

BLAKE NEWSLETTER

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BLAKE NEWSLETTER

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Morton D. Paley, Executive Editor
University of California, Berkeley

Morris Eaves, Managing Editor
University of New Mexico

Donald D. Ault, Associate Editor
University of California, Berkeley

Michael Phillips, Associate Editor
University of Edinburgh

MANUSCRIPTS are welcome. They should be typed and documented according to the forms recommended in the *MLA Style Sheet*, 2nd ed., rev. (1970). Send two copies with a stamped, self-addressed envelope either to Morton D. Paley, Executive Editor, *Blake Newsletter*, Department of English, University of California, Berkeley, California 94720, or to Morris Eaves, Managing Editor, *Blake Newsletter*, Department of English, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87106.

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Allen Ginsberg's "To Young or Old Listeners" is reprinted with the kind permission of the author from Allen Ginsberg/William Blake: "Songs of Innocence and Experience" by William Blake, tuned by Allen Ginsberg, MGM "Verve" FTS-3083, a stereo recording.

The cover reproduces number 257 in Blake's series of water-colors for Edward Young's *Night Thoughts*. Reproduced by permission of the Trustees of the British Museum.

NEWS AND WORKS IN PROGRESS

DOUBLEDAY TO PUBLISH NEW FACSIMILE

From David Erdman:

Doubleday has signed me to prepare a large Anchor paperback to contain all Blake's Illuminated Works in monochromatic facsimile (plus the Job illustrations), with brief descriptive commentary on each plate. The aim is a price under ten dollars, for a working handbook. But the photography is to be of the best, and although each work will be reproduced in a single color, the plan calls for using as many as five different Blakean colors for the different works. Trim size will be 7 1/8 x 10 1/4 inches; 352 pages. Nearly all the reproductions will be in exact size, with the smaller pictures sometimes doubled up two or more on a page. There will probably be a very slight reduction of the largest plates, *America . . . Jerusalem*.

The idea of trying to say what is going on in each illumination is, I realize, a mad one, and I know I'll need help. Suggestions about baffling details or whole pictures will be welcome. I shall also welcome ideas as to which copies of particular works will reproduce best in one color. And if anyone has a superb set of photographs of any Illuminated Work, that could be borrowed, I shall be happy to be apprised.

Target date: spring (or fall) 1972 publication.

Reward for the best title suggestion. "Blake's Illuminated Works Entire"?--"The Canon of &c &c"--"All In One . . ."? Hard to find the right words.

A VIDEOTAPE OF AMERICA PRODUCED AT YORK UNIVERSITY

Janet Warner, John Sutherland, and Robert Wallace collaborated on a one-hour videotape called *Blake's "America,"* which was made in October, 1970 at the television studio of York University. We wrote Mrs. Warner to find out more about the history, the nature, and the availability of the tape, and this is her reply:

The tape was very much a joint effort of John Sutherland and myself, who wrote the script, and Robert Wallace, my colleague at Glendon, who produced it. We wanted a program suitable for senior students, that is, those who were already acquainted with Blake's work, which would allow them to see all the plates of *America*, hear the whole poem read dramatically, and at the same time interpret the poem for them in a way that would link it to past and present historical events.

To this end, we obtained photographs of the black and white *America* in the Rosenwald Collection, and we used slides and photographs of many other works of art, including some by Blake, and many by early American painters. We also used pictures of modern student riots and other political events which bore out the themes of political

and psychological revolution.

The poem was read by Michael Gregory, our department chairman at Glendon, who is also an experienced actor; his voice and that of another narrator were heard always off camera. We used no "live" actors. Suitable music and sound effects were employed throughout to add emphasis and interpretation. The music consisted mainly of snatches of Charles Ives' "America Variations," while the sound effects concentrated upon both natural sounds (such as wind, thunder) and sounds of war and revolution (air raid sirens, machine gun warfare, bugle calls).

Most of our problems during production arose from our limited budget and the fact that York's television studio does not have a camera with a special close-up lens, which would have facilitated close examination of the plates and photographs. Consequently, because we could not afford to have all the graphics blown up to a suitably large size, some visual effects could not be maintained for every plate.

In addition, copyright stipulations covering both music and some photographs inhibited their expanded integration into the tape. Various other problems inherent to the process of adapting to a visual and rhythmic medium could only be discussed properly in a more academic paper, which, incidentally, Mr. Wallace is considering writing.

In general, we feel the tape was an artistic success and it has been well received at York, Glendon (a separate campus) and Colby College, Maine. In fact, it is likely we will receive money to do a second production on *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*.

Regarding distribution rights and costs, any institutions interested in *renting* a copy of the tape can do so by supplying their own videotape to York, which will transfer the production for a fee of \$75, with the stipulation that the transfer be erased after it is shown. Should enough institutions be interested in *buying* a copy of the tape, York would have it transferred to film, which could then be bought for approximately \$200.

It is interesting to find how suitable Blake's work is for adapting to television. We would be interested to hear if others have tried similar experiments.

BLAKE AT THE THOMAS GRAY CONFERENCE

A conference on "Thomas Gray and the Humanist Tradition" will be convened by James Downey at Carleton University in Ottawa, 18-20 May 1971. The brochure announcing the conference displays a detail from Blake's fifth illustration to Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" (illustrating the line "Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield"), and the conference program includes at least one paper on Blake and Gray: "Gray and Blake and the Human Design" by Ben Jones, Chairman of the Department of English at Carleton. Others scheduled to participate in the conference are Jean Hagstrum, Eli Mandel, Roger Lonsdale, Donald Greene, Donald Davie, Kenneth MacLean, Arthur Johnston, George Whalley, Alastair Macdonald, Ian Jack, and Louis Kampf.

From Michael Phillips, our Associate Editor at the University of Edinburgh:

For students of Blake perhaps the most significant event of interest in some years will be the Blake Exhibition due to open shortly at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. The Keeper of Paintings and Drawings, Mr. M. Cormack, has kindly written the following note with regard to the Exhibition and in particular the Exhibition Catalogue:

The exhibition is provisionally due to open on January 9th, but this may be changed. The paperback edition of the catalogue will be on sale *only* at the Museum, price £1 and a hard cover edition will be published by W. Heffer & Sons Ltd., Trinity Street, Cambridge and be available from all booksellers, price £3. The catalogue will comprise 96 pages of text including a supplement of the proposed bequest by Sir Geoffrey Keynes plus 74 illustrations on 44 pages of plates, and a coloured frontispiece. This should be available at the same time as the exhibition.

A review of the Fitzwilliam exhibition will appear in a forthcoming number of the *News-letter*.

On Sunday, 15 November 1970, at 8:00 p.m. Jack Lindsay presented at the Mermaid Theatre, London, an evening entitled "William Blake And Our World." Sir Bernard Miles and Josephine Wilson gave readings from Blake's works to complement Mr. Lindsay's discussion. The following note by Mr. Lindsay gives some suggestion of the evening's presentation:

William Blake, born in 1757 to a London hosier, early turned to art, and made his living as artist and engraver. But he was opposed to the dominant art-forms of his world and sought to express an imaginative vision, which he carried over into his poetry. He matured in the later 1780's as the French Revolution was breaking out, and found his inspiration in the conviction of vast changes going on which would culminate in a Last Judgement, or total reversal of things. He began a semi-allegoric epic on the French Revolution, of which a part got into proofs; but the extremely repressive situation of the 1790's led him to print his own poems with his designs by an etching process. He was thus led into a "prophetic" method in which he felt he could express the human situation at multiple levels, in its full inter-connections. His work ranged from lyrics of unparalleled intensity and simplicity, to the highly complex Prophetic Books. Disregarded in his own age, taken up to some extent by Rossetti and Swinburne, he began to come into his own with the turn of the century; and now, because of his utterly uncompromising spirit, is one of the few "great poets" of the past who maintains a direct and powerful impact on the young people of today in their various revolts and in their attempts to create their own art and poetry.

The rapidly increasing interest in Blake in Britain is further suggested by a new play by David Hare, "What Happened to Blake," recently performed at the Royal Court Theatre, London, and the poet Adrian Mitchell's play, "Tyger, Tyger," which has been announced for future production at the National Theatre.

In the *Times*, Tuesday, 10 November 1970, was a pen and pencil drawing by Henry Fuseli which apparently was at one time in Blake's possession. The drawing, which was to be sold at auction at Christie's on Tuesday, 17 November, was described as follows:

David and Goliath, by Henry Fuseli, R. A., bears Blake's initials and date 1779, pencil, pen and grey ink, grey wash, on Whatman paper dated 1794, 10 3/4 in. by 6 1/2 in.

Kathleen Raine's *William Blake* has been recently published by Thames and Hudson for their "World of Art Library" and contains 156 illustrations, 28 in colour.

MORE BRITISH BLAKE NOTES

From G. E. Bentley, Jr.:

Prophecy in England is not dead, according to the following notice seen recently in a London taxi:

CRIME AND BANDITRY, DISTRESS OF NATIONS, AND PERPLEXITY will continue to increase until the Bishops open Joanna Southcott's Box of Sealed Writings.

The notice is sponsored by The Panacea Society (Bedford, England) which was founded (according to their brochures) about 1916 to broadcast the ideas of "Eight Modern Prophets," the first two of whom are Richard Brothers and Joanna Southcott. (She is said to have died "of grief, because the Child disappeared at the birth," because it was only "the birth of the Child's etheric body.") They are also fostering "The 'Whosoever' Religion," "The Last Religion for the Last Times," based upon Joel 2.32: "Who-soever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered."

Christie's sold on 17 November 1970 a number of "Blake" works, including one (no. 140) called "Portrait of a man, said to be William Blake," by G. Harlow, which had previously been sold at Sotheby's on 29 July 1925, lot 147 (see *Blake Records* [1969], p. 223), but I am told by those who have seen it that it had no evident connection with either Blake or Harlow. There was also in the sale a counterproof of the Visionary Head of Queen Eleanor (no. 30) and a Blake drawing of what may be Saul and David (no. 29).

Sotheby's sold on 17 December 1970 *Urizen* [pl. 3] (no. 14) about the genuineness of which there is some difference of opinion.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

The Golden Chain / Lyrical Poems 1964-1969 by Peter Russell. Venice, 1970. 48 pp. \$5. Although it is not our practice to review contemporary poetry in the *Blake Newsletter*, Peter Russell's book should be noted as being of unusual interest to our readers because of the impact of Blake on some of the poems published here. The title poem has as its epigraph five lines from the Fairy's speech in the introductory lines to *Europe*; a section called "Manuela's Poems" is arranged in nine short "Nights" and is also evidently indebted to Blake's idea of the Emanation. The book, published privately by the

author, may be obtained from him at Castello 3611 / 30122 Venice / Italy. (Among Mr. Russell's works in preparation is *Paysages Légendaires*, Enitharmon Press, London).

The Golgonooza Organ #1 by Aethelred Eldridge. R. R. #1, Millfield, Ohio, 1970. 16 pp. + 2 inserts. "Published . . . no fewer than four times during the liminary course that makes of substance by the use of birdlime an adhesive year. . . . Five dollars divested brings, in so many words, The deterged ear out of Golgonooza."

As Mr. Eldridge kindly invites us to quote from the pamphlet, we reproduce below the opening of *Golgonooza Organ*:

GOLGONOOZA ORGAN

Drilling, no eye hath prepared this thing; no heart in learning
Hath drily inclined; no hands hath taken up the measure of
The doing — and none but new creatures need apply.

Citizenry-citizens of Golgonooza, Spiritual Fourfold London!
Latchet string espousers round the shaly walls of Blake's
Betrothal! Bowlahoola surrounds us: the law stercorous. I vie
Reduced within the time it takes a single archer kneeled to
Strike through generations along the worm of Merlin. I am the
Utmost droning phonetic hid by the space of a Fooi's uncertain
Days; and hid in lengthening night's conjecture over mis-read
Jars. There is no new dust in which sinners may perform. Nor
Blindly shall the sentry when the tree shall be uprooted fall
To American heroes.

People obtaining discomfiture from air beneath their hats
Have pointed me out. You! And yours; by courtesy of bodily
Sickened eye appalled by one so lustrous small of flesh.
How in woven jaws of periled, hardening cradle grass the cock
Holds back the rose of fecund breathing clods; in this, blending
Attar of brass to rose and patina of place, I anticipate you in
Whom the wake of presumed men confuses historicity with tarnish
On the dawn. And, I have gone hovered in resplendents off the
True circulating men, further, by the flour of northern altering
Light.

Assyriologue, lard faded thaumaturgist, works his white, exquisite
Dot everywhere. Gods and dwellings, goddesses, art built unpolished
Of the noble, life exerting ilk; stamped, as it might appear, by
Wearied intellect from building downward driven daughters; whose
Doors are unbolted by sensories recruited, brooded by the best
Wild-parrot, clanish cog advisement.

Draw near, last mentioned Londoners. First, the voice filled human
Whirlpool; then, the crack of some immense contrivance falling; then,
Surrounded features silenced on the Man resuming; then, three lines
Are lopped, pregnate stem solidities, sub teeming very-molecules.
Then, tears wiped, delight repeats in limbs that follow out beyond
The reach within the riven skull.

The bitter thing that loveth thee is dumbness beckoning all blades,
Straining the capaciousness of the beetle within the blade that
Wanders as it bends. Mothers are filling with oil; the doing of
The heart's repose on gentle, silent teeth.

As for the stunt of weakened goddesses, since when has poetry,
Since once it was revealed, or shone, brought barbed the child's
Swift diffusion? Or brought evoked upon a quantity of food
The loudness of the rose mid-drifted, rarefied within the dragon?
Nor has it been made visible that latitudes of consciousness,
Inept around the heart spelled forth, are edible.

A warning: No god, of those remains shown on the dagger turning
Simple wrath within the worm, should be sniffed from the flint.

Funerary table past acquaintance is no cause for parsimony's
Being held the helpmeet turning hawk in blue and ripening
Fruit that boundaries the sun. Send miners. Yourself to send,
Digging in the groin of a moth, is, by solemn, yellowed, nibbled
Feast of day, needless. To a canary's poppy laboured sleep of
Wandered field belongs the thick, aurific sag of elephant costiveness.

Risk not in me, teetotum teaspoon pictograph, your toxic body
Snatch technique; about which dew-knit gripping clothes are bound.
Excepting Anglicized exempting paraphrasts revolving wax in sound,
The pathetic human dragon is a pig impersonating loins tripartite.
And further, is a prodigal of gaggles, and a brooder to a poke of
Hens— excepting naked beauty on the Angle who solitary synonymic
Translates rustling into solar second joyous gear.

Hear Ye, Londoners! The groan that voices abscess, death, and the
Transport of angels as the carriage of germs is a breach of
Etiquette.

Puissant in the crouch of one demeanor was the word that walked
In likeness of a Man. Send the sped speed dorsal waters of His
Word, imbricated safe corrosive, to the raven's tedium tor. Unstruggle
Mountain maladjustments from the sister epicene retreat. Tedium.
Tedium, tedium. We praise Thee scattered, O remotely middled God.
Te Deum. Te Deum grass remembered men re-told. Te fibered Deum
Cherished victim. Invincible Te levelled laboured Deum.

SOTHEBY'S: COPY C OF THE [FIRST] BOOK OF URIZEN

From *Sotheby's Catalogue / of / Valuable Printed Books / and / a Few Manuscripts / from the renowned Library / Formerly at Britwell Court / Burnham, Bucks / The Property of the Trustees of the Late S. R. Christie-Miller, Esq.:*

First Day

16

Monday, 29th March, 1971

35 Blake (William) *The First Book of Urizen*, 25 plates on 25 unwatermarked

leaves (of 28--without plates 7, 8 and 16), PRINTED IN BRILLIANT COLOURS with thick opaque pigments and finished in places with watercolour washes, the text printed in sepia (first 2 plates) and green, brown morocco gilt, g.e., by Francis Bedford, the Gaisford copy (sale in our rooms 23 April 1890, lot 191)
4to (303 mm by 240 mm) Lambeth, printed by Will. Blake, 1794

**Copy C in Keynes & Wolf's census (*William Blake's Illuminated Books*, New York, 1953), where seven copies (and two fragments) are recorded: of these only two are complete, this being the only other copy which contains plate 4 ("Muster around the bleak desarts . . .").

The word "First" appears in the title, Preludium, and in the colophon; the lines "The web is a female in embryo . . ." (plate 25) and "All the seven deadly sins of the soul" (plate 4) are not erased.

Bound in after the title-page is another impression of plate 2 (Preludium), with the words "Preludium to the first book of" painted out, and with a painted border surrounding the figures added by Blake, who has also delicately heightened the figures with pen and brush; this plate is on different paper and is inlaid to size.

[See Colour Plate]

The colour plate referred to is a handsome full-page reproduction of the picture of the crouching Urizen which is plate 4 in the Trianon Press facsimile (of the Rosenwald copy).

Our thanks to Professor James Hart, Director of the Bancroft Library, for bringing this item to our attention.

PIERRE BOUTANG'S WILLIAM BLAKE

Professor André Le Vot of the Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines, Université de Paris, sends us two newspaper articles concerning a new French translation and commentary on Blake by Pierre Boutang. We reprint them in full, with thanks to Prof. Lee Johnson of the University of New Mexico for his translations:

[*Le Monde*, 20 November 1970, p. 17]

Between Holderlin and Nietzsche

*William Blake, by Pierre Boutang**

At the same time a commentary, a text, and a translation of the work of William Blake, Pierre Boutang's book will rapidly become an indispensable work with regard to its principal subject, stimulating in its explications, even provoking, because the manner of the author is so incisive and controversial.

Besides his uncommon qualities as a writer, there is the added interest of Boutang's reflection on the diverse philosophical, religious, and literary ideas which

are expounded and discussed in his book--in particular those of Nietzsche and Heidegger. This book, which without a doubt opens up a wider road to future studies, will finally permit the French reader to approach the incandescent core of works that he knows only partially or defectively.

What has kept us separated from Blake until now is of course the habitual obstacle of translation, and as little as one regrets Gide's readings of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, and earlier, Denis Saurat's, they remain only approximate. Every difficulty inherent in translation is found aggravated in the case of Blake because the slightest weakness causes irreparable damage. Where one should find only fulgurations, spells, and splendors, there no longer remains the ashes of a poetry that has consumed itself: whereas precisely this consummation is the primary event in the poetry and vision of Blake.

Boutang has surmounted this original difficulty. He has translated a great number of long passages, especially from the "Prophetic Books," and he has then presented himself as the commentator on and the critic of his own translation. He becomes for the reader the "actor" of Blake. His French text is presented before the English text, and the double reading leads us to the heart of the infernal mechanism of the Word by which the work consumes itself.

William Blake is doubtless not only the greatest but the closest to us of those who have exercised the supreme poetic power to the single end of answering the first question, that of our existence in a fallen world, our own. Beyond this well of flames, of which Boutang's book is the scholarly and intrepid discoverer, the frequently-evoked myth of Urizen presents us with the culprit for all the metamorphoses of man.

The demiurge Urizen had for his task the creation of the Universe ("This abominable void, this vacancy before which the soul trembles," writes the poet). This world invented by Urizen, tomorrow the domain of man, is formed by a brutal separation from the Divine, from the "Eternals" who are one and indivisible. The creation of the Universe by Urizen is actually a de-creation: it carries with it the mark of destruction and death. And what follows is the coming of "Time," by which man is forever separated from the "Eternals."

The grand design of Blake, Christian but contemptuous of all natural religion, is to try to imagine the redemption of Time, which holds us in a fallen world, outside the eternal and salvation. "Man," writes P. Boutang, "must be transcended for Blake as for Nietzsche: his reason, and what his reason has accomplished, must be surpassed without abolishing his piety. . . . It is Holderlin the poet and Heidegger the philosopher who in piety come closest to Blake."

Written on Blake, this book finally departs from Blake. By means of Blake's exemplary work the book describes and prefigures the adventure of man in a world of cruelty and violence, the violence that already announces the decomposition of modern society.

I should add that the volume ends with the facsimile (engravings and texts) of *The Gates of Paradise* (1793). Blake, as we know, engraved his own works, which he printed and bound with the help of his wife Kate.

André Dalmas

*L'Herne, 1970. In the series *Essais et philosophie*, 316 pages, 33 F. In English the most pertinent and suggestive study seems to be that of Max Plowman: *An Introduction to the Study of Blake* (one volume, Dent, London, 1927).

[*Le Monde*, 19 February 1971, p. 15]

About William Blake

Following the article by André Dalmas on the *William Blake* of Pierre Boutang (cf. "The World of Books," for 20 November 1970), we received this letter from M. Pierre Leyris:

The high praise that your newspaper has awarded Pierre Boutang's *William Blake* calls for certain remarks.

M. Boutang has nothing but sarcasms for earlier translators. He laughs out loud at Madeleine Cazamian and at Gide. But while Gide renders superbly the proverb "Damn Braces, Bless relaxes" by "Malédiction tonifie, bénédiction lénifie," Boutang has nothing better to offer us than "Qui te maudit te redresse, qui te bénit te ramollit." If I had several pages instead of several lines at my disposal, I would show that each line of his version of "The Tyger" is faded, awkward, ruined. Under the title (false) of "Eternity" M. Boutang quotes:

Abstinence sows sand all over
The ruddy limbs and flaming hair
But desire gratified
Plants fruits of life and beauty there.

which would be:

L'abstinence sème partout du sable
Sur les membres vermeils et les cheveux en flammes,
Mais le désir comblé
Y implante des fruits de vie et de beauté.

Reading "air" instead of "hair" and not seeing that "over" links the first two lines, M. Boutang (for whom "abstinence" and "chastity" are the same) writes:

Partout la chasteté sème le sable
Les membres rougis vont enflammer l'air
Mais le désir quand il peut s'accomplir
Y plante les arbres de beauté et de vie.

Then he uses this lucubration to accuse Blake of an "unbridled libido, never quite under control." In Boutang's eyes, whoever claims to believe that love should have no restraint but charity is being satirical. Moreover, Boutang comes back to this accusation in speaking completely out of context about "the old erotic obsessions" when Blake makes a sinner (according to the world) of the mother of Jesus in order to identify in her, and in Jesus through her, a plentitude of humanity.

Naturally M. Boutang makes nearly invisible the pro-revolutionary Blake, the friend of Paine, who wears a Phrygian cap in the streets of London. On the contrary he makes him a chauvinist, and calls "warlike" and "nationalistic" a song as purely eschatological as that which ends with:

Je ne ferai pas trêve au Combat spirituel
Et mon épée ne dormira pas dans ma main
Tant que nous n'aurons pas construit Jérusalem
Sur la verte et riante terre d'Angleterre.
[the last stanza of the song from the Preface to *Milton*]

But for Blake the history of the Jewish people and the history of Albion are one! When he sees on the English meadow the lamb of ancient days and the tower of the future Jerusalem, he is no more "nationalistic" than the Provencaux who wish that the Three Marys had stepped ashore at Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer!

Let us console ourselves for a book that so constantly betrays the letter and the spirit of Blake by re-reading the excellent *William Blake* of Francis Léaud (Armand Colin, 1968).

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Kremen, Kathryn R.: a book, "The Imagination of the Resurrection: The Poetic Continuity and Conversion of a Religious Motif in Donne, Blake, and Yeats," which will be the revision of a dissertation (Brandeis, May 1970) that "studies how the resurrection motif begins as a religious doctrine--a revelation of God's mercy--and becomes a possession of the romantic poets (especially Blake)--a recreation of the imagination." Article on two of Blake's illustrations to the Bible, "Ezekiel's Vision" and "The Woman Taken in Adultery"--how they "portray Blake's religious vision and how they illuminate Blake's reading of the Biblical text and our reading of Blake."

Paananen, Victor N. (Michigan State Univ.): the *William Blake* volume for the Twayne Series.

"A CHECKLIST OF BLAKE SCHOLARSHIP/JUNE 1969-SEPTEMBER 1970": ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS

The following list is divided into the categories used in the most recent Checklist (*Blake Newsletter*, 4 [Fall 1970], 51-59).

BOOKS

Blake, William. *Bureiku no tegami [Blake's Letters]*, trans. Narumi Umetsu. Tokyo: Yashio Shuppan-sha, 1970. [Translations of 140 letters by Blake and a chronological history of his life.]

Boutang, Pierre. *William Blake*. L'Herne, 1970. [See the *NEWS* in this issue of the *Newsletter* for some French opinions of Boutang's book.]

Léaud, Francis. *William Blake*. Armand Colin, 1968.

ARTICLES

Allentuck, Marcia. [Publishing a letter written in the late nineteenth century by John

Linnell, Jr., telling his correspondent about the first meeting between Linnell's father and Blake], *Blake Studies*, 2 (Spring 1970), 66-67.

Geisler, Bruce L. "Concept of Forgiveness in Blake's *Gates of Paradise* and Major Prophetic Poems: The Predicament of a Protestant Mystic in the Context of the Romantic Revolt," *Insight* (University of Notre Dame, Kyoto), no. 2 (May 1970), 16-35.

Haya, Ken-ichi. "The Image of a True 'God': A Note on William Blake," *Oberon*, 12 (March 1970), 15-19 [in Japanese].

Ikegaya, Toshiro. "Blake's Illuminated Books," *Jissen Bungaku* (Jissen Women's College, Tokyo), no. 38 (December 1969), 66-74 [in Japanese].

Katsura, Fumiko. "Blake's Myth of the Creation: *The Book of Urizen*," *Outlook*, no. 13 (May 1970), 16-28 [in Japanese].

Matsushita, Senkichi. "The Revival of the Word 'Glee' meaning 'Joy' (or 'Song of Joy')-- (1) In Blake's *Songs of Innocence*," *Review of English Literature* (Kyoto University), 25 (March 1970), 45-72 [in Japanese].

Mitchell, W. J. T. "Poetic and Pictorial Imagination in Blake's *The Book of Urizen*," *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 3 (Fall 1969), 83-107.

Saito, Kuniji. "William Blake as a Poet and Painter," *The Meiji Gakuin Review* (Meiji Gakuin University, Tokyo), no. 155 (February 1970), 33-47 [in Japanese].

Stevenson, Warren. "'The Tyger' as Artefact," *Blake Studies*, 2 (Fall 1969), 5-19. [This is a correction. "'The Tyger' as Artefact" was wrongly attributed to W. H. Stevenson in the Checklist.]

FILMS AND TELEVISION

Blake's America (videotape, one hour). An interpretation by Janet Warner and John Sutherland, produced by Robert Wallace. Available through York University, Toronto (made October 1970). [For a description of this videotape, see *NEWS* in this issue of the *Newsletter*.]

Our thanks to Mr. Kenji Nakamura of the University of Osaka, Japan, for the items of Japanese Blake scholarship listed above.

NOTES

ROBERT ESSICK: SAN FERNANDO VALLEY STATE COLLEGE

The Blakes at UCLA

Several readers of the *Blake Newsletter* have asked me for more information on Blake's "Donald the Hammerer" [1] listed in my "Finding List of Reproductions of Blake's Art" (Part IV, page 9, published in the supplement to the May, 1970 issue of the *Newsletter*). This pencil and ink drawing measures 7.8 x 12 cm. on the inner bordering lines and currently hangs in a back room of the Department of Special Collections of the UCLA Library. The block lettering of the title below the border appears to be in the same brown watercolor used as a monochrome wash in the drawing itself.

Martin Butlin has very kindly given me some information on the history of "Donald the Hammerer." Two drawings with that title were sold from the Linnell collection at Christie's on 15 March 1918 (lot 167) where they were both bought by Parsons and subsequently offered for sale by Tregaskis in June, 1919. One of the drawings was in the George C. Smith, Jr. collection sold at Parke-Bernet on 2 November 1938 (lot 100). One version was sold by Rosenbach to Mrs. Landon K. Thorne, in whose collection Mr. Butlin saw it in 1966. The other version, now at UCLA, was given to the school by Miss Margaret Gage of Santa Monica, California in 1964.

The UCLA card-catalogue entry for "Donald the Hammerer" refers to the description in Gilchrist's *Life of Blake* that I noted in the Finding List:

1794. -- Design from the 'Europe' of a
Man at a Forge, with a Woman and Youth.
[Linnell.]

Carefully coloured.
(1880 ed., II, 209 no. 17)

The basic description fits, but the wash exhibits no unusual care in application and the design has nothing to do with *Europe*. Mr. Butlin suggests that Rossetti's catalogue entry actually refers to a separate color-printed copy of plate 21 of *The Book of Urizen* (Los, with Enitharmon and Orc) from the Linnell collection now in the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne. Indeed, it seems more likely for Rossetti to confuse two illuminated books than to write that a simple monochrome wash is "carefully coloured." Donald himself does suggest Los in the illuminated books, both because of the instruments of his trade and his posture. The hammer is much the same as the one held by Los in *The Book of Urizen*, plates 18 and 21. Morton Paley has recommended Los on the last plate of *Jerusalem* as perhaps the closest parallel in the illuminated books to Donald, particularly in the tilt of the head and twist of the body. Martin Butlin has further pointed out to me the basic stylistic similarities between "Donald the Hammerer" and what is quite possibly a companion piece entitled "Los Walking on the Mountains of Albion" (pencil, pen, and wash drawing, 11.1 x 7.6 cm.) sold at Parke-Bernet on 13 November 1968 (lot 16) and reproduced in the sale catalogue.

Yet in spite of the Los-like qualities, the composition taken as a whole strongly



1 "Donald the Hammerer." From the Department of Special Collections, The Library, University of California, Los Angeles.

suggests an illustration to some work of literature not by Blake himself. Unfortunately, after a good deal of searching I have been unable to discover just what work might be illustrated. The drawing technique, facial expressions, and bodily gestures have much in common with some of the designs for *Paradise Regained* and *Pilgrim's Progress*, although the coloring is far more vivid in these two series than in "Donald the Hammerer." Every motif in the drawing can be found in other works by Blake (compare for example the young woman's face with Mary's in the fourth design for *Paradise Regained*), but these common forms point more to basic motifs in Blake's pictorial vocabulary than to any thematic similarities between "The Hammerer" and other designs. I would appreciate hearing from anyone who can identify Donald and his two companions.

UCLA owns another drawing by Blake, a pencil sketch on a sheet measuring 27 x 21.2 cm. [2]. It corresponds closely to the following description in Gilchrist:

"In maiden meditation fancy free."
A slight pencil-drawing, with figures in



2 Drawing. From the Department of Special Collections, The Library, University of California, Los Angeles.



3 Drawing. From the Department of Special Collections, The Library, University of California, Los Angeles.

the air round a girl who is reading as she walks. Slight, and of a conventional tendency. The general feeling of the subject seems to be such as would be conveyed by the motto above suggested.
(1880 ed., II, 272-3 no. 183)

This is very likely a preliminary study for "Enoch" since the four large figures in the sketch correspond closely in their lineaments and arrangement to the hovering spirits in the lithograph (reproduced in Geoffrey Keynes, *Blake: The Separate Plates*, pl. 26). The small central figure does not appear in "Enoch," but a girl reading a book is certainly compatible with the youthful representations of Poetry, Painting, and Music in the print and may well be part of an early version of the finished design. On the back Blake has drawn two figures [3], apparently a version of the figures on the right of the main sketch with the open book replaced by a scroll, as in "Enoch." The note at the bottom of the sheet refers to the catalogue entry in the 1863 edition of Gilchrist, which is the same as that quoted above except for the added point that the sketch was owned by "Mr. Harvey." Mr. Butlin tells me that Harvey probably acquired it at the anonymous Frederick Tatham sale at Sotheby's on 29 April 1862 (lot 200 or 201). This drawing, like "Donald the Hammerer," was presented to UCLA in 1964 by Miss Gage. I have been unable to locate her for any further information she may have about these two small but interesting works.

I wish to thank Mr. Brooke Whiting of the Department of Special Collections of the UCLA Library for his kind assistance.

EDWARD J. ROSE: UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

The 1839-Wilkinson Edition of Blake's *Songs* in Transcendental America

Random speculation and general comparisons are to be found scattered through Blake criticism about certain affinities for Blake's views in the work of several American writers of the mid-nineteenth century. Nothing is said, however, of the specific fate of the first typographical edition of his *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* in America, that, in fact, two copies of this edition came to the attention of influential men and women of letters. It is important that Blake criticism take special note of this interesting literary phenomenon because of the possible direct influence of Blake's work on writers of the American Renaissance.¹ The Houghton Library of Harvard University has in its collection two copies of the *second issue* of the 1839 edition,² one owned by Ralph Waldo Emerson and another owned by Thomas Wentworth Higginson.

The edition is well described in Keynes' *Bibliography* where he quotes from the *Memoir of J. J. Garth Wilkinson* (London, 1911) to the effect that Charles Augustus Tulk lent Wilkinson "a copy of Blake's own making." Keynes corrects Gilchrist and Sampson by saying that Wilkinson did not adopt an arrangement of his own (p. 265), but followed the order in the Tulk copy. The Tulk copy is also listed in the *Bibliography* (pp. 121-22). It should be noted that "The School Boy" and "The Voice of the Ancient Bard" appear among the *Songs of Innocence*, but "The Little Girl Lost" and "The Little Girl Found" songs appear in the *Songs of Experience*. The copy that Tulk lent Wilkinson appears to be the same one that Coleridge examined. Whereas Coleridge saw Blake's own designs, Emerson and Higginson saw only the printed poems. Unlike Emerson, Higginson reveals a knowledge of Coleridge's opinions. Emerson does not comment on Wilkinson's introduction, but marks poems all of which are songs of experience.

Emerson's copy:

- p. 48: a penciled "X" at the beginning of the title of "A Little Boy Lost"
- p. 52: penciled brackets around "sweet" in the third line of "Ah! Sun-flower"
- p. 65: a light vertical pencil stroke in the right margin by the last two stanzas of "To Tirzah"

In Emerson's hand on the inside of the back cover (in pencil):

Tyger 46

Little Boy Lost 48

Sunflower 52

The last page reference is to "To Tirzah." Written in Emerson's hand on the recto side of the front end paper (flyleaf): "R. W. Emerson / from his friend / E.P.P." The initials are those of Elizabeth Palmer Peabody (1804-1894).

Elizabeth Peabody was associated in the 1830's with Bronson Alcott in his Temple School. Her home in Boston became the forum for Margaret Fuller's series of conversational classes from 1839-1844. During the 1830's and 1840's, the Symposium, also known as the "Transcendental Club," often met at Emerson's home in Concord, but it also met frequently in Elizabeth Peabody's bookshop, which was a kind of physical point of reference for the transcendental intellectuals in the Boston area. Like many of the other members of the Symposium,³ Elizabeth Peabody was a contributor to *The Dial*. She was also the sister-in-law of Hawthorne and Horace Mann. I think it is a safe assumption that Blake's *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* were well known by many members of the transcendental community through the 1839-Wilkinson edition with its biographical-critical preface which quotes Cunningham's hostile views of Blake and Wilkinson's partial attempt to argue those views.

Thomas Wentworth Higginson (1823-1911), twenty years younger than Emerson, grew to adulthood in the transcendental climate created by Emerson and his fellowship. He is not much younger than Thoreau or James Russell Lowell and was a student at Harvard shortly after they were. These were the years in which Emerson upset the statesmen and divines at the Divinity School and read to Phi Beta Kappa his intellectual declaration of independence, "The American Scholar." Higginson tells us inside his copy of the *Songs*, "I read these about 1842."

Higginson's copy:

Inside front cover: "T. W. Higginson." In pencil on end paper:

First pub. 1787 / 10 yrs. before Lyrical Ballads /

Lamb said in 1824 / 'only saw in Ms' /

Crabb Robinson read in 1812 to / Wordsworth who

thought them above / Byron or Scott /

Coleridge criticized in 1818 / (Corresp. II. 686) /

I read these about 1842

p. 56 (in pencil): "Coleridge disapproved" written above and to the left of the title of "The Little Girl Lost."

Higginson seems to have read Wilkinson's introduction, but he does not mark any of the poems besides "The Little Girl Lost." We can only speculate on how much of Blake was still meaningful to Higginson when Emily Dickinson asked him in 1862 to become her "self-appointed teacher." Her poems have often been compared to Blake's songs. Although she does not write about Blake, she may well have known his work through Higginson.

To Emerson in his most neglected and certainly most important late essay, "Poetry and Imagination," Blake was still "William Blake the painter":

He [man as poet] is the healthy, the wise, the fundamental, the manly man, seer of the secret; against all the appearance he sees and reports the truth,

namely that the soul generates matter. And poetry is the only verity,--the expression of a sound mind speaking after the ideal, and not after the apparent. As a power it is the perception of the symbolic character of things, and the treating them as representative: as a talent it is a magnetic tenaciousness of an image, and by the treatment demonstrating that this pigment of thought is as palpable and objective to the poet as is the ground on which he stands, or the walls of houses about him. And this power appears in Dante and Shakespeare. In some individuals this insight or second sight has an extraordinary reach which compels our wonder, as in Behmen, Swedenborg and William Blake the painter.

William Blake, whose abnormal genius, Wordsworth said, interested him more than the conversation of Scott and Byron, writes thus: [Emerson then quotes through secondary sources (if the spelling and punctuation are any clue) from Blake's comments on his painting of the Bard in the *Descriptive Catalogue* and the concluding passage from *A Vision of the Last Judgment*.]

Emerson clearly sees Blake in a sound context, especially for a nineteenth century writer with so different a disposition. It was a context, however, with which the younger Unitarian minister, Higginson, Elizabeth Peabody, Emily Dickinson, and much of intellectual New England were familiar. Painter or poet, Blake was a fellow visionary.

NOTES

¹It would be nice to believe that Barlow had come full circle, but alas *America* does not seem to come to America until much later. For Barlow, see David V. Erdman, *Blake: Prophet Against Empire*, 2nd ed. rev. (New York: Doubleday, 1969), p. 154 and elsewhere.

²This edition is no. 134 in the *Bibliography of William Blake*, ed. Geoffrey Keynes (New York: Grolier Club, 1921); the second issue is no. 135, from which "The Little Vagabond" song is missing. Although Deborah Dorfman discusses the Wilkinson edition, she never speaks of Emerson's ownership in her random remarks on Emerson and Whitman. She never mentions Higginson. See *Blake in the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1969).

³Members included Emerson, Alcott, F. H. Hedge, Thoreau, Hawthorne, J. F. Clarke, Margaret Fuller, the younger W. E. Channing, Theodore Parker, George Ripley, Orestes Brownson, Jones Very, W. H. Channing, Elizabeth Peabody, Christopher P. Cranch, and others. Cranch, another Unitarian minister, became a writer and illustrator of children's books. Cranch also did humorous illustrations for Emerson's essays.

MORTON D. PALEY: UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

Blakes at Buffalo

While teaching a seminar on *Jerusalem* in the Buffalo summer session of 1970, I became aware of five Blake pictures the whereabouts of which are virtually unknown to present-day students of Blake. Four of these are in the Lockwood Memorial Library of the State University of New York; one is in the Rare Book Department of the Buffalo and Erie County Library. As these pictures have been lost track of for at least several decades,

and as at least two of them have never been reproduced, it is appropriate to note their existence here.

I was first informed of the Lockwood Library Blakes by Mr. K. C. Gay, curator of the famous Poetry Collection there. No acquisition record could be found, but the pictures are described in *A Selection of Books and Manuscripts in the Lockwood Memorial Library of the University of Buffalo* (New York, 1935). At some undetermined time, the pictures were placed in the Library vault, where Mr. Gay came across them last year.¹ All four items had been sold at auction in New York by the American Art Association on 2-3 April 1928.² They were part of a collection owned by Emma W. Bucknell of Philadelphia, and they are described in the sale catalogue as follows:

[Fig. 1] Original Watercolor Drawing by Blake for "Europe, A Prophecy"

56. Blake (William). Original Watercolor Drawing of "Shot from the Heights of Enitharmon." Height: 6 1/2 inches; width: 6 1/2 inches. Framed between 2 sheets of glass. Circa: 1794.

This is the Final Illustration in Blake's "Europe, A Prophecy," Published in 1794. The drawing depicts a nude figure of a man carrying an inanimate woman on his shoulder and dragging a child by the arm; they are flying from a huge tongue of flame.

[Fig. 2] This drawing is tipped on to a sheet on the back of which is a pencil drawing of a discus thrower, and the name "Mrs. Gilchrist" is written in the right hand margin.

There is a slight variation in this drawing and the illustration in "Europe": the drawing depicts the man entirely nude, and the muscles of his body are clearly depicted, whereas in the illustration as published the muscles of the body are not shown, a cloth is draped across his loins, and the figure of the child is partially obscured by the flames.³

Important Blake Drawing

[Fig. 3] 57. Blake (William). Original Wash Drawing of a giant figure, seated on the ground, in a hunched position, head resting on knees, arms entwining legs and hands clasped at ankles; in the background is the blue sky; rocks to each side of figure; in the right hand margin is depicted a snake wending its way down the side of the rock. Height: 7 1/2 inches; length, 8 inches. Framed.

58. Blake (William) Beggar's Opera, Act III. "When My Hero in Court Appears & c." *Line engraving*. Painted by Will^m Hogarth. Engraved by Wm. Blake. Publish'd July 1, 1790 by J. & J. Boydell, Cheapside. . London. Height, 24; length 30 inches. In black frame.

The exceedingly rare first state of this engraving, with the following scratched below the plate, -- "Painted by Will^m Hogarth, 1729. Etch'd by Will^m Blake, 1788." No. 71 in A. G. B. Russell's *The Engravings of William Blake*.⁴

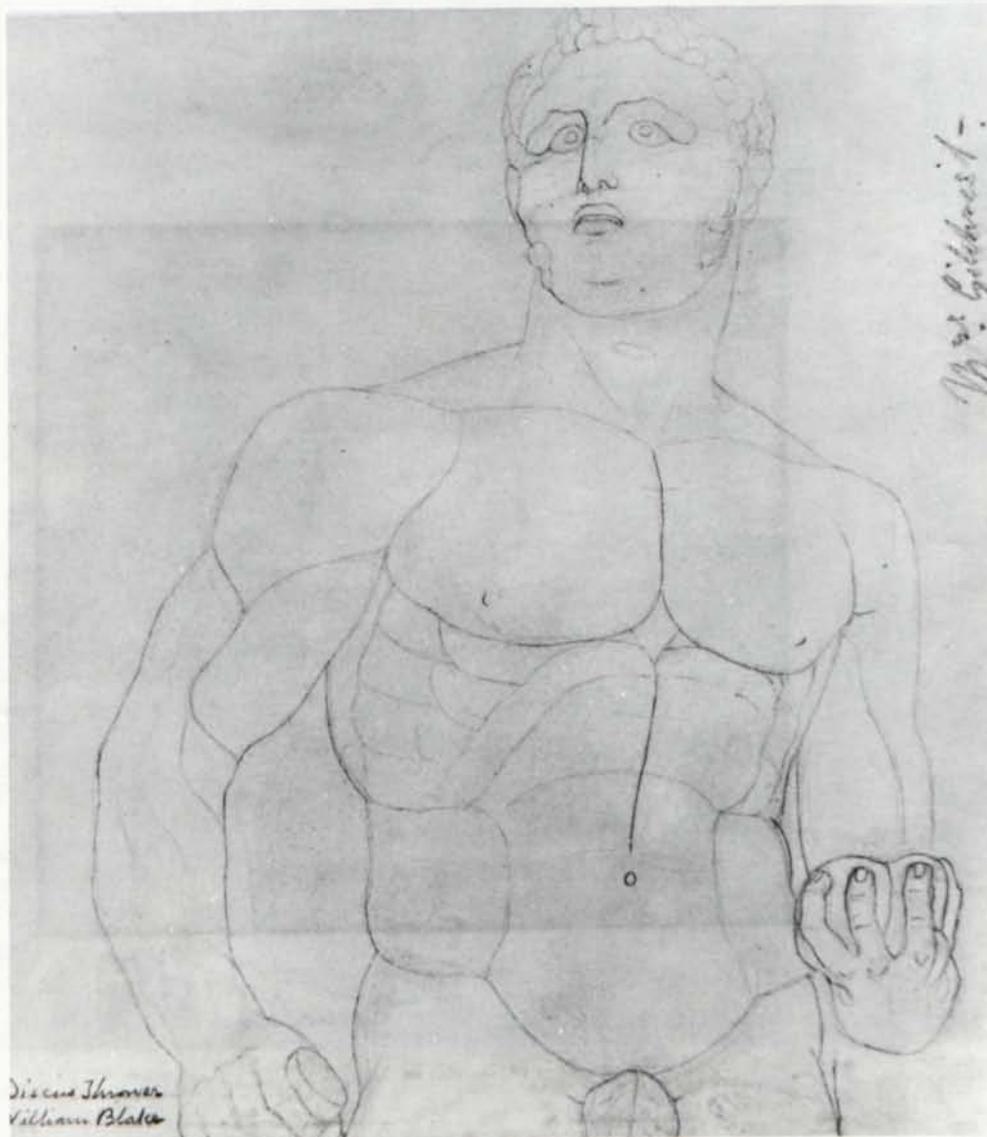
In the New York Public Library's copy of the auction catalogue, sale prices have been marked next to each item. If these figures are correct, number 56 brought the highest price in the Blake section, going for \$1,100. Number 57, the wash drawing,



1 Watercolor drawing for *Europe*. Published by permission of Lockwood Memorial Library, State University of New York at Buffalo.

sold for \$900; the *Beggar's Opera* engraving (in truly beautiful condition) brought \$525. Among the other items in the Bucknell collection, the most important was surely number 76, one of the two known pulls of the *Laocoön* engraving.⁵ It went for \$610. There was also one autograph letter, Blake to Linnell, 31 March 1826, "With portrait"; and there was a set of *Illustrations to the Book of Job* (#74, \$280), lacking the last plate. An example of *The Prologue and Characters of Chaucer's Pilgrims* ("London 1812. Not recorded in Keynes bibliog.") went for \$440. The rest of the collection consisted mainly of books illustrated by or otherwise associated with Blake. At least two of these may have been acquired by Thomas B. Lockwood and presented to the Library by him--Blair's *Grave* and Mary Wollstonecraft's *Original Stories from Real Life*; the Lockwood Memorial Library has a copy of each of these.

Several minor conundrums attach to numbers 56 and 57. Why did Blake tip the *Europe* drawing on to the back of an unrelated pencil drawing? For what purpose was the picture of the giant figure, too crude to be considered a finished work, intended?



2 Pencil drawing. Published by permission of Lockwood Memorial Library, State University of New York at Buffalo.

Solutions to these questions must await study of the pictures by a scholar expert in Blake's pictorial techniques, but a tentative hypothesis may be offered here. The pencil drawing is so crude as to be almost certainly one of Blake's early productions, as the Flaxmanesque linear quality also suggests. Perhaps it is a study from a plaster cast. In any event, the figure (as Mr. Ruthven Todd points out to me in correspondence) is less likely to be a discus thrower than a boxer holding a cestus, and the catalogue appears to be mistaken on this point, as was whoever wrote the pencilled inscription on the drawing. If this was a relatively valueless piece of early work, Blake may well have regarded it as expendable, and he may simply have used it as a mount to protect his later, highly finished *Europe* picture. As for the giant figure, he is recognizably a version of a very small figure in *America*, plate 1, lower left. Blake may have used cheap paper for this picture because he never intended it as a finished work: it could have been a study for the *America* figure or, alternatively, an experimental blowup preliminary to a possible finished design.

The Blake picture belonging to the Buffalo and Erie County Library is the illustration to the "Preludium" plate of *Europe* (plate 1). It was given to the Library by James Fraser Gluck, the benefactor who presented the manuscript of *Huckleberry Finn* to the same library. The picture is described in the *Descriptive Catalogue of the Gluck Collection of Manuscripts and Autographs in the Buffalo Public Library* (Buffalo, July 1899):

Original water-color, one of the designs made by the gifted, but eccentric, artist-poet to illustrate *Europe*, one of his so-called "prophetic" books published in Lambeth in 1794. The drawing represents a distorted, Caliban-like figure hiding behind a rock with a dagger in his uplifted hand ready to strike a young man who is approaching.

Miss Jane Van Arsdale, librarian of the rare book collection, tells me that for many years this picture was kept in the vault of the Albright-Knox Gallery in Buffalo, after having been loaned to the Gallery for an exhibition; it was only recently rediscovered and returned to the Library. Compared against the Trianon Press facsimile of *Europe*, the picture appears to be the same size as the corresponding portion of the top of plate 1. The coloration is different: foliage is colored yellow-brown rather than green, and some details of the foliage behind the Pilgrim figure do not appear in the Buffalo picture. However, the latter is in other respects very similar to the facsimile illustration, even in the configuration of shadows on the rocks. As in the case of the Lockwood picture from *Europe*, it is to be hoped that someone expert in Blake's pictorial techniques will study this picture in order to give us a more precise account of it.

NOTES

¹They now hang in the office of the Associate Librarian. In addition to Mr. Gay, I would like to thank Dr. Oscar Silverman and Professor Thomas Connolly for information about Thomas B. Lockwood and his collection.

²For which information I am grateful to Mr. Martin Butlin, Keeper of the British Collection at the Tate Gallery.

³This statement is puzzling. In the Trianon Press facsimile of *Europe*, the male figure is nude (this page is from copy B, the Cunliffe copy); in the Huntington Library copy he is nude; and in the proof plate in the Lessing J. Rosenwald collection, he is also nude (this last is reproduced in the Philadelphia Museum of Art's *William*

Blake 1757-1827/A Descriptive Catalogue of an Exhibition of the Works of William Blake Selected from Collections in the United States, 1939, facing p. 38. In the Keynes-Wolf Census, p. 79, this figure is described as "a nude man"

⁴*The Important Library of / PRESS BOOKS / LIBRARY SETS / FIRST EDITIONS / Formed by the late / Emma W. Bucknell . . . The catalogue cover does not mention Blake, but the title page includes "A Notable Collection of BLAKE ITEMS" and particular note is made of the Blake collection in the foreword. The Blake items take up pp. 10-16 of the catalogue; page 15 is a reproduction of the *Laocoön*. The Blake section is headed "Extremely Important Series of Blake Items Including Original Drawings / Numbers 56 to 85, Inclusive."*

⁵Presumably this could be the impression designated #2 by Sir Geoffrey Keynes in *Engravings by William Blake / The Separate Plates* (Dublin, 1956), p. 56. However, this example is described as "much damaged" (p. 57), and no damage is evident in the reproduction in the American Art Association catalogue (p. 15). It should perhaps also be noted that of the four examples of the first state of the *Beggar's Opera* engraving listed by Keynes (p. 73), none could be the Buffalo copy, as all four are accounted for elsewhere at some time between 1935 and the present.



3 Wash drawing. Published by permission of Lockwood Memorial Library, State University of New York at Buffalo.

REVIEWS

John Beer. *BLAKE'S VISIONARY UNIVERSE*. Manchester, England: Manchester University Press; New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1969. Pp. xiv + 394. 78 illus. 70s; \$11.50.

Reviewed by Irene H. Chayes, Silver Spring, Maryland

This book is the companion and continuation of *Blake's Humanism*, published just one year before; there are some overlappings, repetitions, and revisions, and some of the same difficulties, beginning with the present title. The words "vision" and "visionary" were used in the earlier volume, and in *Coleridge the Visionary* as well, with an evasive looseness that has not been remedied. Blake's "vision" here is not primarily, as some might expect, his creative imagination as a poet or an artist. Sometimes the word is a synonym for "fantasy," or it merges with the plural "visions" of anecdote, which Beer refers to but makes no attempt to examine critically. (The Ancient of Days above the staircase is invoked several times.) Often, "vision" seems to be no more than the quality inferred from a passage of lyrical affirmation or moral exhortation, the effect of Blake's poetic powers rather than the cause. In his more general remarks, Beer stays close to Blake's own language and juggles his terms, noun and adjective, in sentences which reach completion without yielding up a definition. When Blake is said to stress the "visionary element" of world myths, for example, he is seen arguing that "all alike were telling a common story of the decline of Man from original Vision" (p. 15). Later, following the account of *Jerusalem*, the word-play is carried to the subject of the whole study: "Blake had come to acknowledge that the most important point about his visionary universe was not that it was a universe but that it was visionary" (p. 263).

Unlike "vision" and "visionary" alone, however, "visionary universe" does have a practical equivalent in the specific discussions here. It is the not unfamiliar world of the prophetic books, "a symbolic and interpretative landscape," as Beer eventually calls it, whose traditional and mythological elements have been well investigated by Damon, Percival, Raine, and Hirst, as well as by lesser workers in the same vineyard. Beer has little to add to what is already known of Blake's background in these matters, and he does not fully develop the motifs he himself singles out for emphasis: "pathos" and "sublimity," the sceptre and crown, the shell, the "phallic lapse." Instead, and rather surprisingly, the contribution of his study turns out to be straightforward commentary, sustained over the three central chapters and covering both *The Four Zoas* and *Jerusalem*, book by book. Inevitably there are some misreadings and distortions of Blake's texts, balanced by felicities of observation and insight elsewhere; a literate new reader who previously had only glanced at the poems undoubtedly would gain enlightenment from Beer's commentary, and the acknowledgments in the Preface suggest that it is such a reader who is being addressed in the expository portions of the book. I leave a detailed critique of these chapters to other reviewers. Instead, in this limited space I would like to consider Beer's way of looking at Blake's pictures, which is more revealing than the commentary and more pertinent to current discussions in the *Newsletter*.

The interpretation of the Arlington Court painting which John E. Grant has challenged¹ is included in a chapter dealing mainly, and conventionally enough, with the illustrations to Young, Dante, and the Book of Job. My concern is with Beer's inter-

pretations in another section of his book, where the illustrations cited in the critical text are grouped according to a private scheme of the author's own, with a separate commentary. The terms used in the captions are from Blake--"Innocence," "Experience," "energy," "desire," "moral law," and of course "vision"--but the phrasing and the combinations and contrasts are Beer's, and to the hypothetical new reader who may have been won by the chapters on the poetry the relation of the captions to the illustrations is likely to be as mysterious as the relation of the plates to each other. Interpretive captions are usually assigned only to Blake's designs, although pictures from other sources are introduced for comparison; on occasion, Beer's purposes seem to be served by the comparative plates alone, without reference to those by Blake. (See, e.g., Figs. 17 and 18, "The Imposition of Law," and 19, "Cruelty under the Law.")

Beer perhaps would defend his arrangement and his captions by quoting what he asserts in his last chapter about the work of the "visionary" painter: "the symbolic meaning is a guide to the internal organization of the design" (p. 297). But even if it were possible, at the present stage of Blake studies, for all to agree that a "symbolic meaning" is what must be sought in each Blake design, and that John Beer has found the key: even so, objections would have to be made to Beer's descriptions and interpretations on elementary grounds. In *Blake's Humanism*, every serpent entwining a human figure (including the earthworm in "Elohim Creating Adam") was an image of "selfhood"; here, serpents either coiling in spirals or entangled with groups of human figures (Figs. 24-30) are designated "energies." "The picture actually changes for us as we learn what it is about," Beer says of "visionary" painting; but the changes in these designs that are implied by the captions are unacceptable. The opposition set up between men in *Urizen* 25 (Fig. 29) and women in *Jerusalem* 75 (Fig. 30) is clearly wrong, as John Grant also has pointed out, and it is doubtful that the creatures in Fig. 29 can be called serpents at all. (The Ghisi engraving reproduced as Fig. 28 is identified only as "Serpents attacking men." Actually, the struggling group is a detail from a famous original, which itself is relevant to both Blake designs--but not in Beer's terms.)

Or there is Fig. 54, the design from Plate 4 of *Europe*. Evidently recalling the verbal imagery of veiling and covering in the poetry, Beer labels this "Woman veiling child of Vision," in spite of the summons "Arise O Orc" in the text.² Fig. 53 is an engraving after Raphael's "Madonna of the Veil," offered in contrast; yet if Enitharmon's action is recognized as *unveiling*, there is not a contrast between the two scenes but a parallel, which confirms and is confirmed by the Orc-Jesus analogy at the beginning of *Europe*. In his picture commentary, however, Beer fuses the two figures as "Jesus who has been veiled by the Church" (p. 374) and bewilderingly (unless it is a misprint) cites Fig. 53.

On the other hand, when Beer seems to be reporting direct observation he may be equally unreliable. There is *no* "extraordinary resemblance" (p. 370) between Blake's three figures in "Har and Heva Bathing" (Fig. 2) and "corresponding figures" in Piero della Francesca's fresco "The Death of Adam," one of the series at Arezzo mentioned by Grant. In the fresco group Beer must be referring to but does not illustrate, the resemblances are only general: staring eyes, a use of profiles, an archaic stiffness of attitude, which in the case of Blake would be explained by the uncertainties of his early style. Otherwise, in the setting, the placement of the figures and their relation to each other, and their individual poses, Piero's scene is very different from Blake's; moreover, it is the mortality of Adam and Eve that he emphasizes, their physical decline in old age, not the perpetual youthfulness Blake bestows on Har and Heva along with their white hair. Since Beer adds that Blake "could hardly have known" Piero's fresco, what he seems really to be saying is that the *idea* of the death of an aged Adam enables him, the commentator, to leap ahead of his evidence and identify the white-haired corpses in his Fig. 3, the title page of *Songs of Experience*, as Har and Heva "laid out in death."

At the beginning of his special commentary on the illustrations, Beer speaks of exploring "the relationships between Blake's visual symbolism and the images of earlier art." Unfortunately, such an exploration is precisely what is missing, although some of the pairings of Blake's designs with likely sources or models can be corroborated by those of us who, for different purposes, have been making similar investigations. A recognition of "resemblance" or of Blake's "different treatment" of a theme shared with another artist is the most Beer has to offer the reader who is not committed to a search for symbolic meanings but who may be curious about the pictures placed before him in juxtaposition. This critical default damages even the best and most suggestive exhibits, none more strikingly than Figs. 31 and 32. I agree that Michelangelo's "The Fall of Phaethon" was surely Blake's model for Plate 5 of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, and that the particular version Beer has chosen--the last of three drawings on the same subject, made for Michelangelo's friend Tommaso Cavalieri--was probably the one Blake knew. (Beer publishes an engraving. The original drawing is in the Royal Collection at Windsor Castle.) Something in the graphic imagery or the composition of the two designs must have impressed Beer in some way when he first looked at them; the relation he noted between them must have been based on something more than the idea of *fall*. Curiously, however, what he says about them he might have said without reference to an illustration of any kind. In the text (pp. 150, 154) the fall of Phaethon, in terms of the myth, is mentioned only as a simile. "The fall of visionary desire" is the caption assigned to *MHH* 5 as Fig. 32, and it obviously comes from Blake's capsule reading of *Paradise Lost* in the text of the same plate ("It indeed appear'd to Reason as if Desire was cast out"). When Beer says in his picture commentary, "The Fall of Phaethon is for Blake a story of the failure of Desire under the Law" (p. 372), he is forging a last link of his own to join the subject of Michelangelo's drawing and Blake's view of Miltonic contrariety, and the result is a closed circle of abstraction which excludes the particularities of both narratives no less than those of both designs.

"The symbolic meaning is a guide to the internal organization of the design." It is this principle, evidently, that enables Beer to make what is in effect his own prophetic book out of his seventy-eight heterogeneous illustrations, for which the captions and the special commentary seem intended to perform much the same function as Blake's engraved inscriptions for the copied figures of Laocoon and the pseudo-Joseph of Arimathea. In the instance of the design from *MHH* 5, the caption actually makes it unnecessary for the reader to devote more than a glance to the illustration itself, if, like the exegete, he is impatient to uncover its "symbolic meaning." Yet the design from *MHH* 5, in particular, if it were adequately seen and fully explored in relation to both Michelangelo's drawing and *Paradise Lost*, might demonstrate that "internal organization" and "visual effect" can have a significance of their own which is not dependent on the kind of symbolic meaning Beer deduces, but which is not a matter of merely technical description or the annotations of an art historian. An exploration of this kind might in fact help to establish a concrete, practical, and definable meaning for "vision" in Blake's art.

NOTES

¹*Blake Newsletter*, 4 (August 1970), 15ff. A neutral bystander might note of this particular dispute that if Beer's "vision of the Book of Revelation" tends to dissolve the images of the painting into the prose of the King James Bible, Grant's "minute" descriptions threaten to replace the carefully organized whole by a Urizenic sum of its parts, and the parts of a number of other Blake pictures. Perhaps the emphasis on composition promised for the Warner-Simmons essay will be a corrective.

²On *Europe 4*, see my "The Presence of Cupid and Psyche" in Erdman and Grant, eds., *Blake's Visionary Forms Dramatic* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1970), pp. 218-19.

Allen Ginsberg. ALLEN GINSBERG/WILLIAM BLAKE: "SONGS OF INNOCENCE AND EXPERIENCE" BY WILLIAM BLAKE, TUNED BY ALLEN GINSBERG. With Peter Orlovsky, variously accompanied. [MGM "Verve" FTS-3083 \$5.98.] Side 1, *Songs of Innocence*: "Introduction," "The Shepherd," "The Ecchoing Green," "The Lamb," "The Little Black Boy," "The Blossom," "The Chimney-Sweeper," "The Little Boy Lost," "The Little Boy Found," "Laughing Song," "Holy Thursday," "Night." Side 2, *Songs of Experience*: "Introduction," "Nurses Song," "The Sick Rose," "Ah! Sun-Flower," "The Garden of Love," "London," "The Human Abstract," "To Tirzah," (and in addition) "The Grey Monk."

Reviewed by Morris Eaves, University of New Mexico

This is a full stereo package in the new style of providing a single disc in double covers (as the record companies used to do for two-disc sets only), leaving room to reproduce some of the plates from the *Songs* outside, pictures of Ginsberg and Orlovsky inside, along with an extra sheet of lyrics, and--unusual these days--a whole page of very densely printed liner notes. Mr. Ginsberg has very kindly allowed us to reprint the liner notes here (see "To Young or Old Listeners" in *COMMENTARY* following this review, pp. 98-103).

I

I shall begin with a long and more or less "theoretical" digression and come back to the performances later. The reader may want to skip from here to Section II.

There are two ways of thinking about Blake's work in illuminated printing. One is Blake's way, and the other for convenience I shall call Jacob Bronowski, Stanley Gardner, and Harold Bloom's way, recognizing however that Bronowski, Gardner, and Bloom have said out loud what many others have silently believed, and that neither Bronowski, Gardner, nor Bloom has extended his argument as far as I extend it here. It may be fairest for the reader to regard my "Bronowski," "Gardner," and "Bloom" as straw men. At any rate, the two ways of thinking about Blake's work in illuminated printing, theirs and Blake's, head off in opposite directions.

Blake asserted that "Poetry Painting & Music" are "the three Powers in Man of conversing with Paradise which the flood did not Sweep away" (*VLJ*, in Erdman's edition of *The Poetry and Prose of William Blake* [hereafter *E*], p. 548). He was obviously proud of his ability to combine the first two Powers in his invention of "Illuminated Printing" (*Prospectus 1793*, *E* 670) and hoped that the public would find his combination an improvement over the separate arts: "If a method of Printing which combines the Painter and the Poet is a phenomenon worthy of public attention, provided that it exceeds in elegance all former methods, the Author is sure of his reward" (*E* 670). Although in illuminated printing he could not easily combine the Musician with the Painter and the Poet, Blake nevertheless liked to think of music as being there to make a third with poetry and painting. He called attention to the presence of music in the *Songs* simply by naming the collection, and later, to the presence of music in all poetry by speaking of poetry as "sounds of spiritual music" with "accompanying expressions of articulate speech" (*Desc Cat 1809*, *E* 532). Blake's belief in art as

the best way of improving "sensual enjoyment" (MHH 14) made combinations of the arts especially appealing to him. Improving sensual enjoyment is improving spiritual pleasure because the senses are "the chief inlets of Soul in this age" (MHH 4). Only when man is "tremblingly alive all o'er," to use Pope's hyperbole (*An Essay on Man*, I.197) and pervert his intention, can man say with Blake's Isaiah, "my senses discover'd the infinite in every thing" (MHH 12). Blake used a battery of analogies from sex (sensual enjoyment), religion (miracle, Last Judgment), and chemistry (corrosives) to suggest the cooperative, upward-striving, all-involving sensual dynamism of the artistic venture that aims to cleanse "the doors of perception" (MHH 14). One way of understanding "fourfold vision" is as a recommendation to the artist to combine the arts, and therefore as an advertisement for Blake's own medium, which made it possible for the reader (hardly an adequate word) to perceive poetry, painting, and music simultaneously.

Bronowski, Gardner, and Bloom's position with regard to illuminated printing is based on a reverse line of thought. As I gather it chiefly from Bronowski's *William Blake and the Age of Revolution*, pp. 24-27, from the Preface to Gardner's *Blake in the Literature in Perspective* series, from the Preface to Bloom's *Blake's Apocalypse* and from his essay "The Visionary Cinema of Romantic Poetry" (*Partisan Review*, 1968; reprinted in Rosenfeld, ed., *William Blake: Essays for S. Foster Damon*), the position is essentially this: Blake's illuminated books are performances of his poetry, as a movie is a performance of someone's screenplay. Bloom says in effect that he doesn't like Blake's film, but that the screenplay is sometimes the best poetry since Milton's. One implication of this view is that someone else might do a better job of performing the poetry than Blake. Ginsberg, Benjamin Britten, and Ralph Vaughn Williams, for example, each of whom has set some of Blake's poems to music, are simply readers, like you, or me, or Blake himself, directing their versions of the screenplay that Blake provided. The composers happen to have chosen a medium other than illuminated printing in which to perform, but their choices and their performances are as legitimate as Blake's and should be judged on the same basis. Since this kind of logic is offensive to one's critical sense, one tends to prefer the negative alternative, which is to regard all performances as equally illegitimate. This accords with Bloom's incredulity at Blake the illustrator's having isolated an image that Blake the poet had better sense than to isolate ("Visionary Cinema"): all performances (the argument implicitly goes) have an aspect of interpretative bias. To get rid of the bias and free the reader for his own imaginative effort, Blake's poetry must be stripped of all accompaniments (a word that follows from the point of view), even of those provided by Blake himself. This quintessential Blake is to be found in the printed editions, where the "poetry" is least biased by an interpretative aspect that may be labeled "performance."

The Ginsberg disc is not for those who take the latter point of view. In setting *The Songs of Innocence and of Experience* to music, Ginsberg is conscious of having taken his direction from Blake, who called this group of poems "songs" and is said to have sung them himself, and who in both theory and practice promoted an art of expansion to plenitude rather than one of reduction to purity. The Ginsberg recording will allow any reader with Blake's attitude toward art and a copy of the Trianon Press facsimile of the *Songs* to have not only the whole Blake, but an ultra-Blake amalgamated of the trinity of primary arts.

But once those who choose to go so far are reading, looking, and listening at the same time, the question will arise, I assure them: does this music deserve a place in the Trinity? I fear that few will think so. I would go along with them to a point, but then I'd have to confess that in my opinion Ginsberg's compositions are the best of any yet written for Blake. Among the others, the compositions by Benjamin Britten (with texts selected by Peter Pears) and Ralph Vaughan Williams are the best known, but I find those notable composers reading black where I read white, though they read

very well in the conventional way. (The Britten-Pears songs have recently been re-recorded by Britten and Pears on London OS 26099; their performances are very fine. The Vaughan Williams songs, written for the film *The Vision of William Blake* in 1958, the year of the composer's death, are poorly performed and recorded on Desto DC 6482, the only available recording. There is a long but incomplete list of musical works related to Blake--not in every case poetry set to music--at the back of Bentley and Nurmi's *Blake Bibliography*, and some additions in the "Checklist of Blake Scholarship/ June 1969-September 1970" in the last issue, Fall 1970, of the *Newsletter*.)

Ginsberg is the first to put many of Blake's *Songs* together with the forms of popular music (in which I am including rock, country, folk, and jazz), though the Fugs, a New York group, once tried something similar with a song or two. Ginsberg places his work in musical history as follows:

Ma Rainey, Pound, Dylan, Beatles, Ray Charles, Ed Sanders & other singers have returned language poesy to Minstrelsy. As new generations understand & decipher poetical verses for gnostic-psychedelic flashes & practical Artistic messages, I hope that musical articulation of Blake's poetry will be heard by the Pop Rock Music Mass Media Electronic Illumination Democratic Ear and provide an Eternal Poesy standard by which to measure sublimity & sincerity in contemporary masters such as Bob Dylan, encouraging all souls to trust their own genius Inspiration.

Actually, Ginsberg's own music resembles none of the musicians he names so much as it does the Incredible String Band. At any rate, he is relying on the experience of a generation that has taken its popular music seriously, more seriously than it has taken any other art except the cinema, which, however, does not lend itself easily to the same kind of popularity, since--to name only one reason--it cannot manufacture a portable environment in which virtually all one's business can be conducted. So Ginsberg is "imagining" this music ("after 20 summers musings over the rhythms," he says) in the terms of a generation that recognizes Bob Dylan and the Beatles, Ma Rainey and Ed Sanders as honest-to-God artists competing for excellence with all composer-performers in musical history.

But for the critic who wants to talk about them, the popular arts present a tremendous problem that we have not begun to solve. Recently a reviewer for one of the musical monthlies said that even though he is a professional reviewer of popular music, most popular music cannot be discussed in "musical terms," only in sociological terms. He couldn't see that what he calls "musical terms" are the critical vocabulary of conventional music, and they are adjusted to its values. But the values of modern popular music often seem to insult conventional values, and using the old critical vocabulary to talk about the popular arts gives only a parody of music criticism. The closer the popular music under scrutiny is to some form of conventional music, the more sensible-sounding the criticism is apt to be: the rock music that is most like the jazz music that is most like classical music is easiest for the critic to discuss. This has nothing to do with the excellence of the music.

There are elements of popular culture (as it is sometimes called) in Blake. Take the simplest of the *Songs*, say "The Lamb" and "The Blossom." The innocent reader immediately notices the resemblance of both to nursery-rhymes and to "Jesus Loves Me," and the student often wants to know just what is so great about poems that sound like a Methodist Mother Goose with crude illustrations. The experienced reader, who can talk at length about "London," is at a loss for words when he confronts "The Lamb" directly, and so he resorts to explaining its meaning chiefly in its relation to other poems in the collection. At this stage the progress of criticism has ceased, and no passage from experience to a higher innocence has revealed itself to the critic. Of

course I include my own helplessness in this description.

Ginsberg places his music right there in the critic's sorest spot, sore for Blake and sore for popular music. Ginsberg and Orlovsky have outrageous voices, Orlovsky's more outrageous than Ginsberg's. Ginsberg's rabbinical chant and Orlovsky's asthmatic squawk could have been voices behind a cartoon. No one, including the professional sidemen (there are a number of well-known musicians present), stays consistently in tune, and the rhythms are seldom firm for more than a measure or two. The amateur skills of the amateurs and insufficient rehearsal for the professionals cause a lot of stumbling. Ginsberg and company demand of the listener a child's indifference to conventional musical values. Sincerity, simplicity, and spontaneity are the words that come to mind in such a critic's emergency.

But by the time I had listened to the record a time or two and my skin had stopped crawling at the missed notes and my toes had stopped curling at the tentative rhythms, I had begun to notice a true charm in Ginsberg's music. By the time I had listened a dozen or so times more, I had realized that Ginsberg's music and Blake's *Songs* possess corresponding powers, and that the power of the music reinforces the power of the *Songs*. Both--this is the power I am speaking of--want to render their audiences naive. This is not the end of Blake's art, but it is the necessary beginning for the change of vision that he insisted upon. Blake's is an art of rebirth, and the power of naiving that the illuminated books possess is responsible for the preceding death on which any such art is based. The progression from innocence to experience to a higher innocence that readers have found in the *Songs* is among other things an aesthetic formula, that is, a description of the reader's changing response to a work of art in illuminated printing. Neither Ginsberg nor Blake builds on what the audience may already know. Instead, having seen with Jesus and Wordsworth "Custom starving Truth, / And blind Authority beating with his staff / The child that might have led him" (*The Prelude* III), they demand that the audience abandon its education and look with new eyes at what they have to offer. Anyone who is looking at one of Blake's illuminated books for the first time is conscious of being powerfully urged to become one of the children whom Blake said understood his work best. Blake referred to this aspect of his work when he wrote of Jesus in *The Everlasting Gospel*,

When the rich learned Pharisee
Came to consult him secretly
Upon his heart with Iron pen
He wrote Ye must be born again (E 510)

Blake's illuminated printing--which is Jesus writing upon the heart of the conventionally learned, "Ye must be born again"--is aimed at the death of the old sleepy senses of conventional knowledge and their rebirth in a sensual awakening. To that end are directed all Blake's reveilles for drowsing artists, such as the Preface to *Milton*.

Ginsberg has tried and to my mind succeeded in adding to the naiving power of Blake's *Songs*. The listener may recognize this power at first as a vague feeling of embarrassment at witnessing such a public display of childish musicianship from a forty-two year old man whose vocation is poetry. But the makers of cartoons have always been grown men, and Ginsberg's music is cartoonlike in the best sense, that is, the sense in which Blake's *Songs* are also cartoonlike. The animation of nature, for example, has always come naturally to cartoonists, whose techniques free them to make everything come alive, and whose medium urges childlike acts of the imagination such as homemaking animals, sick flowers, and choral hills, all alien to ordinary cinema. Along with the animistic nature go equally childlike views of man's conduct and his relation to nature. This does not imply a child's foolishness as opposed to an adult's wisdom, of course, but the clear-sightedness of Jesus as opposed to the sophistry of the

Pharisee, to whom Jesus' maxims sound like innocent and commonplace wishful thinking, unsuited to the complex real world of affairs.

The best music on the Ginsberg disc has the power to corrode one's resistance--no matter how great the sour force of one's learned wit--to the further corrosive powers of illuminated printing in Blake's *Songs*. This undressing of the wit, this unlearning, is as fundamental to Blake's artistic strategy as to Christian salvation. It is my opinion that Ginsberg is the first composer to understand Blake's strategy and to strengthen it with music. But many readers, either upon reading what I have had to say or, unfortunately, upon listening to their new purchase from the record store, will think my opinion of Ginsberg's music-making powers and my understanding of illuminated printing rather over-subtle and eccentric. Certainly many who read Blake with pleasure and profit will dislike Ginsberg's music, or they will find it simply amusing.

Regretfully then, and praying he remember that I wished him no disappointments, I must leave the reader to his own devices and to the following brief comments on individual compositions and performances.

II

The next few paragraphs are fearfully impressionistic. I couldn't help that, but I have done the reader what I think is a favor by balancing my impressions (in roman type) as often as possible with the counter-impressions (in parentheses and italic type) of one who knows Blake and popular music well, and who also generally likes the Ginsberg recording. Together the two sets of commentary should give the reader a fuller picture of the recording than either set alone.

SIDE 1, SONGS OF INNOCENCE (Generally I prefer Ginsberg's Songs of Experience, particularly "The Sick Rose" and "Ah! Sunflower," to his Songs of Innocence. I think this is because it is very hard to convey pure joy to jaded human ears: it's better left to the aural imagination. Ginsberg's diction is quite odd and self-conscious in, for example, "The Ecchoing Green" and "The Lamb." And Orlovsky's voice does not add anything in the duets.):

(1) "Introduction" will be a surprise to all but the most blasé listener (and what is a blasé listener doing listening to Ginsberg perform Blake?). This is a good introduction to the album, since most of the qualities that characterize Ginsberg's treatment of Blake are present, but the composition is not one of Ginsberg's best.

(2) "The Shepherd," which is born on the dying wrong notes (insistently wrong) sustained from the "Introduction," is a failure. It drags and stumbles terribly; Orlovsky's insensitive voice seems to cut through everything else.

(3) "The Ecchoing Green" begins with strong gospel piano chords and never loses its power. Ginsberg, who accompanies himself in 3/4 time on the finger cymbals, for the first time shows the clarity of his voice and its sensitivity to the changing verse. Note especially two lines: "Such, such were the joys When we all girls and boys . . ." and "And sport no more seen on the darkening green."

(4) "The Lamb" is another disappointment; its rhythms are Sunday-School stiff and monotonous.

(5) "The Little Black Boy" has splendid moments, chiefly toward the last, when Jon Sholle's guitar, Ginsberg's voice and even Orlovsky's rasping vocal organ (*I like "The Little Black Boy" very much except for Orlovsky's voice, which to me seems out of tune, though maybe it's supposed to be harmonizing.*) hit a note here and there in perfect unison, and the effect (sort of oriental) shows that the method Ginsberg has used to set most of these *Songs* to music could be very successful, though none of the *Songs* set by this method are among the best on the disc. The method I am referring to is described at length by Ginsberg in the liner notes; it has to do with the effort to "articulate the significance of each holy & magic syllable of [Blake's] poems." Ginsberg says he "tried to hear meanings of each line spoken intentionally & Interestedly, & follow natural voice tones up or down according to different emphases and emotions vocalized as in daily intimate speech: I drew the latent tunes, up or down, out of talk-tones suggested by each syllable spoken with normal feeling.

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Id:

Thus the flute pipes notes down from the hill into the deep valley floor with accurate melody." This is clearly a poet's, not a musician's, method. The result is usually something between chant and recitative; the chant to bind the recitative to a rhythm pattern latent in the poem, and to hold the recitative within a vocal range whose proportions seem to derive from ordinary speech (that is, no room is left for virtuoso vocal effects; Peter Pears would not be at home here). As I said earlier, the result is a music like the Incredible String Band's. If the songs on this disc are to be taken as evidence, the chief danger of the method is monotony. One might expect the success of the method in performance to depend more than it actually does on precision. It seems to hold up very well under a great deal of hunting and pecking for pitches and rhythms, and I would even go so far as to say that one of the most interesting effects of the method is the listener's pleasure when out of the obscure crosscurrents of voices and instruments comes a moment of clarity with unity. Blake's later work in illuminated printing sometimes lends itself to similar effects. (*I basically like the album for its homemade sound--see Ginsberg's remarks about modern minstrelsy in the notes. I think weird primitivism is the right way to do Songs of Innocence and of Experience, though it inevitably flounders in the truly innocent songs. I do think the album is to be classified as primitivism rather than over-simplification. When it falls into over-simplification, it's at its worst.*)

(6) Harpsichord, finger cymbals (played this time by Don Cherry, a well-known jazz trumpeter), flute, bass, and Ginsberg without Orlovsky imitate seventeenth-century music with gusto--almost as though they had invented it on the spot--and make "The Blossom" one of the two or three best songs on the disc.

(7) "The Chimney-Sweeper" is poorly performed; Orlovsky is overbearing, and though it gathers some force as it goes, there is scarcely a moment of unity; but the composition, as far as I can tell, is much better, and deserves another chance in another performance. (*"The Chimney-Sweeper" is very interesting. Ginsberg reads it as sincere rather than ironic and speaks in his notes of "vision of the Heaven Desire we can imagine once we do accept our soul feelings as more real than the material fix we have*

been trapped in." His musical setting of it, especially the vision of the Heaven Desire in the second half, seems to be a Protestant hymn. The instrumentation and the enthusiasm of Ginsberg and Orlovsky at the beginning of the fourth stanza give the impression of a ragged congregation suddenly coming through loud and clear and triumphant, with the power all in the human voice rather than an organ. This idea of using a hymn, assuming that's what Ginsberg had in mind, strikes me as a much more interesting way of fitting historically appropriate music to the songs than the music preceding "The Blossom.")

(8)(9) "The Little Boy Lost" and "The Little Boy Found" are simply and perfectly combined. The rhythm, like the child and searchers, walks insistently 4/4, occasionally syncopated in the bass.

(10) When I hear "Laughing Song" with sleigh bells, Don Cherry's strange trumpet, and a chorus of laughers, I think of those festive, but not altogether pleasing, scenes of swaying and singing trees, plants, animals, insects, and rocks in Walt Disney cartoons. Disney was less successful than Blake and Ginsberg and company. (One musical touch I do like; that's the use of the flute on Side 1 and not on Side 2, except in "Tirzah," which is a special case. I prefer the simple competent flute-playing to the flipped-out trumpet and french horn in "Laughing Song.")

(11) Ginsberg's liner notes on "Holy Thursday" indicate what to expect: "--spaced out Orlovsky singing against Don Cherry on Flute and trumpet Zapped the tune up to ecstatic joy instead of a tender lamblike chorus it might also supposed to be." (The instrumentation of "Holy Thursday" is a mystery to me. Ginsberg claims he's trying to achieve "ecstatic joy," but I don't think he does.)

(12) For the first time Orlovsky adds more than he takes away. His contribution is to keep the childishness in the spiritual mystery of "Night." In each stanza 3/4 time is alternated with something like recitative.

SIDE 2, SONGS OF EXPERIENCE:

(1) The appropriately harsh, ominous tone of "Introduction" is broken occasionally by the rasp of Orlovsky's voice, which is otherwise effective.

(2) "Nurse's Song" is cartoon dark and quieter than any other song on the record. It loses a great deal of its effect by being sung twice through.

(3) "The Sick Rose" displays Ginsberg's priestly voice at its best. His method of composition (described above) has worked better on "The Sick Rose" than on any other song in the collection. It is also sung twice through, but to no harm. ("The Sick Rose" is my favorite cut, and to me it seems about half Blake, half Ginsberg. I prefer Ginsberg as a chanter to Ginsberg as a singer. I am also impressed with his use of organ and harmonium on this album, and I especially like the organ in "The Sick Rose" because it comes through as pure energy. The harmonium has a more powerful effect: it has a droning sound that rearranges the brain. But it is used a little cornily, somehow: perhaps it is so direct as to be unfair. It works best in "Ah! Sunflower" because that's a short song; it wears thin in "The Little Black Boy," though it's effective at first.)

(4) "Ah! Sunflower" shows all the dangers of Ginsberg's method.

(5) Ginsberg sings "The Garden of Love" solo to a 3/4 quasi-hillbilly background. The hillbilly mode is either just right or absolutely wrong (see italics be-

low). To my ears and my understanding of the poem, the mode is right, although I think a better hillbilly than Ginsberg would have found a better melody and would have taken a slower tempo. The imagery of the poem, except for the Priests in the last stanza, is the imagery of thwarted love in a lot of country music, right down to the use of the "'Thou shalt not' writ over the door." The lesson of Blake's poem is the reverse of the lesson of the (hypothetical) corresponding hillbilly song, but that's the point. The insistence of the 3/4 time suits the rhythm of Blake's line perfectly. *(The worst thing in the album is "The Garden of Love." I'm tempted to explain it by saying that it's obviously ghosted by Ed Sanders. Why Ginsberg decided to go hillbilly here is beyond me--it would make much more sense to treat a really innocent song that way ("A Cradle Song"? "The Divine Image"?). Sanders does it beautifully in "How Sweet I Roam'd" on the first Fugs album.)* I should answer this by saying that real Blakean Innocence is not the subject of very much good hillbilly music, which is made of unrequited and forbidden love, misery, jealousy, hate, crime--songs about life gone sour, usually told from the point of view of blind Experience.

(6) Though Ginsberg sings "London" by himself, poor ensemble playing and his own faltering sense of rhythm spoil it.

(7) "The Human Abstract" is another song in the chant-recitative manner, this time a solo by Ginsberg over a single sustained note on the harmonium. This is as good as "The Sick Rose."

(8) It is followed by another great success, Ginsberg singing "To Tirzah" with harpsichord, organ, flute, and guitar accompaniment. Singing over sustained chords is alternated with strict 3/4 time.

(9) "The Grey Monk" is a tour de force, with Ginsberg and Orlovsky and the french horn of Julius Watkins all wailing while the percussion of Elvin Jones drives several old friends from other cuts on the album. The song builds with military force like the march of an occupying army, and goes out in a barrage of drums.

In a letter to me Ginsberg has written that "Before recording I'd visited S. Foster Damon & sung what I'd done to him. He said he used to tune one song a year at Xmas. I'm working on ahead & have finished another ten songs including *Schoolboy*, *On Another's Sorrow*, and *Cradle Song* ("Sweet Sleep, from a Shade"). . . . I'll make a second record this spring, recorded more simply--like the method of quiet low vibration 'Nurse's Song.'" When I wonder how Blake might have sung his *Songs*, I somehow find it hard to believe that it was in the style of Benjamin Britten and Peter Pears or Ralph Vaughan Williams, though they have certainly caught a side of Blake's poems in their music. I can hear the spiritual Cockney voice of Blake himself, though, in the New York voice of Ginsberg. The poet and amateur musician has made better music for Blake than the professional composer so far. I look forward to the spring and the second stage of Ginsberg's tuning.

COMMENTARY

ALLEN GINSBERG

To Young or Old Listeners: Setting Blake's *SONGS* to Music,
and a Commentary on the *SONGS*

The songs were first composed on tape recorder, improvised on pump organ in farmhouse upstate N. Y. in two nights after returning from Democratic Convention 1968 Tear Gas Chicago. These are half the *Songs of Innocence & Experience* now finished to music; the rest will be completely tuned in another year.

Inspiration began 21 years, half my life ago, living in Harlem, in mind's outer ear I heard Blake's voice pronounce *The Sun Flower* and *The Sick Rose* (and the *Little Girl Lost*) and experienced an illumination of eternal Consciousness, my own heart identical with the ancient heart of the Universe.

It's taken 2 decades of vision fame, friends' deaths & Apocalyptic history for me to materialize the spiritual illumination received thru these poems, without systematic study of Blake's life & only fragmentary study of later works. I *imagined* this music after 20 summers musings over the rhythms.

William Blake (1757-1827), engraved his own picture plates, hand colored, & printed *Songs of Innocence & Experience* (1789-1794), only a couple dozen copies. Thus every word, every picture & every print of the book he made in his life bore the impress of his own intelligent body; there was no robot mechanical repetition in any copy. The title *Songs of Innocence & Experience* is literal: Blake used to sing them unaccompanied at his friends' houses.

The purpose in putting them to music was to articulate the significance of each holy & magic syllable of his poems; as if each syllable had intention. These are perfect verses, with no noise lost or extra accents for nothing. I tried to hear meanings of each line spoken intentionally & interestedly, & follow natural voice tones up or down according to different emphases and emotions vocalized as in daily intimate speech: I drew the latent tunes, up or down, out of talk-tones suggested by each syllable spoken with normal feeling.

Piping
Down the
 ey
 Vall
 Wi
 ld:

Thus the flute pipes notes down from the hill into the deep valley floor with accurate melody.

Since a physiologic ecstatic experience had been catalysed in my body by the physical arrangement of words in so small a poem as *Ah! Sun Flower*, I determined long ago to think of poetry as a kind of machine that had a specific effect when planted inside

a human body, an arrangement of picture mental associations that vibrated on the mind bank network; and an arrangement of related sounds & physical mouth movements that altered the habit functions of the neural network. XX century French poet Artaud noted that certain sound vibrations, certain rhythmic frequencies of music or voice, might alter molecular patterns in the nervous system.

I had been led to hear by ear individual syllables and their spoken tonal intention by a whole American poetic tradition begun at turn of century with Pound who specified that for any prosody (measure of poetry rhythm) adequate to our real speech, the poet should train his ear "pay attention to the tone leading of vowels" instead of the tripping of stressed accents--i.e. hear the musical Aum vowel alterations of note & rhythm pattern, and not get hung up on voiced monotone stressed da dit da dit da dit da dits--like, "Thou too sail on O Ship of State." W. C. Williams, Pound's friend, taught attention to raw spoken talk to learn the "for real" rhythms of American poetry. Later Basil Bunting sharpened my attention to vowels as solid objects in a verse line.

Ma Rainey, Pound, Dylan, Beatles, Ray Charles, Ed Sanders & other singers have returned language poesy to Minstrelsy. As new generations understand & decipher poetical verses for gnostic-psychedelic flashes & practical Artistic messages, I hope that musical articulation of Blake's poetry will be heard by the Pop Rock Music Mass Media Electronic Illumination Democratic Ear and provide an Eternal Poesy standard by which to measure sublimity & sincerity in contemporary masters such as Bob Dylan, encouraging all souls to trust their own genius Inspiration.

For the soul of the Planet is Wakening, the time of Dissolution of Material Forms is here, our generation's trapped in Imperial Satanic Cities & Nations, & only the prophetic priestly consciousness of the Bard--Blake, Whitman or our own new selves--can Steady our gaze into the Fiery eyes of the Tygers of the Wrath to Come.

SONGS OF INNOCENCE

Introduction: Passing thru the Natural World, piping unconscious music, Poet glimpses Eternal Vision, child spirit on a cloud, his own Imagination, that demands he play intuitive feeling music to God, who weeps to hear Man-Poet's answer come true. Mind-Child weeps to find it's possible to show God thru language. Vision vanishes leaving instructions for Poet to lay inspiration out in words to entrance later generations. ("Sentient Beings are Numberless, I vow to save them all" is the first of 4 Buddhist vows.) Poet takes simple materials near his body, hollow reed, & messes up the clear water to make ink & writes it down forever.

The Shepherd: The first song "Every child may joy to hear" utters how sweet it is to do nothing but sit in natural pasture following the flock of mind thoughts that pass thru his brain same as lamb and ewe calling each other knowing a supreme Consciousness aware of everyone is in Everyone.

The Ecchoing Green: But all natural sunrise bells are an apparition on green symmetrical pastures of matter grass & hills in an illusionary echo world. The old folks bodies get tired & wither under older trees & they sit watching Baby games thru eyes that also saw themselves dance play & copulate & friends vanish in graves. Sun descends, we even get tired of joy & want to sleep, a shadow passes over the illusion of Garden & City, consciousness dims & we forget the green ecchoing Field forever as it fades.

The Lamb: Who are we here? What tender being gave us ourselves? Lamb's wool or

soft sexual human skin, voices calling & murmuring our desires to each other till the whole world lights up with our feeling. Who is our Love? Our selves are the same as the Lamb or Christ or Lords that desired to become living meat spirit, to Cry & die, living in the strange material world an eternal minute. The Piper-Poet-Lamb-Child shepherd soul knows & tells fellows who forgot to bless themselves.

The Little Black Boy: Suffering! Race experience burning into the skin & blackening it with the sun-fires of life. White Light Eternal Being, the Abyss of Light, the Void is identical to our own souls: the English child looks "white as an Angel" which he is (or will be when he realizes his soul). "And I am black, but O! my soul is white" is a racist masochistic tearful sentiment from the 18th century Slave Days to modern political eyes: Gnostic (secret knowledge of the Abyss of Light) Vision transforms the understanding, we realize the Bodhisattva's singing to the inexperienced Honkey Material Soul, saying that all matter-body is a cloud of Ignorance. "And we are put on earth a little space that we may bear the beams of love." And when the cloud-bodies vanish we return to our identical Primeval Radiance. Matter itself is a shield against this brightness too vast for human body. ("Life, like a dome of many-colored Glass stains the white radiance of Eternity until death tramples it to fragments. . . ." wrote Shelley who like Blake read Gnostic texts in translation by Thomas Taylor the Platonist. Taylor also translated Pythagoras' line "Whatever we see when awake, is Death; and when asleep, a Dream.") The black boy or Jewish boy trembling rejected by the English Child, his homosexual love rejected by the master race, realizes the English Child's white because his body hasn't yet been blasted by the deep heat of God's love, white is inexperience; & the only place the little Black boy will be fully understood is when their material bodies fall away transparent & they are reunited in the Place of Death.

The Blossom: Sparrow into Blossom: Yang & Yin, Phallus & Vagina, Tantric Lingam & Yoni, Form and Emptiness, Matter & Void, Samsara & Nirvana, Maya and Sunyatta, Aeon & Abyss of Light, Life into Death, are incarnated in the emotional softness of the robin sobbing under green leaves in flower's bosom. Straight sex comes identical with metaphysical Mystery in a little almost unnoticeable ditty in Blake's book.

The Chimney Sweeper: "You know the words by heart, huh?" Peter Orlovsky's voice asks. And the sorrowful horror of child slavery begins tale weeping--18th century London XX century New York, the same skulls sitting at tables reading papers headlining massacre slavery. The material universe so debased, city greed and poverty so unbearable the imagination only breaks out thru the skull in Death--and then comes vision of the Heaven Desire we can imagine once we do accept our soul feelings as more real than the material fix we have been trapped in. Blake was a friend of Tom Paine the Revolutionary & tipped Paine off that the fuzz had a warrant for his arrest in London 1792--Paine skipped the country from Dover across the English Channel to France a couple of hours before the Police arrived. The Chimney Sweeping, infant slavery to society, is also interpreted here as faithful Bodhisattvic work of social revolution--"So if all do their duty they need not fear harm." The vision of angels with bright keys and myriad elevated voice notes of shiny children washing in tearful rivers reminds us of Reality we all desired forever, and always will, and will achieve forever in life or Death, no matter what a cold dark Capitalist/police-state Satanic morning we are born into with bodies.

The Little Boy Lost: Authority, the State, the Mortal Father, all vanish as our Consciousness outgrows Habit & Conditioning (thru Time, Acid, Sex or Vision) & the soul is left alone: to weep, and thus thru intuitive Feeling, Disperse "the Vapors" of Mortal Boring Gloom.

The Little Boy Found: So the soul boy follows wandering imagination, the mind's heart crying tears, & the great Authority (Great as shroudy Death) appears & leads him to Mother Nature Life. She also thought he was lost, they only found each other thru his emotional tears, & she'd wept for him all along too.

Laughing Song: Water & trees are alive, the great grassy hill rocks with laughter, spring spreads green smile in meadows; all illusion material universe giggles in the void, girls young tongues show noises. Birds are only painted sentient, laughing theosophically to themselves in the valley of the shadow. No harm in Maya Dream Life, merry Nuts! Blake's colored picture shows a table at the wood's edge with fruits, nuts, girls & a young man in red skin-tight suit lifting cup dancing laughing facing the trees. The rythmic Paradigm of the laughing song is echoed verse by verse with Ha Ha He's in second chorus making mirror image of universe in pure laughter receding into infinity.

Holy Thursday: Multitudes of sentient children in London 18th century like tender insects waving their hands and singing in the Domed Mortal Universe of St. Paul's Cathedral are the only angels visible in this Eternity. Even the old archons tending them are exquisite. Blake's not being sardonic, he's seeing the central holiness of multitudinous being: "Everyone's an angel": *then cherish pity lest you drive an angel from your door.* The verses can only be read naturally if they syncopate Thames Waters & Wise Guardians--spaced out Orlovsky singing against Don Cherry on Flute and trumpet Zapped the tune up to ecstatic joy instead of a tender lamblike chorus it might also supposed to be.

Night: Most mellow address to Night, sleep, Death & Heavenly Peace. Little visions of lovely earth in the mind's eye vanishing, farewell to the physical fields & woods. And when the break with life comes, Death's Terror's transformed to Eternal peacefulness: "And there the lion's ruddy eyes/Shall slow with tears of gold." Realizing that the Lion Ego abandons his selfhood & lies down with the Lamb to die--all pain Fear and Unsatisfied Desire radiating out of head Consciousness washed away thru experience of the Body & Dissolution of the body--pure feeling consciousness is left eternal shining thru all living Being, "Golden Emptiness" said dead Kerouac same as "Abyss of Light."

SONGS OF EXPERIENCE

Introduction: Prophecies, Futurecies! Great claim of the Bard, to call directly to the Soul hidden in the world, obscured & forgot weeping sunk in material thickness, old Gnostic tune. Ecological intuition, the Holy Word walked among the Ancient Trees. Meanwhile man Prisoned in the starry Universe tries to destroy this planet-prison with Electrical Machines and pollutes the wat'ry floor with DDT Detergents. Blake calls thru civilization to Earth Man to return to knowledge of his own soul & live in place with the Material Universe as his to control only till Death's daybreake.

Nurse's Song: The deepest voice of Experience tells the tale of vanishing bodies and Time--our Guardian says innocent play ignores sexual glory till too late--the Nurse's face turns green & pale remembering the body love & eye soul she refused to realize as a child; and now old in winter & night she is afraid to show her still childlike Desire's naked glory because her body ages near death & it becomes repulsive to her.

The Sick Rose: English Poetry is pure Mantra here as penetrant & capable of causing Transcendental Knowledge as any Hindu Hare Krishna or Hari Om Namō Shivaye.

What's the Rose? Genital Flowers? Body Life? God? What's the Worm? Cancer Syphilis? Mind Time? Death? Or If the Rose is Eternal God, the worm may be human consciousness. If the Rose is all Life itself what dark Secret Love eats at our Being? Does the Universe Die? Is God Death?

Ah! Sun Flower: The Sun Flower, our own Soul Desire, tho root-trapped in earth turns to the source of Desire, the Sun of Death, "where the travellers journey is done." Youth's and Virgin's desire are unsatisfied unsatisfiable mortal forms only not Immortal Union in the Golden Clime where the Sun goes at Night. The Sun flower, rooted in earth, alive, can only turn longingly to follow the sun's path beyond life itself.

The Garden of Love: Consciousness builds a Church of Fear in the body's Garden. Flowers of desire die, & lovers' graves appear in time; but Mind priests take Mad advantage by punishing & forbidding desire altogether while we're here in the garden.

London: The first modern Prophetic poem de-hypnotizing the city & exorcising the Money phantoms that "charter" or "own" space--time Garden plots, cover rivers & riversides of Thames (or Hudson) with Robot Mental smog Money Real Estate Usury Exploitation Law Possession Greed Cancer Stone-Metal Pollution & Spiritual & Physical Death Banks. Walk out in 17th century London or XX century Wall Street look directly in Man's eyes see Marks of weakness marks of woe--the direct imprint of anxiety visible on face masks of Folk caught in City Mental prisons which are concepts of Money gain & exploitation of other beings and nature. Slaves to Machinery! Matter Junkies with oil Burner Habits! Manhattos' Zombies, "In meine Heimat/Where the dead walked/and the living were made of cardboard." Brainwashed by Moloch & the CIA & the Mafia & Chase Bank, So they have destroyed Mother Nature a hundred miles around. And the hapless soldier's sigh runs in Blood down White House Walls. Boys sobbing in armies Berkeley to Vietnam! All Love turned financial commercial makes the Honeymoon car a Hearse of Desire. A death Lament for the Machine Nations filled with Satanic Mills.

The Human Abstract: The Gods made Nature free but Ego greeds grow weird false Universe trees in the human physical Brain. Hear it vibrating in your own & realize the dead mechanical universe is a mind trap Illusion created by your senses "To the Eyes of a Man of Imagination, Nature is Imagination itself"--Blake in letter to Rev. Trusler.

To Tirzah: Blake stuck this poem in *Songs of Experience* ten years after the other poems were arranged--late wisdom, Gnostic-Kabalistic-Buddhist transcendental put-down of the entire phenomenal sensory universe as a mental Illusion mothered by Ruha, Tirzah, Sophia, Momma Nature Creatix Consciousness herself a shadow reflection of the Abyss of Light shuddering a second flashing on itself. In Beginning the Word (Sophia Mother Wisdom Knowledge Tirzah) flash-imagined all Aeons down to Jehova's Garden. The Serpent was the Caller of The Great Call, disguised messenger from the Abyss of Light, according to the Mandaean Gnostic* heresy suppressed around 313 A.D. Rome when Constantine Emperor (CIA) accepted Christ took over Religion & suppressed revolutionary metaphysical hip gnostic Illumination of the fake Authority of the Material Universe itself. The Roman State coopted religion at Council of Nicea & burned all Dissenting metaphysical doctrines. This established the Satanic State, presently headed by Richard Nixon, Jehovah in disguise forgetting to whom he is beholden, son of Elohim, Descendant of Ialdaboath, only a flash of Sophia's Consciousness, herself a flash of selfconsciousness in the Infinite Abysse of Light. The Shekinah was too great for the 7 cups the 7 Sephiroth, the seven Chakra centers of the human body, which shattered. Now the Rabbis are occupied giving the light back to God. We will return to the Abyss of Light. "It is raised a spiritual body."

*See *The Gnostic Religions*, by Dr. Hans Jonas, Beacon Paperback.

The Grey Monk: (This poem is separate, later than *Songs of Innocence & Experience*) On the Revolution, French then, American now, these fragments of Blake's thought returned to my mind in melodious form on a bus up Bayshore Freeway Los Gatos to San Francisco August 10, 1968 or thereabouts riding back from visit to wooden urned ashes of the body of Neal Cassidy old love friend & heroic American mind angel died in mid-life. "They never can work war's overthrow." He'd been imprisoned by the State 1959-61 several years for giving a free grass cigarette to the secret police, ruined off his railroad vocation and plunged into homeless psychedelic exploration thereafter till death. "Fayette Fayette thou'rt bought & sold, & sold is thy happy morrow," & other Blake verses remembered after touching Cassidy's ashes were the first music that occurred to me tuned to Blake's rhymes. "This hand," wrote in *Howl*, "Moloch whose fate is a cloud of Sexless Hydrogen." My brother is Leroi Jones; Thy father's sword was drawn in North Vietnam; The Panthers have armed themselves in steel to avenge the wrongs thy children Feel: But Vain the sword & vain the Bow, They never can work war's overthrow. Violent Vengeance perpetuates self-righteous Tyranny, and A sign is the Sword of An Angel King.

Allan Ginsberg
 Dec 14-15, 1969
 New York City - returned again
 from Chicago as defense witness,
 Conspiracy Trial.

DISCUSSION "With intellectual spears, & long winged arrows of thought"

JOHN BEER: PETERHOUSE, CAMBRIDGE

A Reply to John Grant

In Part Two of his article on the Arlington Court picture (*Blake Newsletter*, 4 [August 1970], 12-25), John E. Grant devotes some time to my interpretation of the design in my *Blake's Visionary Universe*. I hope that his very dismissive remarks about my work will not deter the readers of the *Newsletter* from reading it and giving serious attention to my ideas.

In one instance, to be sure, he has spotted a mistake. When I read Keynes's article on the preliminary drawing for the Arlington Court picture, I was pleased to find that this, also, had in the past been described as possibly an illustration to Revelation 22:17. In memory, however, this ascription became conflated with the fact that another ascription ("The River of Oblivion") had actually been pencilled by someone on the back of the drawing itself. The point ought to have been picked up when I checked my references, but I missed it; I hope that it may be possible to correct it

in a later edition.

Mr. Grant also suggests, however, that I do not describe Blake's pictures correctly, claiming that I see the figures in plate 25 of *The Book of Urizen* as male, whereas they are "obviously female". Here the lack of strict accuracy is, I am afraid, his. If he will look again at the figures in question, he will see that while the foremost figure and the nearly submerged one on the right have fairly clear female characteristics, the figure near the top has the hair and lineaments of a Blakean male. The design seems to refer to the process which begins near the end of the previous page, when Urizen "curs'd/Both sons & daughters". My caption, "Men gripped by spectrous Energies", which deals with the process more generally and uses "men" in the generic sense, is correct, therefore, whereas "Women gripped by spectrous Energies" would not be.

Mr. Grant's next point, that I see the figures in *Jerusalem* 75 as male, I find totally inexplicable. The plate is mentioned twice in my book: on the first occasion (p. 192) I refer to the "women who control" dragons of energy and on the second (p. 372) to the "daughters of Jerusalem". Where does Mr. Grant find his "men"? His charge that it is *I* who am "hasty" and cannot describe what is actually there strikes me as a little cool, to say the least.

Mr. Grant now moves to a different sort of criticism, claiming that in my discussion of "A Vision of the Last Judgment" in connection with the Arlington Court picture, "the wirey bounding line of rectitude becomes invisible". I have re-read my discussion and can find no grounds for such a charge. What I am saying there is that while the scene depicted in *V LJ* is clearly not *identical* with that in *ACP* there are enough resemblances between individual elements in the two pictures to make one ask whether Blake's interpretative commentary for the one may not also be relevant to the other. Where is the lack of rectitude? One begins to suspect that Mr. Grant's own sense of sound argument sometimes falters--all the more so when one discovers him assuming that because my second book appeared within two years of the first it must have been written in as short a period, allowing me no time to study the full range of Blake's visual art. For the record, it may be pointed out that the two books were written together over twelve years, during which I examined every available design of Blake's.

When Mr. Grant turns to one of the chief points in my interpretation, the remarkable series of parallels between items in the text of Revelation 22:14-17 and various features of the Arlington Court picture, he is swiftly dismissive, referring merely to the verse "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come . . ." and commenting that the figures in the centre of Blake's picture cannot be saying "Come!," that they cannot be inviting anyone to drink, and that if they were they would be offering nothing more than sea-water. There is more than one way of saying "Come!," however, and the text in question does not say that they are offering drink, at least directly:

And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come.
And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water
of life freely.

The text states only that those who respond to the invitation will find their thirst satisfied. And this is precisely what is beginning to happen to the figure who is rising from the river and who will shortly exchange the waters of oblivion in her scaly bucket for the waters of life that are flowing in the paradisaal landscape above. What the Spirit and the Bride are inviting her to (as one might expect in Blake) is the exercise of energy and an awakening to vision: and it is this that is indicated by their gestures.

Mr. Grant does not bother to mention the other parallels which I have noted, except to say that they are "without exception insubstantial". Since the argument here is detailed and cumulative, I can only refer the reader to my original chapter and leave him to judge for himself; it is time to turn to a larger question raised at the end of the discussion.

Mr. Grant claims to find the key to my attitudes in my use of the word "idiosyncratic" to describe Blake and goes on to maintain that, being "deeply read" in "occultism" I miss the "infinite implications" of his art. At this point I begin to despair and to wonder whether he has really grappled with my book at all. For my main argument, stressed again and again, is that Blake read occult literature *not* for its own sake but for its "infinite implications". The point which I concede to his hostile critics is that occultism in general tends to work through tradition of various kinds, thus providing lines of communication for those who have begun to learn its language, and that Blake, by standing at an angle to such traditions, forfeits this ease of communication, compelling his reader to learn a new language. It is in this sense, and this sense alone, that I refer to him as "idiosyncratic" and I argue that it is precisely this independence and concern with the infinity of energy and vision that gives him his unique power as an artist. It is my theme from cover to cover.

Perhaps it is because he has missed this central argument that Mr. Grant is so resistant to the idea that the Arlington Court picture is an illustration to verses from the Book of Revelation. At first sight such an interpretation might seem to betray Blake back into the hands of orthodox Christians and impose a narrowly pietistic framework upon his picture. But this danger passes as soon as it is grasped that Blake is reading the Book of Revelation on his own terms, and that the Spirit and the Bride are not the Holy Spirit and Church of orthodox biblical exegesis, but the Energy and Vision of his own universe. So the red-clad figure of enduring creative energy folds out his hands over the sea to indicate his faith that "the sea shall be no more" but will be displaced by the city of vision and desire when the sleeping figure in the chariot above awakens to drive his chariot of fourfold vision. At present he is foreshadowed by the naked goddess of liberated sexual energy on the waters (Vala released from the hindrances of the law). The Bride, meanwhile, expresses all that Blake has ever had to say about the relationship between nature and imagination. The gestures of her hands indicate the extremes: the oblivion below of those who are totally preoccupied with birth, copulation and death, and the freedom of those above who minister to the energies of fourfold vision. Her body, darkly veiled in parts, but also beautiful in face and crowned with stars, indicates the more limited range between the single vision of analytic thinkers and the threefold vision of organized innocence. Near her veiled part can be seen the wooded Greek temple which, as Mr. Grant points out, can be associated with Blake's critique of Greek philosophy and art: the latter is seen by him as a developed form of single vision, its passion for beauty being restricted by its devotion to number and measurement. On the right of the picture, on the other hand, is enacted the process by which the awakening spirit learns to embrace the energy of twofold vision, passing through the fires of experience and emerging triumphant in creation; above, figures thus initiated emerge into the clarified threefold vision of Blake's Beulah, from which, dwelling near the waters of life, they can discern the potential triumph of fulfilled desire.

It is in this way, on my reading of the picture, that Blake works upon and reinterprets the text of Revelation; and I find for my own part that such a reading structures the dynamics of the design in a way that brings out its infinite dimension and makes it a pleasure to look at. It is natural that interpretations should differ, of course, and I have no dispute with Mr. Grant on that score. I have dealt with his remarks at length simply because he has chosen to go further: he has described *Blake's Humanism* as "unreliable" (and even rebuked the reviewers who found things to praise in

it!) without producing a scrap of evidence in substantiation; and so far as *Blake's Visionary Universe* is concerned he has accused me of being "shoddy" and "unsound" in my scholarship and lacking in "rectitude" in my arguments--all on the basis of what turns out, on examination, to be a single error. In doing so, moreover, he has not always shown himself to be exactly impressive either for the accuracy of his own scholarship or for his methods of argument. In all fairness, however, I should add that I found many of the detailed points in the remainder of his articles interesting and persuasive, and I look forward to reading his forthcoming interpretation. I hope that those who are interested in the Arlington Court picture will read both that and others (including my own, in its full context) and work towards an interpretation which squares with their own sense of the way in which Blake works as an artist.

MINUTE PARTICULARS

JANET WARNER: GLENDON COLLEGE, YORK UNIVERSITY, TORONTO

James Vine

James Vine, according to rumor, was supposed to have been one of Blake's principal patrons, and the man who commissioned *Milton*. He is mentioned in the Keynes-Wolf *Census* (p. 102), and in Bentley's *Blake Records* he turns up lunching with Blake and Linnell (p. 275), and purchasing *Job*, but there is little evidence to date that he was a principal patron, or is there even much certainty about his identity. However, I was able to discover a few more details about him, while coincidentally spending last summer on the Isle of Wight.

The *Census* calls him James Vine, a merchant of Puckster, Isle of Wight. For this information it refers to Bohns catalogue of 1843, which seems to be non-existent, according to *Blake Records*. In any case, the proper address on the Isle of Wight is Puckster Cove. Vine was buried in the churchyard of St. John the Baptist Church in Niton, Isle of Wight, on 16 July 1837 at the age of 63. In this same church, a brass plaque has been erected to the memory of his daughter, Augusta, by her son, Arthur.

Augusta was born in Puckster in 1821, implying that the Vines were living in the house called Puckster Close at the time. This was presumably their country house, Blake and Linnell having lunched in London. According to the church records, Augusta married Alexander Mitchell-Innes, but their son later took the name of Arthur Vine Innes-Vine and lived on at Puckster Close. He is still remembered by the church sexton at Niton. Arthur is said to have turned Roman Catholic and sold the house before he died, having been well known as the local squire and benefactor. If James Vine did indeed purchase much of Blake's work, it would be interesting to find out if an Innes-Vine descendant has a book or painting hidden away.

G. E. Bentley, Jr. wrote me from England that he has recently found a few more

incidental references to meetings between Mr. Vine and Linnell; perhaps the future will turn up something more concrete about the actual purchases of this rather elusive patron.

G. E. BENTLEY, JR.: UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

An Apocryphal Blake Engraving: *THE MINOR'S POCKET BOOK* (1814)

In 1859 the British Museum Print Room acquired an engraving which it catalogued as by William Blake, "The World before the Flood . . . The Minors Pocket Book 1814." Subsequently the engraving was mislaid; at any rate, it is not now with the Blake Collection in the Print Room.

Since no such print by Blake is known to Blake scholars, my article describing the above evidence ("A Fugitive or Apocryphal Blake Engraving") was printed in the *Blake Newsletter*, 2 (April 1969), 74, expressing not only doubt as to the authenticity of the attribution to Blake but uncertainty about the subject and the work in which it appeared. The point of the present note is to identify *The Minor's Pocket Book* and the subject of the engraving and to lay the ghostly attribution to Blake.

The World Before the Flood is a poem by James Montgomery (1813) which enjoyed some popularity (there was a third edition by 1814 and a seventh by 1826). *The Minor's Pocket Book* is a quite uncommon annual for children published by permutations of the firm of Darton & Harvey (Harvey & Darton; W. & T. Darton; W. Darton; W. Darton, Junr; Darton, Harvey, & Darton). I know of no comprehensive runs of the journal, but isolated issues may be found as follows:

1797	Osborne Collection, Toronto Public Library
1804	Columbia University Library; Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand
1805	Columbia
1807	Columbia; Turnbull
1808	Columbia
1810	Columbia
1811	Columbia
1812	Columbia
1813	Columbia
1814	Mrs. Linda Hannas
1829	Turnbull

The Minor's Pocket Book is a small volume, ordinarily bound in full red morocco with clasps to close it like a kind of envelope. It consists of a few sections of miscellaneous interest, such as New & Full Moons, Holidays, "Memorandum," as well as pages with the date, for a journal. The copies in the Turnbull Library, for example, were used as a journal by Ann Taylor (later Gilbert), who contributed to early issues of the work. (Under 19 March 1807 is:

1 11 6	Rec ^d of Darton for Minors PBk
3 8 3	for City Scenes
2 2	for Juvenile Anecdotes[.]

In some years there was a frontispiece, such as the one in 1829 designed by Stothard;

in other years, an engraved vignette appeared on the titlepage.

The frontispiece for 1814 is identified at the top as having been "*Engraved for the Minor's Pocket Book 1814,*" and at the bottom it is inscribed: "*Nurst by that foster-sire, austere and rude, / Midst rocks and glens, in savage solitude. / The World before the Flood. Canto 7, p. 136.*" The design represents a child holding up a snake before a crouching man. The plate is not signed with the name of either the designer or the engraver, and I see in it no reason to attribute either role to Blake. The British Museum Print Room cataloguer who added Blake's name to the work seems to have been simply mistaken.

