

First Draft Film Script for Blake's Cottage Appeal

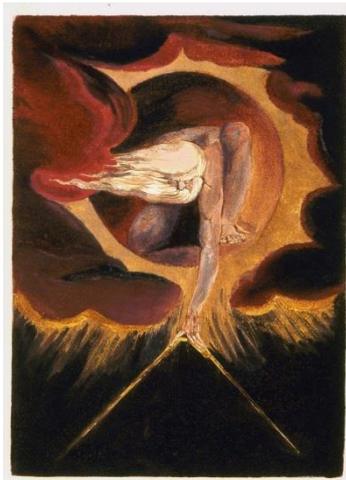


Image fades into actor impersonating Blake (maybe the same actor will be Blake and Catherine. I am imagining their faces in close-up, somehow talking from a visionary space, some sort of "Visionary Heads".)

Blake

I must Create a System, or be enslav'd by another Man's. I will not Reason & Compare; my business is to Create.

He lowers his gaze, as if disposing himself to work. The image changes gently into Catherine's.

Catherine

William Blake was a visionary artist, poet and prophet. He was born in London in 1757 and was witness to dramatic changes in the world, such as the French Revolution and the American War of Independence, in which he saw symbols of the necessary liberation of a sleeping Humanity that he urged to awake in the epic illuminated poems that he wrote and illustrated.

Blake

*...Awake Albion, awake! and let us awake up together.
My Houses are Thoughts: my Inhabitants; Affections,
The children of my thoughts, walking within my blood-vessels,
Shut from my nervous form which sleeps upon the verge of Beulah
In dreams of darkness... (fades)*

Catherine

He came from the dissenting tradition, that questioned the structures of our society and challenged both the limitations imposed by laws and the internal constraints of our 'mind-forg'd manacles'.

At the onset of the Industrial Revolution he foretold the sad diminishing of men and women's spirit in a world governed by greed and reason. He challenged the art establishment of his time, whose leading figure was Joshua Reynolds, by claiming that art is inspired and of the spirit –a claim

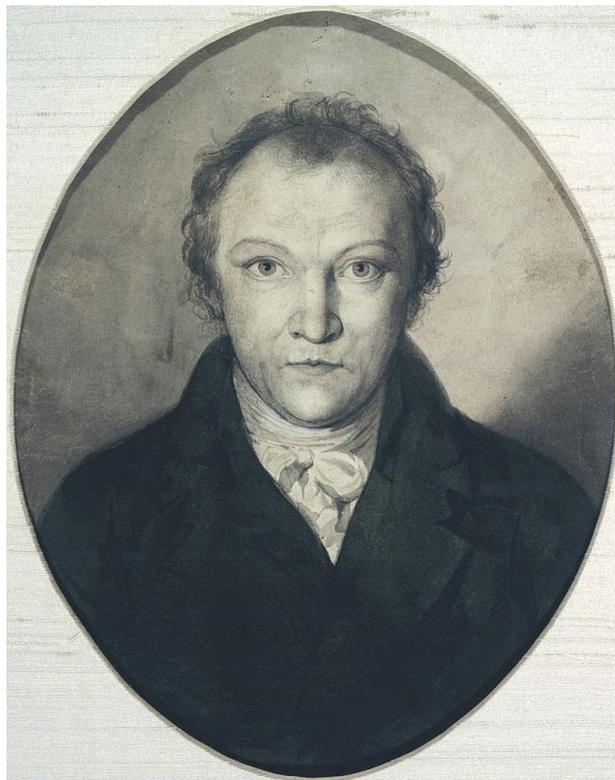
that he upheld until his death in 1827, in poverty and ignored by most, sustained only by his vision and his faith in it, shared by her loyal Catherine.

She turns her gaze to one side and raises her hand gently.

The hand touches Blake's forehead. His eyes are closed (as in the life mask) and on feeling the caress he opens his eyes.

Catherine's voice (off)

One of the greatest geniuses, along with Shakespeare and Newton, that England has given to the world, and one of its most radical thinkers, he lies in an unmarked grave.



His works are read, studied and loved all around the world, but other than a handful of museum collections, nowhere celebrates his extraordinary craftsmanship and creativity.

Image of South Molton Street

William Blake lived in nine houses during his lifetime. Of these only two survive, a small Georgian house in London and a cottage on the Sussex coast.



It was while living here by the ocean that he wrote the words for the hymn *Jerusalem*.

Blake

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

Catherine

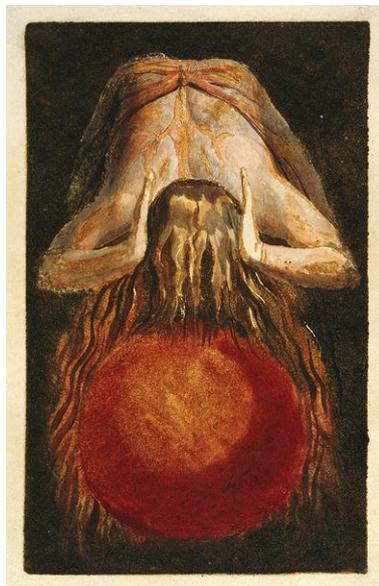
It was here too that he was arrested and charged for sedition.

Catherine (voice off), images of the Cottage

The Cottage in Felpham is now for sale. We need to raise the purchase price of £600,000 by 31 October 2014, so that it can be put into a charitable trust to be held in perpetuity for the benefit of the nation and visitors from abroad.

We need your help.

Blake championed the imagination, so let's raise this money imaginatively. Since *Jerusalem* is sung all over England and known by millions, through crowdfunding everyone can give a small amount, so that the Cottage belongs to everyone.



Blake

*I am inspired! I know it is Truth! For I sing
According to the inspiration of the Poetic Genius
Who is the eternal all-protecting Divine Humanity*

Catherine

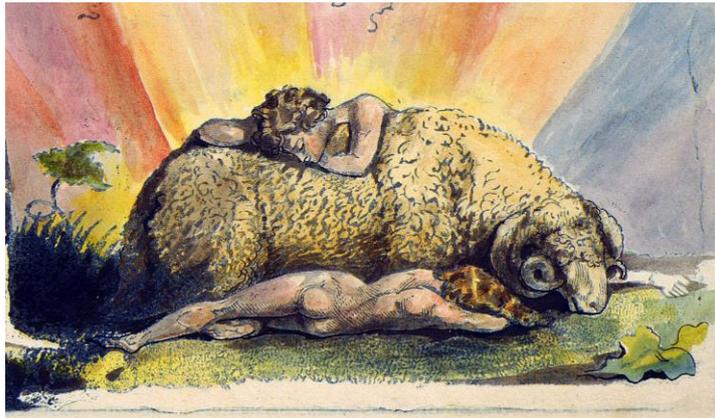
Blake's vision still challenges society's constraints and the art establishment today.

The Cottage shall be a place from which to pick up the challenge...

Images of the Cottage

...not for people to simply come in, look around then leave, but a place where people conceive and create. It will have an open door, not to draw in, but to give out: its rooms will be at the disposal of individuals and groups invited to work on imaginative projects.

The Cottage will be a place of sanctuary for everyone who asks great questions - the outsiders, the prophets and the visionaries. We are inviting support from everyone who is strengthened by the knowledge that somewhere in the world such a place exists; a home for the dissenting imagination.



This should be a fitting way to honour the man who was not afraid to say, 'for every thing that lives is Holy' --the man who conceived and gave us the image of a free, joyful humanity.

