“WINGS OF FIRE”

Designing the Blake Gallery
Stenciling the wall

"Dark’ning

with a terrible crisis

will

mountainous

around

Departin"
Piping down the valleys wild
Piping songs of pleasant glee
On a cloud I saw a child
And he laughing said to me;

Pipe a song about a Lamb;
So I piped with merry cheer,
Piper pipe that song again
So I piped, he wept to hear.

Drop thy pipe, the happy pipe
Sing thy songs of happy cheer;
So I sang the same again
While he wept with joy to hear

Hear the voice of the Lord!
Who present, Past & Future sees
Whose ears have heard,
The Holy Word,
That walk d among the ancient trees.

Calling the lapsed Soul
And weeping in the evening dew;
That might control,
The starry pole;
And fallen fallen light renew!
Wings of Fire:
The Illuminated Books of William Blake

March 19 - April 19
Wings of Fire
The Illuminated Books of William Blake

March 19 - April 19, 2008
Martin Art Gallery, Muhlenberg College

Fiery the Angels rise, and as they rose deep thunder roll'd
Around their shone: indignant burning with the fires of Orc.
Here alone I
In books form’d of metal have written the secrets of wisdom
The secrets of dark contemplation.

Lo! I unfold my darkness:
And on this rock, place with strong hand
The Book of Eternal Brass, written in solitude.

Sund’ring! Thund’ring!
Dark ring
Rent away with a terrible crash
Eternity wide apart
Mountains All around
Departing, departing, departing
Hanging
Prowling
Clf. f
And all between
An ocean of voidness
Unfathomable
How do you know but every Bird that cuts the airy way Is an immense world of delight, clos’d by your senses?
Is an immense world of delight, clos’d by your senses five?

Thund’ring!

The Eternal Prophet
Heav’d the dark bellows
And turn’d restless the tongs;
And the hammer incessant beat:
Forging chains new & new
Numb’ring with links, hours, days & years.

And now his eternal life
Like a dream

Was

blessed

of voidness

omable
Sund’ring! Thund’ring!

Dark’ning
Rent away with a terrible crash
Eternity
Roll’d wide apart
Mountainous
All around
Departing; departing; departing;
Hanging
Frowning
Cli f f
And all between
An ocean of voidness

Unfathomable
I fell back into my light sleep I s
I fell back into my light sleep I saw a great clear river running between the houses I knew and a brighter shore of temples children in long robes how I rose and loved climbing a high hill toward a new sun. Hours later the river slowly washed me and I slept. I slipped into the world, my shoulders...
the new spring winds groaned around me, the distant light of no new star marked me home.

“Coming Home from the Post Office” (1991)
Or Geniuses, calling
ages of woods, rivers, mountains,
ner senses could perceive.
country, placing it under its
& enslav’d the vulgar
om their objects: this began
ed such things.
And did the Courtmane’s Bacon,
Shine teeth upon our chesped hill.
And was Jerusalem builded here,
Among these dark Saxon Miles.
And did those feet in ancient time,
Walk upon England’s mountains green.
And was the Judo Lord of York.

Eternity is in love with the productions of Time.
Eternity is in love with the productions of Time.
Opposition is true friendship.

I will not cease from Mental Fight,
Nor shall my Sword sleep in my hand:
Till we have built Jerusalem,
In England's green & pleasant Land.

Bring me my Bow of burning gold:
Bring me my Arrows of desire:
Bring me my Spear: O clouds unfold!
Bring me my Chariot of fire!

And did the Countenance Divine,
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here,
Among these dark Satanic Mills?

And did those feet in ancient time,
Walk upon Englands mountains green:
And was the holy Lamb of God,
On Englands pleasant pastures seen!

Preface to Milton (1804)
Proverbs of Hell

Drive your cart and your plow over the bones of the dead.
The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom.
A fool sees not the same tree that a wise man sees.
The most sublime act is to set another before you.
Prisons are built with stones of Law, Brothels with bricks of Religion.
The lust of the goat is the bounty of God.
The cistern contains: the fountain overflows.
One thought fills immensity.
Always be ready to speak your mind, and a base man will avoid you.
Every thing possible to be believ’d is an image of truth.
The tigers of wrath are wiser than the horses of instruction.
Expect poison from standing water.
The eyes of fire, the nostrils of air, the mouth of water, the beard of earth.
To create a little flower is the labor of ages.
Exuberance is Beauty.
Improvement makes strait roads, but the crooked roads without improvement are roads of Genius.
Sooner murder an infant in its cradle than nurse unacted desires.

from *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1790)
of fire, the nostrils of air, the mouth of water, the beard of earth.

A little flower is the labor of ages.

Ancient is Beauty.

Emptiness makes strait roads, but the crooked roads without improvement.

Die of Genius.

murder an infant in its cradle than nurse unacted desires.

from The Marriage of Heaven and Hell (1790)
15 August 1827

My Dear Friend,

Lest you should not have heard of the Death of Mr Blake I have Written this to inform you—He died on Sunday night at 6 Oclock in a most glorious manner. He said He was going to the Country he had all His life wished to see & expressed Himself Happy, hoping for Salvation through Jesus Christ—Just before he died His Countenance became fair. His eyes Brighten’d and He burst out into Singing of the things he saw in Heaven. In truth He Died like a Saint, as a person who was standing by Him Observed—He is to be Buryed on Friday at 12 in morn. Should you like to go to the Funeral there will be Room in the Coach.

Yrs affectiony

G. Richmond

Excuse this wretched scrawl
Bonanza for bibliophiles

‘WINGS OF FIRE’

- What: Muhlenberg College’s semi-annual shrine to William Blake (1757-1827), visionary painter, revolutionary engraver, mystic poet and Old Testament prophet.
- Pick hits: One of 37 known colored copies of ‘Night Thoughts’, which has a Blake woodcut on every page; one of 100 signed copies of the 538-page poem by Robert Burns; a rare line-engraved impression of Blake’s print “The Century of.Locale”; tablet-like versions of illustrations for “The Book of Job” on a swirling wooden wall.
- Jack story: Grant Scott, chair of Muhlenberg’s English department, initially decided to exhibit two college-owned treasures: “The Century of.Prince” and “Work Thoughts.” After a Blake expert agreed to lend Blake relics, including copper printing plates, he organized a student seminar to study Blake and design a Muhlenberg Blake experience.
- Assisted by art and theatre professor Scott, students riffed on Blake’s observation that his written works “fly about the room in all directions.” Blake’s poems are stenciled on the Martin Art Gallery’s walls, doors and floor. Some art has meaning, “white沃土,” for example, is stamped out like alphabet soup laced with acid.
- Walls are also decorated with copies of Blake’s fanciful pictures of human, animal and letter forms. The “F” in a large painting of Blake’s last name is climbed by poet Alex Erisberg, who hallucinated that Blake sang to him. “Blake has such an epic style,” says Scott. “He thinks big with his words and images. We honor his imagination, his wit, his iconoclasm, his daring. He wasn’t just some mystical, messianic prophet; he was a fine craftsman who worked on a very small scale very delicately.”
- Historic curiosity: Original electrotypic demonstrates Blake’s “Illustrated,” “Intense,” metal casting process, which he said came from his deaf brother, a former printer.
- Ben Franklin connection: Both Bill and Ben were known print pamphleteers. Franklin: “The early bird catches the worm.” Blake: “The coltsman forgives the plow, but not the builder.”
- A painter’s sad lot: Blake remained poor because he insisted on printing his poems and illustrations at the same time, a time-consuming, costly method. He hurt his financial chances by angering ministers, monarchs and other possible sponsors with his belief that the world is humanity’sElden ruler.
- Blake was buried in an unmarked grave in the Dissenters’ section of a public cemetery. His traveling population was resurrected by a fellow English poet. "There was no doubt that this poor man was mad," said William Wordsworth, "but there is something in the madness of this man which interests me more than the sanity of Lord Byron and Walter Scott.
- Exhibit details: Through Saturday, Martin Art Gallery, Muhlenberg College, 2400 Locust St, Allentown. Hours noon-5 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Friday and noon-5 p.m. Saturday. 610-618-3481, www.muhlenberg.edu/artgallery.