

Papakura Post Office

a spazmodical



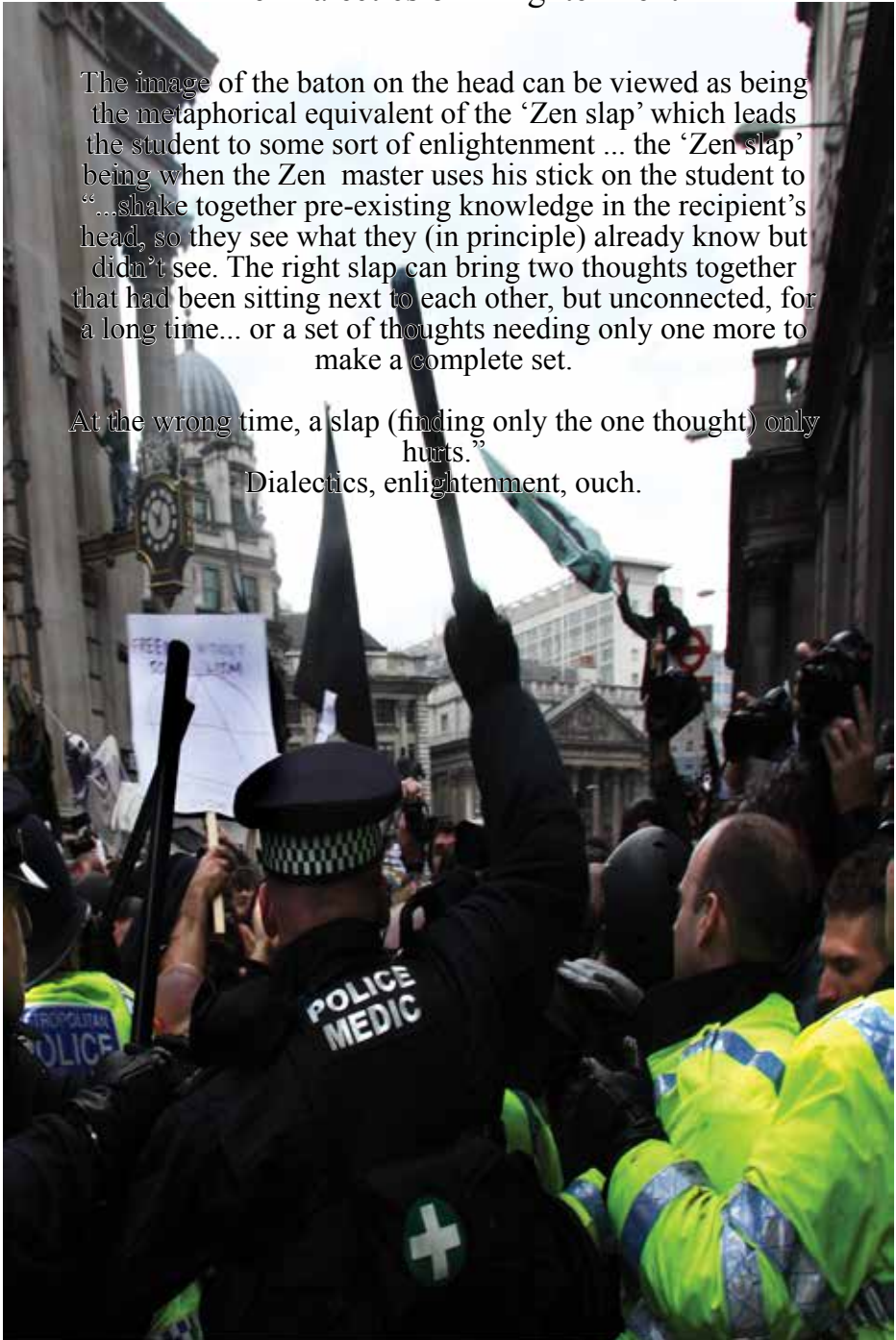
NEW JERUSALEM

‘The Dialectics of Enlightenment’

The image of the baton on the head can be viewed as being the metaphorical equivalent of the ‘Zen slap’ which leads the student to some sort of enlightenment ... the ‘Zen slap’ being when the Zen master uses his stick on the student to “...shake together pre-existing knowledge in the recipient’s head, so they see what they (in principle) already know but didn’t see. The right slap can bring two thoughts together that had been sitting next to each other, but unconnected, for a long time... or a set of thoughts needing only one more to make a complete set.

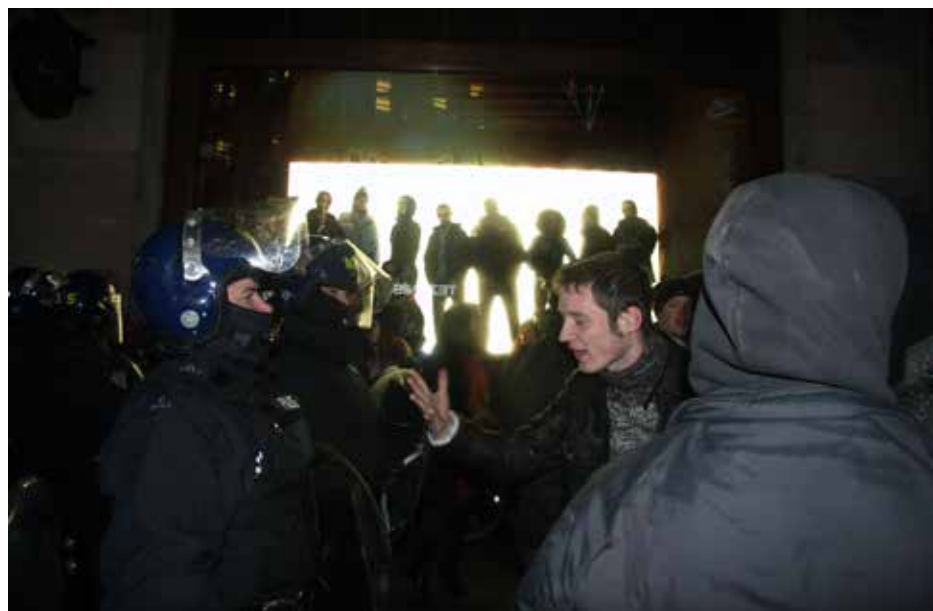
At the wrong time, a slap (finding only the one thought) only hurts.”

Dialectics, enlightenment, ouch.

















Blake's London

Blake was born in Broad Street, off Golden Square, Soho, in 1757. His parents were both artisans and non-conformist Christians, who thus gave him his particular formative background. It is believed that they were also members of the Moravian Church, a Bohemian sect influenced by the free will theology of Wyclif and the religious anti-Feudalism of the medieval Lollards. Other members of his family are thought to have been Muggletonians, the most moderate wing of the mystical antinomian movement. This unusual sect was characterised by their bizarre materialism (in which even God, or alternatively Christ, was a physical being, somewhere between five and six foot tall, who dwelt on another planet!) and not surprisingly by their strong hostility to rationality, which they saw as the tool of the Devil, something with which Blake also became sympathetic to in part. But his most crucial influence was perhaps his mother's interest in the Hermetic Christian mysticism of Jacob Boehme, via London's active Behmenist societies, as well as the teachings of his spiritual heir, the visionary, mystical spiritualist Emanuel Swedenborg. The latter would live on in London till his death in 1772, and would also directly influence the young Blake via the Swedenborgian New Jerusalem Church with which he was briefly associated.

When Blake himself began to have visions – the most famous being his seeing angels in a tree on a visit to the then rural village of Peckham Rye - it was the religious faith of his parents, and particularly his mother's, that allowed them to accept this as a gift, rather than denounce it as a form of madness, as many others would. Regardless of the true nature of Blake's visions this greatly helped him contextualise them positively, and his family soon encouraged him to take up an artistic career that would channel his gifts.

The area around Blake's home at the time was also mostly rural, but at the age of fourteen he became an apprentice to an engraver in Great Queen Street, Covent Garden. He was apprenticed to a senior member of the Society of Antiquaries, which gave him access to a variety of ancient sources in his ongoing studies of the mytho-poetic. Just across the road at this time Freemason's Hall was under construction, and the Masons were still meeting in the tavern next door, now the site of the Connaught Rooms. This effected Blake in many ways, not least by the fact that many Freemasons of the period were political radicals, and several of Blake's friends and associates would eventually join them. Blake's radical affiliations were far closer to another more grassroots association of the time, the emerging Neo-Druid movement.

His apprenticeship would lead to his discovery of a new technique for combining words and coloured pictures on mass printing plates. All Blake's poems were from then on combined with his evocative imagery when published, the first time this had been seen. A key feature of his work was a synthesis of word and form. Not only were the visual arts combined with his poetry but also the musical, as many were written to be sung. But most of all it was the imagination he sought to stimulate, seeing this as the seat of genuine spirituality. Though for him the imagination, while often quite fantastical for him, was not a mode of escape or fantasy as such, but rather a deeper connection with reality, and an aesthetic re-contextualisation of that reality. Thus even his most imaginative abstract poems still contain a symbolic representation of the actual lived reality of his time. Likewise he thought the

Old Testament Prophets and Christ himself were simply visionary poets who had been taken too seriously by religious Jews.

His obvious artistic talents lead him to be admitted to the prestigious Royal Academy, and it was at this time that he expressed his opposition to the Rational Materialism of the likes of Isaac Newton, and their mechanistic view of the world. Newton became a symbolic demon for Blake. It was this view that sent him on a different path to some of his best friends in the radical movement of the time, such as Tom Paine, who remained a staunch rationalist, but this never effected their friendship.

After dropping out of the Academy Blake moved closer to the radical underground of London, maintaining himself as a freelance engraver, while pursuing his own art. He had earlier flirted with politics when he joined the mob in the Gordon Riots that stormed Newgate Prison, releasing political prisoners, and everyone else. Some claim he was merely swept along with the mob on his way to his apprenticeship workshop. If his involvement in the riots are ambiguous. No such ambiguity existed in his support for the French Revolution however, though it waned after the news of the Terror hit London. Until that time he constantly wore the revolutionaries red bonnet on his daily walks through the streets of London. Blake was a regular attendee at the house of Joseph Johnson, a radical publisher whose bookshop was based near St Paul's. Johnson hosted regular political meetings whose attendees included Tom Paine and Mary Wollstonecraft.

It was here he refined his political awareness and met Paine for the first time. Blake had much in common with the politics of Wollstonecraft and her partner William Godwin who, along with Paine, were the most influential political critics of the age, as well as sharing a dislike for the Establishment in all areas of 18th century life. He only differed in his rejection of reason as the instrument of liberation and change, for him it was always imagination that could alone fill this role. Someone who went a long way along the same lines on this was the poet Percy Shelley. Curiously both Blake and Shelley lived in neighbouring houses in Poland Street, but Blake lived there from 1785 to 1791, while Shelley was only there in the Spring of 1811 before visiting the Godwin's in North London. An even closer miss between Byron and Blake occurred in association with the legendary Wolf Club in the Strand. This home of decadent rakes, on the site of today's Coal Hole pub, then the Fountain Tavern, had been founded by the actor Edmund Kean in 1826.

William Blake's political activities were not only limited by his horror at the violence of the French Revolution, but also his ongoing experiments with engraving, and sometime stormy relationship with his wife Catherine, apparently over his desire to have a concubine in addition to his wife. He had married Catherine in 1782 and shortly afterwards they had moved to Lambeth, nearer to her family in Battersea. It was in his famous garden in Lambeth, with its untended vine, that Blake and his wife often used to sit in its trees naked in imitation of the earlier antinomian Adamites. It was also here that he allegedly hid Tom Paine when the later had to flee the country after being charged with sedition for his pamphlets.

London and Revolution

In one of his most evocative poems, London, we get a feel for the 18th century City in its romanticised reality.

Here the narrator Blake, or more likely the Ancient Bard of the books overall story, describes his melancholic wanderings through London's chartered streets as he calls them. These reflected Blake's own walks, which were not idle strolls it should be said. For someone like Blake in the 18th century walking was the only way to get from A to B. He himself regularly walked between Lambeth and Johnson's House in the City, which even with a ferried short cut between Southwark and the New Temple was no mean feat. Likewise he used to walk from his penultimate home in Poland St, all the way to Wyldes Farm, as well as Hampstead Heath, and back again almost every night, a tall order for a man in his mid 60s. Even in his last years Blake, with his view of the Thames from Fountain Court, would insist on his stroll along its banks. Walking was very much part of Blake's life as it was for many Londoners.

But the key word in this opening verse however is 'chartered'. This replaced 'dirty' in an earlier draft, and was a radical buzzword of the period, which reflects his politicisation at the time. Charters were particularly attacked by Tom Paine, who used the term broadly to criticise the Magna Carta itself, which although had opened the way for greater liberties and protective rights, was increasingly being seen as a tool of the ruling class, that protected their own liberties but whose general provisions could be withdrawn at any time at the whim of the State. Moreover people like Paine and Blake rejected any charter that granted liberties to certain people but not others, seeing liberty as universal or nothing.

"It is a perversion of terms to say that a charter gives rights. It operates by a contrary effect—that of taking rights away. Rights are inherently in all the inhabitants; but charters, by annulling those rights in the majority, leave the right, by exclusion, in the hands of a few. . ." Rights of Man

But more specifically the term chartered referred to the local charters of commerce that were being introduced at the time, that ranged from the protection of trade and business monopolies to tolls placed on roads and bridges then being sold to private interests. In fact the whole of the poem can be seen as protest against the commercialisation occurring in London at this time.

The second verse, "*In every ban, The mind-forged manacles I hear*", highlights two words Blake changed in the final draft, 'ban' and 'mind forged manacles'. The first of these is a reference to prime minister Pitt the Younger's, draconian laws and bans following the French Revolution and related social unrest in Britain. These laws were particularly utilized against the London Corresponding Society of which Paine was a member.

The London Corresponding Society was an association of artisans based in a tavern in Exeter St, in an area now behind the Strand Hotel. Initially focused on parliamentary reform the society became increasingly radical and some saw it as the main link between English Radicalism and the French Revolutionaries. Certainly it would function in part as a coordinating body for

civil protest across the country, and Tom Paine, himself a frequent attendee at the tavern had close links to leading French Revolutionaries. There were also undoubtedly both French and American Revolutionary agents in London at the time, the latter of whom had played a significant role in organising events in the Gordon Riots. But the Corresponding Society seems even at its most radical to have restricted itself to popular activism rather than violent revolution. However even this with its necessity for secrecy and pragmatic alliances was considered by Blake as an unwise development from which he disassociated, claiming deceit and pragmatism would lead to authoritarianism and hierarchy. However he constantly opposed the state's actions against his friends, and the increasing paranoia of the Establishment. It was in this period that new bans on public gatherings and association were imposed, along with laws against sedition and expanded definitions of treason. These measures would ultimately destroy the LCS and lead to the arrest of many of its leaders. Habeas Corpus was frequently suspended in this period, further proving to many the emptiness of Magna Carta.

The Alien Act, led to the regulation and surveillance of all foreigners in Britain, as well as Britons who associated with them. The Alien Office in Holborn set up to control this activity essentially became the first organised intelligence agency, with the assistance of the Post Office, which intercepted mail and copied it, as well as the Police, who since the Gordon Riots had been infiltrating radical groups.

French counter revolutionaries also had their agents in London too, most notably the Chevalier de Eon, the famous transvestite agent based in London who spent half his life disguised as a woman. Most active on the side of the Americans during the Revolutionary War, he is believed to have been involved in the French Revolutionary period in London.

He was most frequently seen in gatherings at the Ship Inn, now behind Holborn station, but at one time moved to Lambeth when it became a centre of social unrest.

The suppression of groups such as the LCS only led to the rise of a former minority of more Nationalist Republicans who desired a far more authoritarian and violent political change. An alliance of the revolutionary organisations the United Britons and United Irishmen came to dominate this movement. But was broken by police infiltration. This ultimately led to the Cato Street Conspiracy, in which an extreme faction of Nationalist Republicans planned to assassinate the entire government at a banquet. But this was infiltrated and broken up very easily. Some have suggested the plot was deliberately allowed to gather steam to cause a media stir when it was exposed. Survivors of this period would become founding members of the Fenian Movement that terrorised Victorian London.

Returning to Blake's poem, the term 'Mind Forged Manacles' replaced 'German forged links' in an earlier version of the poem, which originally referred to both the influence of the Hanoverian Royals and the German mercenaries they introduced to England to maintain order. The new term revealed Blake's growing awareness that it was not just external power that was repressive but the inner mindset that both deployed oppression and more importantly accepted it.

The penultimate verse with its references to the chimney sweeps and soldiers tells of the experience of the working class, both in work and war, while the final verse and added to completed poem only later is believed to be concerned primarily with prostitution, at a time when there were 50,000 prostitutes in London and sexually transmitted disease was rife. All of which Blake attributes to commercial forces.

But at least one commentator sees a positive message in the engraved image that went with the poem, and states in relating it to another image from his poem Jerusalem:

The engraved designs for "London" and plate 84 of Jerusalem suggest an extra graphical message. In the former, an old man is being led by a child stage left into darkness; in the latter, the same figures are exiting stage right and moving from darkness into light. This suggests that Jerusalem is to be read as a corrective to the social evils described in "London."

Jerusalem can be read on many levels, at face value it is a mystical vision of a utopian London, complete with four golden pillars at its corners, though they are actually at St Johns Wood, Islington, Kentish Town, Primrose Hill, with its centre in Golden Square where Blake was born, making an odd shape. This more likely reflects Blake's own experience of London rather than a general map, a personal rather than public mythos. But it is more profoundly a vision of a city of liberty, rooted in the imagination and a new mindset. It can be most clearly envisioned as the anti-thesis of the bleak materialism and industrialisation of Blake's time and the rationalistic mindset that created it.

The Dark Satanic Mills of this poem that symbolise everything Blake was opposed to were actually the Albion Mills in Lambeth, which Blake walked by everyday while living there. It was a large new industrialised flour mill, and the first of its kind, that had been burnt down in a riot, with only its blackened remains left. At the time of the riot placards read 'for the Mills of Albion but no Albion Mills'. Everything in Blake's poetry had a particular correlate in this way, even when it symbolised something more, he did not generalise or abstract. Even mythical references such as the 'Labours of Hercules' referred to Blake's life in Hercules Buildings where he lived in Lambeth, and his rejection of 'Apollo' was not just a reviling of a solar archetype, but also a real critique of the Apollo pleasure gardens near his home! He was constantly reading his local environment as a mythic narrative, without losing any of its reality, but rather fusing the two. The Mill was Blake's core negative image, not only did it reflect the actual Albion Mill, and all mills like it, but also the later factories also called industrial mills. All of which were particular examples of a blueprint and mindset within western culture, the mill as the image of the universe as machine. A deeply rooted cultural archetype going back to ancient pagan myths of an ordered universe, with a revolving world axis turning on a mill stone. For Blake the London Stone, as a focal point of measure in the City was also a tool of quantification and reason, and so a millstone as much as a milestone. Likewise rationalists were called millers by him.

Blake can be seen as the Romantic face of 18th cent radicalism, seen as a visionary by some and mad by others, though arguably some of the current social and ecological problems caused by industrialisation seem to bare him out.

The radical movement continued in London for some time, but with the failure of the French revolution and the decline of the organised movement in England, especially following the Cato Street Conspiracy, that led to a tightening of already draconian laws, many revolutionaries including Paine himself fled to America or Ireland, while Blake retreated into the vaster scapes of his own imagination.

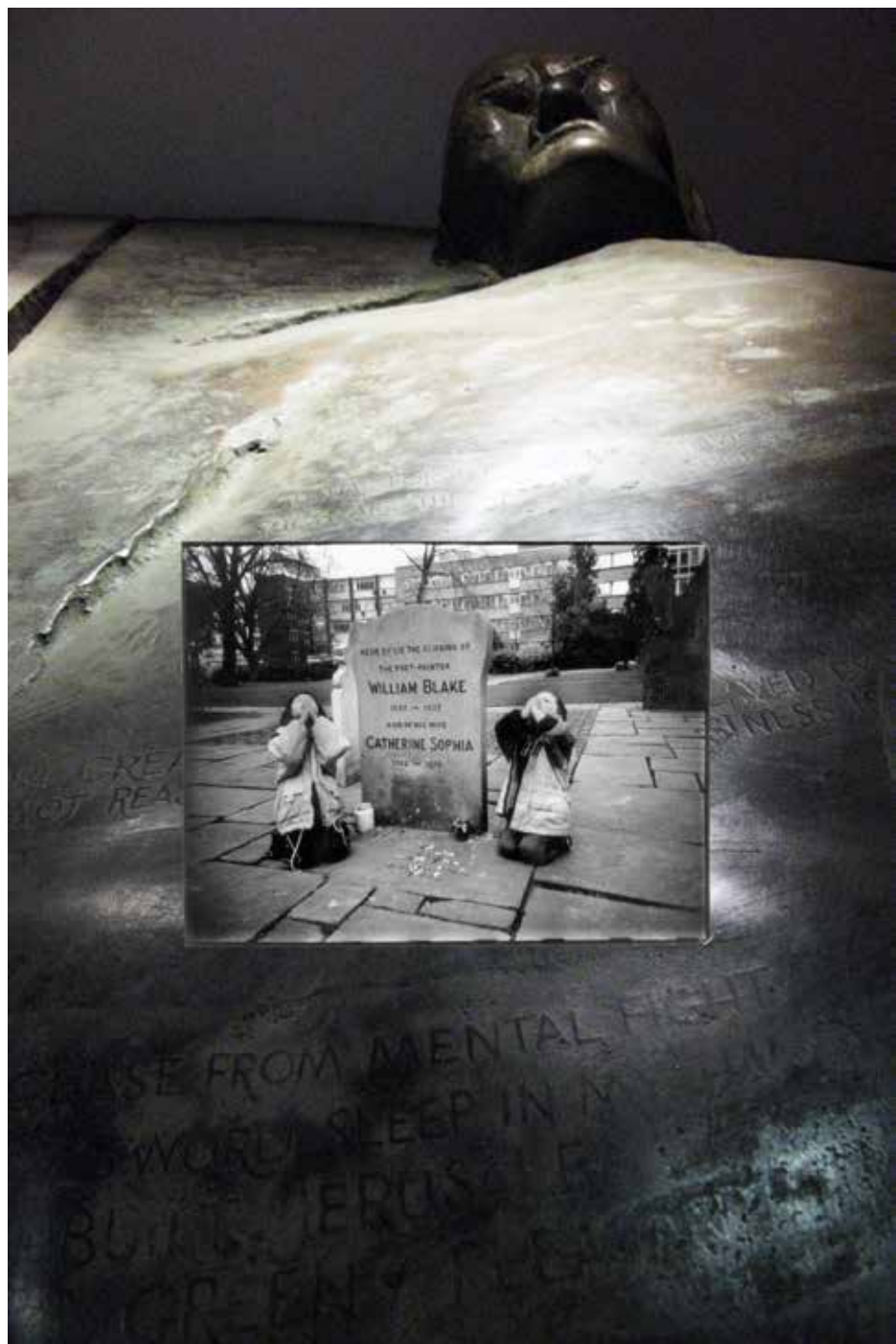
Blake died in 1827 and was buried in a mass grave at the non conformists graveyard at Bunhill Fields, where his parents had also been buried, and was later joined there by Cathrine.





Blake's 250th Birthday on Blake's Steps and Ice Sculptures by Martin Sexton









Blake's 250th Birthday on Blake's Steps and Ice Sculptures by Martin Sexton







[Niall McDevitt](#) : The king.

A haunting picture of Windsor, unposed, unplanned, a negative of his soul as he meets his non-conformists, a gold ring on his little finger he'll never give, shadowed in the backseat window, his mistress eclipsed by the flash of an anarchist's camera. His inner lizard shivers.

What was he thinking? Polo fields of youth? Diana? Is this death rigged? Another death in a car? For Wills? Is the mob rented? Mummy. Where's the bladdy army?

[Aidan Andrew Dun](#): all based in fear will fall, all based in love will stand. violence is the nature of the system and the only answer is non-violent action & 'mental fight' to build jerusalem, here and now, in London

we dance therefore we exist...

reptiles, lizards? i'm not interested. (our apocalyptic times are full of theories needing a swift jet of bullshit-repellent in their self-assured direction. and yet the demons of tradition are no joke.) i do know that charles had nothing to do with the death of di, though extraordinary forces seek to make it appear that way and additionally prevent his accession.

the man does good things through the princes trust and he's one of the most visible spokesmen for the environment on this endangered earth. however i do quarrel with his role as salesman for the british military industrial complex, yet as we know in blakean non-manicheean dualism war is a necessary 'contrary' UNTIL the synthesis of jerusalem is achieved. no doubt charles' class needs a wake-up call (like many others amongst us) but poking a lady in the ribs is not the way, that's the act of a borderline psychopath and must be condemned; while the brutality of the police, who have left an individual (every bit as sacred and unique as the d of a) brain-damaged needs also to be anathematized by all enlightened peeps
blessings of the pan cross

NMcD: Aidan, I'm writing from Hammersmith, not Kings Cross. In Hammersmith we're left-wing and we wield hammers - like Los, Blake's 'blacksmith of man raging round his anvil'. I'm not sure what these blandishments about dancing and love and fear a...re supposed to be saying or what they have to do with the age-old debate on the monarchy.

Having spent 20 years in London and havng assimilated intellectually I have fallen into the non-conformist camp. They refuse the Church of England because the king/queen is the head of that church, since Humpty Dumpty. I saw the nonconformists of today dancing at Fraser Clark's production of THE WARP - which I celebrate in 'The Drum'.

The point about the photo above is that it IS non-violence. The royals were spared. All they were subjected to was a comic scarification. Peace brother! The photograph is sublime, the most enigmatic shot of Mr Windsor we'll ever see.

An Irishman - from the Republic of Ireland - I'm a republican, not in an IRA sense, or less so, but in a European sense, in a French sense, in a 1789 sense. The kings and

queens of today are safari animals. We don't need them. The don't need themselves. Who needs people that have to fly by helicopter to tiny unnamed islands off the coast of Scotland just they can picnic away from prying eyes? Their absurd fame levels are unearned and must drive them half-insane.

Charles makes some nice noise about the environment but he can afford to make some nice noises. He's not a leader, merely a well-mannered parrot. On the flipside he makes some silly noises about architecture. Hanoverian to the last, he'd have us live in a Georgian theme park. I want to live in a 21st century city, not an 18th!

And you've said it, not me. The reason the royals are so useful - apart from the tourist revenues as Sir Rotten pointed out in that astonishing and subversive masterpiece GOD SAVE THE QUEEN - is that they are the perfect PR front for the English war-machine. How bored they must be by the Remembrance Day Parades and the charity work, all done to try and assuage their own imploding consciences and to somehow dignify England's military-industrial psychosis. I was born into a neutral country, the Republic of Ireland, which fights NO WARS. England is the polar opposite, a country which fights wars for the sake of fighting wars, to keep its hand in, for practice.

Afghanistan, mark my words, is PAINTBALL.

Living in Hammersmith, I've found out a few things. Leigh Hunt, who lived here, was imprisoned for calling George IV a 'Fat Adonis of 50'. His estranged Queen Caroline of Brunswick lived here during is coronation. The intellectuals and the masses hated him, loved her. Read Shelley. On George III 'An old, mad, blind, despised and dying king...' My poetry is a king-mocking poetry, and the poets I love are king-mockers.

Morrissey's THE QUEEN IS DEAD is another.

'Dear Charles don't you ever crave / to appear on the front of the Daily Mail / Dressed in your mother's bridal veil?' Check out Jarman's video for it.

Needless to say, Charles and co. are constitutionally incapable of appreciating subversive art. The Three Degrees...? The Windsors are direct descendants of George III and IV. Guess what? When Queen Caroline banged on the door of Westminster Abbey as the crown was being lowered on her husband's head, they refused her admittance. She'd been a right royal pain in the arse, and had made the first family look ridiculous. 20 days later she died, claiming she'd been poisoned. Now I don't say outright that the powers-that-be killed Diana, but I do say there is a historical precedent. Diana was the Windsors' Queen Caroline. It's in their blood.

Thank you for your comment which I found eloquent and passionate and sincere and DIFFERENT. I've always known that your Kings Cross and Vale Royal mantras implied such a position.

I differ. For me, they are legitimate targets. I neither love nor fear the Windsors, but I hope their house falls. We need to move out of the history books and all the repetitive disorders of history.

ROYAL POCKETMONEY

buy out the island's
cancer-rich core
for the lizard clans

...

the coins the queen's
Mona Lisa grins
are not for the likes of us

a dressing-down
from the toppermost doggy
'first is best'

bullion and sugar
teas of the east
liquid tons of claret

busts of the heroines
page 3 framed
sunned mirrored starred booby-trapped

and the lions yawn
in stone dreams
beware of the big cats

on the very margins
of the very margins
beyond the knobs and knockers

royal jelly is set
wibbly wobbly
a sense of wonder

eros is busy
with Robin Hood
in the cherub's cuibicle

fun in function
cash-icers share-icers
uh oh MIIIIIIIIIND THE CRAAAAAAAP

she scrubs up well
the royal gorilla
in a pink versace

fuck the snap
fuck the crackle
and - seriously - fuck the pop

the coffee wars
mama latte
milk-lava froth-inundations

and the honey monsters
with the hairy schlongs
manning the sweet-stalls

on the left hand
is an occult ring
kiss it Mr. Cockface

a cut in rates
champagne tax
bubble bubble fucks bizz

Mrs. Windsor and co.
on the dole
now that's what I call polo

this is thin land
for a harlequin
and a wispy wispy song

ADD: political sloganeering means nothing. left wing, right wing, all death, as blake pointed out. revolution has changed everything except the human heart. fraternite drowned in its own blood on the steps of the guillotine. be the change you wi...sh to see in this world, said mahatma g, putting the power and the responsibility back with the individual.

clichéd superficial takes on charles are familiar, he's an easy target. but remember he was a lifelong friend of kathleen raine's and also enjoyed a great closeness with ted hughes, he can't really be the cardboard cutout of convenient popular myth. consider also the temenos academy before you dismiss charles, the man who has said that he wishes to be 'defender of faiths'. i'm not suggesting he's perfect, far from it, but if he's a human he must be given respect for sharing and suffering our common existential nightmare. calling someone a lizard is just an easy way to dehumanize them as a prelude to... what? personally i'd prefer to be ruled, if i must be ruled at all, by an enlightened individual rather than by that collective joke called a political party, mask of the heartless international corporation.

my point is that we all have a tendency to project our own psychological shadows into the world and onto an 'enemy' out there responsible for all our problems. while we're doing this the true enemy within is very comfortable indeed. of course there are serious exterior problems but given the harshness of social conditions around the planet right now (eg red china with its farming of body-parts and organs from a vast prison-population) i consider britain one of the most enlightened societies left in this GOD-forsaken section of the local galaxy. i am proud to be british, which is not to say we're perfect. you want leaders do you? you may regret it when the pigs come to power.

i stand for the celtic church of the pan cross in kings x and there in the near-future we dance, my8.

'the agony of life can bring the greatest giants to their knees, the action of dancing sets the spirit free'

rumi

what you describe somewhat chillingly as 'comic scarification' (the killing always starts that way, with funny little games, ask those who've survived torture-chambers) is actually the betrayal of the hope and powe...r of non-violence because as soon as we respond to violence with violence we are like the ones we despise. if organizers of demos made big media waves about the fact that everyone - every single person on the demo - was armed with ONE ABSOLUTELY LETHAL WEAPON the police would soon get the message and quit their animal rites.

that weapon? obviously, a mobile webcam hooked up to the internet and beaming live from the streets. by espousing the violent solution niall, no matter how tempting it may be under provocation, you are directly betraying the jerusalem dream of blake. christ died for the feminine, the way of non-violence, that's why he was killed.

and did those feet in ancient times
walk upon england's mountains green?
blessings of the pan cross

NMcD: Blake said 'Princes seem to me to be fools. Politicians seem to me to be fools. They something other than human life.'

Ken Campbell used to show us footage of Icke because he was impressed with how much fun Icke was having. The 'lizard' theory is of course tabloid, but it's sourced in Revelations - and illustrated by Blake - as The Great Red Dragon. Icke's metaphor is apocalyptic comedy. It's nice to see someone prominent in English life who's NOT angling for Royal honours.

Your respect for Charles is interesting in light of your anti-Masonic tendencies in Vale Royal (which I know he was sent by your mutual architect friend). I did a guided tour of Freemasons Hall recently and the very fruitily accented guide was saying that Charles isn't a Mason, Philip is but retired, and none of the new princes have stepped forward. The Duke of Kent is the boss there and Prince Michael of Kent is boss of the Master Mark lot. Prince Edward might come to the rescue.

Kathleen Raine was a force of nature but politically suspect. Too much Plato in her blood. She misinterpreted two of Blake's most anti-establishment paintings - one of Pitt and one of Nelson - as patriotic. She gets it wrong. Prince Charles of course didn't give a penny to Temenos, just his name and an occasional food hamper or bouquet of flowers. The Windsors are the meanest people in God's earth, thriftier than the Masons.

Hughes work is Darwinian though he was also a British-Israelite and so a perfect poet for the establishment to take up. His values are instinct with theirs. Warmongers / hawks. 'The allotment of death'. And he could cast his rod on the Queen's fishing grounds to his heart's content far from the dismembering hordes of feminists who'd have given him the Orpheus treatment. Hughes was our modern-day clean-shaven Cernunnos, lord of the animals.

Some poets clearly get off mystically on a royal connection and perhaps you are among them. I dig the poetic dimension of British-Israel but not the political - e.g. Blair as Middle East peace envoy...

I alone have worked out that the mystical key to English poetry is: The Jewess. More anon.

Me, I'm a Blakean-Joycean Irish-Israelite. We care not for kings but for real people, free from the taint of the psychopathocracy. They'll give you nothing, friend. Don't look up to them. 'The Hungry sheep look up and are not fed.'

Now Captain Beefheart, there's a prince.

I dig your river, dig your Celtic Church, dig your Rimbaud visions, but the monarchism can do without. What would Rimbaud say? When was the last time you read the first poem he wrote in London and his last known poem in verse: 'L'enfant qui ramassa les balles'? A royal-pisstake par excellence from our beloved Rhyme Bawd. Shakespeare, feigning neutrality, actually portrayed the royal houses and aristocratic houses of England as the out-and-out psychopaths they were. His history plays are graphic exposes.

A tercet from Blake:

'The angel that presided o'er my birth
Said: 'Little creature formed of joy and mirth,
Go love without the help of any king on earth.'

I'm not espousing the violent solution. I'm saying we need to be irreverent toward the royals not obsequious. They are the killers and the espousers of violence. That's why they glamourise war.

Also, the little prinnies invariably join the ...armed forces not only because they are DNA psychopaths - Prince Harry of England and all that once more unto the breach - but because it saves a fortune on security. They're always surrounded by an army or a navy or an airforce.

ADD: you've only recently understood this, niall? i'm amazed. charles and his dad are barely on speaking terms and the issue is membership of grand lodge. its been that way for more than thirty years. i admire charles greatly for this stand. ditt...o the young princes. but i don't look to charles for anything. patronage of the project in kings x is inevitable in my view, but with or without, the same values will operate in intelligent playground/ vale royal

those are rasta values, niall. peace and love and more music.

we will police intelligent playground with rasta, white and black. it will be biblical, sacred, funky & serious fun. (jamaica house arrives in kx 2011.)

if the royals wanna come down and boogie that's ok, no problem there. but no old-style status-games inside intelligent playground. and yet, as stravinsky said, when asked to define music:

hierarchy

if you have a problem with hierarchy then you also have a problem with music (which isn't good for poets, it makes writings jar, makes 4 harsh noise.) and i must remind you that the first poem rimbaud ever wrote was addressed to a prince blessing of the pan cross

NMcD: Higherarchy, lowerarchy, ca m'est egal.

Hierarchy is for your friends the Masons, pyramid-fetishists in general, compulsive one-uppers, and avid royal-watchers, none of which I am. Windsors with aprons, Windsors without, are equally repugnant... to me.

Though I have friends from all walks and all talks, I run from the Tory swarms. You court such swarms. I've had dinner with King David and smoked heroin with his sister and dreamed it off under a quartet of original Blakes, conveniently hung over my poppy-red pillow. That was no seduction! 'Tories are very sexy people' (Peter Stringfellow). Rimbaud could be forgiven for writing a royal panegyric - in Latin - at 10. By the time he was 17 he'd seen through the illusion and was portraying the prince, exiled scion of a moribund monarchy, as masturbating himself to myopia. The French royals are evaporated now, mon ami, as the English will evaporate anon. Don't know what you see in the Windsors. Charles has a copy of your book, but that

doesn't mean he's read it. You hoping for honours? The prophet Zephaniah made fools of 'em all by pointing out the 'Empire' in their medals. Blake was 'Prophet Against Empire' (Erdman). By thumbs-upping the royals you thumbs-up Old Empire. With the colonised Scotland in you, the colonised Israel in you, the colonised Caribbean in you, we'd have thought you'd be more libertarian, more tasteful, more independent, more thoughtful.

All very well for the Celtic Church to dig Arthur and Merlin. The C of E, Prince Charles and Paul Daniels are a poor substitute. Who'd be their Taliesin?

All best for Solstice x

ADD: i sense you have a real prob in that you don't like brits. after what was done to ireland understandable, my friend, but you must admit the irish lived under kings and queens for centuries and today you mi...ght find the same anti-egalitarian nightmare over there; but it would be more difficult for you to fulminate with such enthusiasm in your native land, should you decide this place isn't good enough for you.

honours? of course we both deserve them, but i'm happy just to have my work and what it stands for widely known in the uk and international underground. (mccool is an exocet missile aimed at the establishment and its fire shall not be contained.) in my view, honours come, not in this world, but after death, when a life has been real. poetry is a shamanic passport to other higher realities. how can you, who know the sustained and radical vision of mccool and vale royal, call me a tory-lover? in the light of such remarks and accusations i begin to feel our friendship on the wane. if i'd wanted honours in this life i'd have gone through the establishment university-trough instead of living in the squats 14 years (after four years on the road 1968-1972) i love people if they're real, no gender, no colour, rich or poor, i see only their hearts, good and bad.

i try to stay good, to stay real and stay rasta.

one love of the pan cross

NMcD: 'Opposition is true friendship' Blake

I AM a Brit in the sense that I am a native of the British Isles and am entitled to free expression....

Always, with the ruled, against the rulers. Anti-Upstairs/Downstairs. Anti-authoritarian.

Niall (from Old gaelic 'nia' - champion) is my license to champion English poets which I do remorselessly, because I think English poetry is world class, today's as yesterday's).

My work attacks the war-machine and the class war-machine.

English poery has two traditions: royalist and anti-royalist. It's a divisive issue.

Some of my best friends are English! And that includes you.

You'll be hearing from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. I recommended you to them for a project. They want a handwritten poem on a bird or natural theme.

Xmas blessings from Hsmith

ADD: pushkin was friend to the romanov czar but who stood to benefit potentially from that friendship? the czar, of course. 'the eye with which you see the world is the same eye with which GOD sees you' boehme (as i recall)
blessings of the pan cross

NMcD: Then my god sees the world and its human beings as equal in their gift of life. My god sees that no human being has the right to oppress another human being. My god sees royalty as humanity mistaking itself for divinity; and my god laughs at... it (as your Rimbaud laughed at it).

I have allied myself - not with some embittered IRA element - but with the traditions of English non-conformism and of European mystical anarchism. There are no shortage of living English poets who think the same as me, or Europeans. And London is crawling with anarchists from beyond Europe also.

My take on it is from Norman Cohn who wrote PURSUIT OF THE MILLENNIUM: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists in the Middle Ages. The Czar banished Pushkin. My take on Czarism is in the poem 'A Night in with Roget'.

You call Rimbaud a religious poet. Sean Bonney calls Rimbaud a political poet. You both survive on half-truths. I have made the realisation that Rimbaud is in a special category of poets: the politico-religious. Blake and Milton are also politico-religious. There are lots of religious poets and lots of political poets, but politico-religious poets are rare. The avant-left of today has made the mistake of thinking it can go secular, and of assuming that a consensus has been reached among the left that the mystic can be jettisoned. It can't. Look around you at what New Labour did and what the New Tories are doing. The Royal Family is the pyramid-tip of all that. None of it is anything to with 'Christ of Revolution and of Poetry'.

ADD: when you're both anarchist & royalist then you are a blakean but not otherwise since unless you are both you don't philosophically embody the synthesis which is jerusalem, beyond opposition & division & duality, a visionary poet. a religious poet with earth-shaking news for the world.

'when your eye is single your whole body shall be full of light'
naturally like all the rest of us i'm a utopian, an anarchist, a dreamer. (fool on the hill, me, every time.) but only music can bring the golden age, as plato pointed out) i must be a realist though as well, a royalist. even in post-apocalyptic society natural hierarchical vectors of social energy will ensure that leaders emerge in hard-pressed surviving communities. protean kings and queens shall surface and have sudden coronations. we shall see the old ladder effect of natural selection repeated in future demographic structures. (please note i name vale royal so because royalty emerges spontaneously from all classes and backgrounds, it's a similar thing to genius but applies to government more than to art, in our case, poetry.)

blessings of the pan cross at christmas

(when the human countenance divine doth appear to appear from place to place and in

spite of aforesaid darkness people are warmer with each other)

NMcD: When Blake heard through the grapevine that someone had recommended him to George III as Royal Tutor ie. that he would teach art to Prince Regent/George IV/ aka 'Prinny', he immediately stopped teaching. Why? Because he was Republican, sure..., but moreso. He did not wish to be a courtier, to have to dress in a way he did not want, to behave with manners that were alien to him, to have to adopt an enforced obsequiousness, to learn to be both diplomat and dissembler.

Blake was a free man, he could be as he wished to be, say what he wished to say, do what he wished to do. Look what he achieved, away from the pyramid, which is after all nothing but a royal mortuary. The Left is what is always is: LA RESISTANCE. King Jesus be with you.

ADD: lets have the rasta jam and see if you can promote left-wing revolutionary politics ove...r tolstoyan/gandhian anarcho-christianity and non-violent prophetic rastafarianism. the problem with tygers, as blake noted, is that if you evoke only tygers you will end up being eaten by one. (mayakovsky?) the lion must lie down with the lamb. zen proverb: easy to ride the tyger, difficult to dismount

note how the left-wing gods become tyrants in their turn like mao, every inch as cruel as the romanov czars. it is human nature, niall. if we took the babylon police off the streets of london today we'd have the mafia and the yardies in charge tomorrow.

that's why only music (& dance) can bring the golden age. the easy thing about being negative and against everyone who apparently has more (though we are each 100% responsible for our own reality) is that you don't have to think, to think about the facts of human nature, about the fact that, as baudelaire pointed out, every heart nurses a taste for violence and a love of revenge. here is the real enemy for humanity.

in rasta philosophy we don't need to condemn the ones with evil in their hearts, just leave them to face death, which they fear because of their unrighteousness. as far as i understand the first thing on the mystical road is to have no enemies, but speak the truth and never fear.

there's a modern school of buddhism which believes that as a reaction to the chinese occupation of tibet it is justifiable to invoke demonic combat forces. these monks claim earthquakes to be their creation and floods to be their revenge. the dalai lama rightly resists this tendency with its drama and its narrative of great passion. this is a subject from the psychology of the zoas. pushkin was never sent to siberia with the decembrists, he got preferential treatment, who knows why (he was a mason after all, as you know) but he was reinstated after spending a few years away and was given the lowest title at the russian court which infuriated him. his reinstatement however didn't mean that he lost his idealism, the czar appointed himself pushkin's personal censor, which meant he had to read everything pushkin wrote (very good for him)

not all shakespeare's kings and princes are evil, hamlet, lear. kathleen raine: a love-broken poet, a real speaker from the heart, GOD bless her and rest her great spirit.

rasta jam?

one love of the pan cross

plus let me add in case my comment above was a bit off-balance, i massively enjoyed doing the rimbaud-jam with you in london and paris and feel we should do more of these events. our mutual fanaticism about 'les grandes arthur' and our deep engagement with the sunchild of modern poetry fascinates audiences and makes for a unique literary experience, long live the dun/mcdevitt rimbaud-jam

NMcD: I hereby appoint you Chairman of the WHITE RASTAS FOR RIMBAUD. There was no attempt by me to claim Verlaine as Rimbaud's equal. My position is clear, Verlaine is one the half-dozen greatest French poets of the 19th Century. No mean feat. Try it yourself. Rimbaud called him a 'true poet' and that's why he went to Verlaine, to learn from a master craftsman. Rimbaud, though, is one of the all-time geniuses of world literature. That's why Verlaine in turn could learn from him. Verlaine has an obvious image problem. He is unfairly and inadequately received in the Anglophone realm. You yourself - most unfairly - brand him in your RIMBAUD PSYCHOGEOGRAPHER as 'Fuckwit'. I believe Verlaine should be dignified. My own early poem 'Rimbaud' portrays him as 'strawberry-nosed goat of lust' and 'redhead Beelzebub' and so in turn we all channel Rimbaud's negative adolescent perceptions and the retrospective 'Laurel ad Hardy' cum 'Waiting for Godot' bedroom farce of their legend.

Verlaine's poems and letters need to be seriously examined to shed more light on the London episodes. New translations are needed. His poem Sonnet Boiteux (Limping Sonnet or in my version 'Limp Sonnet') open doors into their mutual London.

Scoffing at Verlaine is kids' stuff. Verlaine is Ginsberg to Rimbaud's Dylan.

As for the rasta philosophy, how would that have worked in Vichy France?

Rastafarianism is a serious religion indeed, but I'll leave it to West Indians.

Shakespeare? I was referring to the Histories. Lear and Hamlet are tragedies.

Raine? The love-broken poets are the ones for me, proper Platonists. But she's not politico-religious, like her beautiful friend David Gascoyne.

Charles is a lower-case king. His Pushkin was Andrew Motion.

Freedom is free

Lux

Anthony Rudolf told me a great story. France's greatest living poet Yves Bonnefoy - who has written about and translated Rimbaud - was visiting Jorge Luis Borges just before he passed on. They obviously had a good chat about Rimbaud. As Bonnefoy was taking his leave of the great Argentinian, Borges parting shot was 'N'oubliez pas Verlaine'. Don't forget Verlaine,.. If you can't take it from me, take it from a luminary.

THE LOWER CASE king

the lower-case king cannot keep up with the too many symbols he's inherited. lions, unicorns, stars, garters, they make his head spin and his blood cool. shaving, he sees the salamander. symbolic lions surround him but the problem with real lions is they can't appreciate the difference between him and a common zoo-keeper. his illusion, gilded mirrors... he is physiologically addicted to massive doses of publicity, which

state media supply. omnilocation makes him sacred. a television prisoner, a tabloid prisoner, his soul splits into 50,000,000 shards per diem. gigantified - as a queen bee - he's a small man with silly opinions about buildings, wishing to live elsewhere in time. an 18th century man in the 20th, he'd have been a 16th century man in the 18th. the 21st century is 'horribilis'. the lower-case kingdom is overpopulated, yet death is rampant. they drink, they die. people much cleverer than him write about him all the time; they know him better than he knows himself. the only freedom he has is freedom not to pay. he is a registered charity - pity the most over-privileged man in the country, and make a donation. (his family are niggardly as masons; the royal giro is merely millions). he is bored as a zoological lion, as a stone lion. no art reaches him, no shock, no subversion, no frisson. he's shielded from the tourette's syndrome truth-tellers. a publicity midas, everything he touches turns to publicity. he's a PR front for the masters of war and the military-industrial complex. somehow his inbred splendours dignify the most cynical manoeuvres e.g. shaking hands with rows of corpses. he likes fighting men and doesn't feel comfortable unless surrounded by an army, a navy or an airforce. it's lunchtime. he's taking off in a helicopter to picnic on a tiny, uninhabited and nameless islet off the northern coast. shaving, he cuts the salamander. a dissenter himself, he understands dissenters ie. those who don't know they'll be born again, and soon

'Relationships of ownership
they whisper in the wings
to those condemned to act accordingly
and wait for succeeding kings
I will try to harmonise with songs
...the ancient sparrow sings
And there are no kings inside the gates of Eden'

'The kingdoms of experience
in the precious winds they rot
while paupers change possessions each
one wishing for what the other one has got
and the princess and the prince discuss
what's real and what is not
It doesn't matter inside the gates of Eden'

- Dylan

'J'étais dans son ame comme dans un palais qu'on a vide pour ne pas voir une personne si peu noble que vous...'

'I was in his soul as if inside a palace which had been emptied so that no one as ignoble as myself could be seen in it.'

- Rimbaud



Hi WILLIAM

JUDGE

HELP!

WILLIAM
BLAKE



LEUN DEUN: (notre brick)
POETRY AS URBAN SHAMANISM

1. Urban shamanism is a poetics, originating in London, that seeks to reconnect poetry with aboriginal light. (Leun Deun is the antidote to 'la Londonisation')
2. Taking its cue from Ivan Chthlegov's lament 'We are bored in the city. There is no longer any temple of the sun', urban shamanism has arisen out of the psychogeographical movement. (Psychogeography now brands itself as 'a brand' .)
3. Urban shamanism rejects the materialism that was psychogeography's Marxist/Situationist coping-stone. We do not wish to fight materialism with materialism.
4. Prose sells; the poetry is culverted, forming a system of underground rivers.
5. Urban shamanism calls for artistry over academia, mysticism/magic/mythology over Marxism, and imagination over conceptualism.
6. The work is bohemian. It is aware of the incarnations and reincarnations of bohemia: Dionysians/Orphists/Pythagoreans, Sufis/Haiku masters/Troubadours, Amaurians/Free Spirit/Ranters etc. 'What is going on is a war between those who believe in poetry and those who don't' (Neil Oram).
7. The poetry is multi-stylistic rather than mono-stylistic. English is empathy. It is less about finding your voice than finding your voices.
8. 'The poet, a magician with insecurity' (Rene Char). Magical knowledge is needed to decipher the environs — Centrepoint, Bank, Canary Wharf, Temple — as well as such London-based poets as Shakespeare, Blake, Rimbaud, Yeats. What is sought is not hocus-pocus but accidental magic.
9. The builders of the superstructure need to be at least as serious as the builders of the infrastructure.
10. Urban shamanism is a tradition as ancient as the city itself. The first poems of antiquity to come down to us are 'city laments' e.g. 'The Lament for Unug'. City poetry — on cuneiform tablets — was the first to conserve itself.
11. Though a London movement, the formula is applicable in any city. Charles Olson: 'Polis is this'.
12. Poets go 'beyond the gentility principle' by mixing spirituality with scurrility. The bourgeois is wary of either, terrified of both. Misunderstanding mummifies the work for the later Egyptologists.
13. Urban shamanism — like Surrealism — is an artists' 'ism' rather than an academics' 'ism'. It cannot be done in universities; it can only be done on the streets.
14. Poetry needs to rediscover its real/wild/raw/mad emotions, the spirit of the Dark Lady sonnets. The poem should be a crime of passion. 'Radical heart-search' (Jonathan Griffin).

15. Urban shamanism is avant-garde/mainstream/performance in one e.g. Allen Ginsberg, Amiri Baraka, Anne Sexton. Poetry is not a genre, nor divisible into genres.
16. Poetry is an audiovisual art, not a competitive sport or an academic discipline.
17. Post-Larkin social realism is dull as CCTV. The city is suspended between New Jerusalem and Dis. One of theology's debates is between 'approfondimento' (the metaphysical) and 'aggiornamento' (the quotidian).
City poetry needs both.
18. As in the city our oxygen is polluted, so too the poetry is polluted. It contains negativity, poison, darkness, lead. 'Air can hurt you too' (David Byrne).
19. Story/poem/song: the trinity is indivisible. Poets are also storytellers and songwriters. The lyric is a microcosm of the epic. Concept poetry? Thanks but no thanks.
20. Glossolalia, echolalia, coprolalia... There is no such thing as bad language, only bad usage.
21. Urban shamanism seeks out sacred sites and spaces, turning them into ad hoc shrines. Crossbones Graveyard/William Blake House/Cleopatra's Needle/The Isis-Urania Temple are outdoor theatres par excellence.
22. No uniform politics or political uniforms. Non-conformism doesn't conform even to itself. Poetry in the first decades of the third millennium — as in the 1930s/40s — needs to be political.
23. Poetry should be numerological as well as numerical.
24. Radical pedestrianism is in. The writer is untied from the writing-desk and forced back onto the streets. 'Pedestrian' is no longer used as a critical term. (Poetic driving-licenses are obtainable from The Poetry Society.)
25. Psychogeography/psychohistory/psychoarchitecture/psychoarcheology are less about heritage than illumination. Rimbaud's London prose-poems: Illuminations. 'Juger la profondeur de la ville', to gauge the depth of the city (or literally, to judge the profundity of the city...) The city is a dig.
26. Free verse and formal verse are techniques. One improves the other. Inspiration comes in both. If the L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E and New Formalist poets swapped, it would instantly raise the general standard of poetry.
27. The London of the 21st century, shrouded in twin shadows of Jihad and bankruptcy, should be reflected in the London poetry. 'The City of Assassinations' (Blake).
28. It is not about calling yourself a shaman; it is about recognising that poetry is shamanistic, a DIY magic.
29. A poem should aspire to be a Gesamtkunstwerk (total work of art) i.e. not a Wagnerian opera but an artwork that evokes all the artforms.

30. Lyric/satiric, the Celtic tradition allows for tenderness of lyric and ferocity of satire. The bards were capable of regime-change.

31. Urban shamanism is Judeo-Apache. It speaks for the oppressed against the oppressors. Bible studies and 19th century French poetry are the staple diet. John Fire Lame Deer: 'Artists are the Indians of the white world'.

32. Urban shamanism welcomes the Transition Town movement to the urban centres, and looks to the greening of the city. Ecopoetry is a fusion of nature poetry and political poetry.

33. Christ and the Christian Mysteries are essential to poetry. Christendom is our dragon, longer in the tooth than capitalism. David Gascoyne: 'Christ of Revolution and of Poetry'.

34. Poetry is charismatic language.

35. Art is outrageous because life is outrageous. Shock for shock's sake is disposable. Overstatement, statement, understatement are tools – but it requires the poet to have something to say. Why has poetry ceased to be controversial?

36. The city is also polluted by thoughts, non-stop emissions from the ten million brains of Greater London. Jung called it 'urban neurosis'. The psychosphere is a collective consciousness, a mass-mediated group mind. The poet handles such toxic materials.

37. The committee of urban shamanism is comprised of Shakespeare's falcon, Blake's tiger, Reeves' Crows, Rimbaud's toad, Yeats' swan.

38. In Celtic/Latin/Slavic cultures the heavyweight poets are appreciated. In England, the flyweights/bantamweights/featherweights are more prominent.

39. Urban shamanism is a method for re-reading and re-writing poetry. Past/present/future are mined for aheadness.

40. London is, etymologically, Lud Dun i.e. the Stronghold of Lud, a pan-European solar deity celebrated in Lyons, Leyden, Lugano, Luneburg etc. Rimbaud's name for London — Leun'deun — unveils the camouflage. The Great Mind/Great Memory/Symbol of Symbols, Leun'deun is notre brick.



King Mob Photos by Max Reeves

Blake's London by Steve Ash

Discussion Between Niall McDevitt and Aiden Andrew Dunn

William Blake sees Angels in Peckham Rye by Marlowe Chan-Reeves

Poetry as Urban Shamanism by Niall McDevitt

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THINK SMALL!!!



for Floyd...R.I.P. BRUV!

