6 shipping charges, and the delivery time is about six weeks. All orders must be accompanied by payment in full. Write the American Blake Foundation, Department of English, Illinois State University, Normal, Illinois 61761.

### WORKS IN PROGRESS

Mary V. Jackson (Assistant Professor, The City College of New York, CUNY): "I will indicate how Blake created by experimental changes in the representation of character and, more especially, of time and space, myth as a poetic device which gradually gave him another language through which he could express as well as fully understand complex and interdependent psychic processes and historical phenomena for which no adequate language existed."

Mary V. Jackson and Elaine Mozer Kauvar (The City College of New York, CUNY): "Major Trends in Blake Criticism from 1901 to 1971, A Bibliographical Essay."

Carolyn Wilkinson: "You Are What You Behold: A Study of the Narrative Structure of William Blake's *Jerusalem*," a Ph. D. dissertation directed by Victor Paananen at Michigan State University, concerning "the relation between the perceptions and actions of *Jerusalem*'s characters. It concludes with a study of the reader's perceptions of the entire action of *Jerusalem* as conditioned by the structural techniques of the narrator."

Joanne Witke: "The Empiricism of William Blake's *Metaphysics*," a Ph. D. dissertation directed by Morton Paley at the University of California, Berkeley.