



# Title: William Blake the Alleged Poet & Printmaker

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## Abstract:

William Blake was a visionary poet, painter, and printmaker who created magical worlds filled with drama and peril. He is now regarded as one of the most legendary individuals of the Romantic period. Blake was regarded as a transitional character in English literature who followed no style other than his own as a poet, painter, and artist. He was also regarded as a romanticism pioneer in the UK and as a brilliant poet with significant contributions to the history of English poetry. Studies that analyse Blake's poems or paintings in-depth have been more prevalent in recent years, but there aren't many that integrate the two. This paper attempts to establish that his poetry and paintings interact with one another, usually as an extension or a counterbalance to one another.

This study will help in discovering that his paintings' colours may communicate his poetry in its whole and that his poems exhibit a gradual process of indoctrination. It can more accurately express the poetry's theme, idea, metaphor, conception, and symbols. In the study, examples of some of his well-known writings and artwork were shown and compared for a personal, minor unease.

## Introduction:

William Blake, an early 19th-century English romantic poet and painter, produced a number of amazing works throughout his life that can be viewed as a major achievement in art history. Blake also had a significant impact on the entire society at the time. Born in London on November 28, 1757, he began to focus on subjects of the romantic and transcendental eras as a young child, including imagination, the self, and environment. His exposure to Greek and Roman sculpture while attending a drawing school at the age of 10 had a significant impact on his later work. Blake improved his writing abilities as he kept honing his visual arts cognition. His first collection of poems, known as poetical sketches, was published in 1783. It is important to note that the romantic nature of his early works can be seen in the discussion of natural religion, the individual, and imaginative concepts that served as the foundation for his later poetic works.

Blake was a political outlaw who made friends with those radicals. He held high hopes and enthusiasm for the French Revolution and harshly criticized the capitalists' oppressive practices. He once said, "The dark satanic mills left men unemployed, killed children, and forced prostitution [1]," and it is clear that he was upset by the grim state of the modern world. Blake was the first significant romantic poet who, taken literally, was seen by the public as disdaining reason, going against the classical tradition of the early eighteenth century, and cherishing the individual's imagination.

Blake's work had abandoned the outdated system of classicism in favour of non-metrical ballads that celebrated dream life. He hardly ever used ethereal language; his poetry has always been straightforward. He believes that his inspiration for his work has always come from his religious convictions. By describing the traits of various animals, his well-known poems "the tyger" from "songs of experience" and "the lamb" from "songs of innocence," for instance, convey a strong sense of adoration and compliment.

Blake's poems and artwork have drawn interest from the academic community since the 1980s. Studies on Blake's remarkable works have become more in-depth as post-structure theory has gained popularity in the west, greatly extending and enhancing research on his poems. However, only a small number of studies showed interest in both of them; the majority of studies concentrated primarily on his painting works. They gathered both well-known and less well-known paintings from various points in his career to compare and analyze in order to determine what his main idea is, or they tried to determine the reason for style variation, among other things.

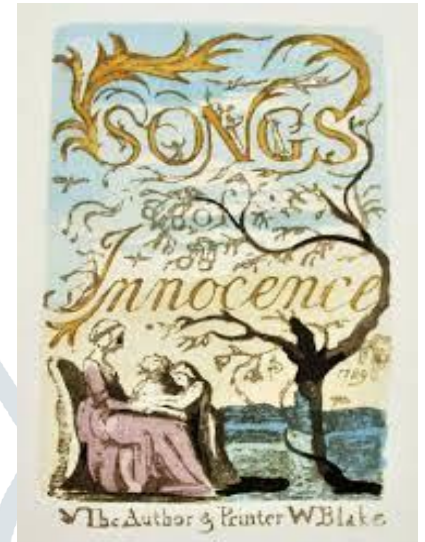
This research will focus on Blake's poetry and artwork and explore how they relate to one another. This study will examine how the two things are combined or different in some works by listing some examples. The study takes primary focuses on his Songs of the innocence and the selected poems from the same.

### Songs of Innocence Pictorial Analysis

William Blake stands out from other poets because he has attained the pinnacle of artistic expression through the "fusion of drawing and poetry." As an illustration, consider the title page of "Songs of Innocence." The letters are shown as leaves, as can be seen from the illustration. Like spirited birds flying in the wind, they make twists and turns. Regarding the title, the word "songs" letter O occupies the image's center, where it stands out the most. On top, the author drew a young boy who was watching the flute player and the woman below. They appeared content and were having fun, based on their facial expressions.

A man is writing at the top of the letter N; he is an echo of the young girl standing close to the letter G. On the title page as a whole, the birds on either side of the picture, connected by the flying leaves, appeared to be guarding those above, creating a lovely and serene scene. In general, the collection's tone has been established by the stunning natural idyllic scene displayed on the title page.

Blake had started the task of educating humanity when he had a thought of writing his innocent songs, and this thought is simply drawn by him on his title page, where a small piper had been placed with his pipe within that letter "I" on innocence is placed. Then there is a protective mother and the child at her knee is sheltered by an apple tree laden with fruit. Also, there is an open book on mother's lap from which the child reads, re-stressing the theme of education and learning. By portraying so much of greenery Blake is stating his influence on pastoral tradition and this pastoral world has been showed by Blake throughout his *Songs of Innocence*.



### Songs of Innocence Literal Analysis

The title page's vivid illustration gave the emotionless letters (S, O, N, and G) a life of their own. It infused letters with a particular image that broadens people's sense of imagination and, more importantly, creates resonances with the poems that follow the title page. In conclusion, writing poetry is just a way to describe and express one's inner thoughts, and each poet's use of the narrative form shows their individual artistic talents. Blake's works have a distinctive style that combines poetry and illustrations, stretching the entire piece spatially through the progression of time while poems serve to explain and extend what the illustrations convey. Additionally, the combination of these two components in Blake's magnificent works diverts the reader's focus from the texts in order to promote reflection and spark their imaginations.

### Selected Poems Literal Analysis

William Blake's poems The Lamb and The Tyger illustrate the idea of romanticism in Europe through the two significant characteristics of the Blake's age, individualism, and experience. The poem The Lamb comes from Blake's larger work Songs of Innocence and focuses on the concepts of innocence and individualism much like an infant child. Children's thoughts are not fogged up by disappointment or previous experience. The children develop their own simplified, views on life. In "Little Lamb," Blake tries to convey the significance of knowing one's creator. Blake in these lines "Little Lamb who made thee? / Dost thou know who made thee" uses the image of a lamb to make a universal biblical reference to Jesus Christ. Blake helps the reader to remind that Christ has provided everything from food to clothing to life in general. The Lamb was meant to revise revival in one's religious beliefs. The idea of simplicity and purity in thought is apparent in the structure as the poem is short in length, as well as the vocabulary of the poem is also very simple.

In contrast to The Lamb which upholds complete faith and dedication to God, William Blake's poem The Tyger focuses on the ideas of religious conviction and creationism against nature in a more inquiring light. The Lamb presents creation in a basic light of all things being made by God, whereas The Tyger seeks to realize the motivation behind creation. As part of Songs of Experience, The Tyger shows the Romantic period's interest in nature and imagination. The poem begins by describing a tiger's beautiful appearance yet evil temperament. He poses the question "What immortal hand or eye / Could frame thy fearful symmetry" and Blake asks what kind of creator or

specifically God intended when creating such a great, malicious beast. He devises this thought by asking annoying questions to an additional understanding creation and brings imagination of thought to a new height.

When combined "The Lamb" and "The Tyger" show the sense of conviction and further imaginative thinking behind romanticism. These poems demonstrate the basic values of religion by depicting the purity and innocence of the incredible God assorted with the power and wrath of the God. The poems together show Blake's views that although contemplating life from a point of innocence is dignified. Thus, both the poems are polar-opposites shows that the God is the creator of both the peaceful lamb that is good, as well as the creator of fierce, destructive tiger which symbolizes the evil.

### Selected Poems Pictorial Analysis

Some writers prefer to include a picture (or sometimes a sketch) underneath the poem to help better express their ideas. This makes their work more appealing and convincing. William Blake incorporated poetry and drawing into many of his productions with this intention in mind. For instance, Blake typically emphasizes his distinct viewpoint by including a lot of their own illustrations, as he does in these two poems. They combine to create harmony by blending with one another.

There are many copies of his original work; they might have starkly differed from one another. To use "the lamb" as an example, G. Keynes edited and published "songs of innocence and experience" in 1967, which contains the majority of Blake's later work. The oak took up nearly half of the picture, showing a strong burst of his ideas. Overall, the works consist of brightly colored scenes and loose lines. The "complete works of William Blake" published in 2001 contained a number of well-known copies that essentially followed the same theme: scenes are created with distinct lines and overall contours that look lively and bright in color [3].

In general, the way the oak is portrayed on both sides seems to convey the artist's intention. The intertwining branches of the towering tree in the two paintings shade the flocks of sheep and the defenceless child like a "sealed cover," so the oak's traditional role as a protector is almost completely replaced by that of a despot. "The Lamb" portrayed an interaction between a pure-hearted child and lambs, seamlessly interwoven with the representation of a tree as a divine entity.

In some versions of "the tyger," the tiger is not only less ferocious but also somewhat docile. In other copies, however, it appears fierce against a vivid background to further highlight the image's variation. According to G. Keynes, these replicas demonstrate how the color scheme transforms the tiger from "a predator painted in red" to "a tame cat." [4]

These two poems demonstrate how, despite the fact that poetry and painting are two distinct artistic mediums, the author's dual identities enable him to produce fantastic works in the right way, establishing a typical mode of intertextuality in mutual interpretation. Overall, mutual fusion and interpretation increase the value of the works of art, which highlights lively Blake's creative talent: using "ideographic" to respond to every work [5]. For instance, in these two works, the text is in the center and there are illustrations on either side, which not only effectively conveys his unique point of view but also makes it easy for readers to read.

### Conclusion:

Blake was born in the UK at the start of the industrial revolution, which caused citizens to suffer for a considerable amount of time. He firmly backed and expressed strong sympathy for the French Revolution during this time because it had a significant impact on his thoughts. He has spent his entire life creating art, blending poetry and paintings to express his experiences, concepts, thoughts, and more. Blake has naturally interpreted his understanding of poetry and the arts of painting by properly fusing these two together, revealing his quest and longing for the paradisiacal world. People were imprisoned and forced into the confines of materialism because they had such a strong belief in God and the monarchy.

His awareness of people's miserable living conditions as an activist who yearns to change the current state of affairs helped him determine the direction of his work. Blake is the artist who never pretends and wears no mask; he is single-minded in ambition and travels the righteous road, according to Samuel Palmer. Furthermore, he asks for little and is only ever generous, noble, joyful, and elegant [10]. His straightforward, "classical" personality seems to come naturally to him. Unlike the formalist painters of the 18th century, he freely expressed his true emotions through poetry and painting, which allowed him to naturally express his genuine creative ideas.

William Blake was obviously trying to make the expression of his works easier but directly in the first place, followed by a "combined art of poetry and painting" way to enhance the value of the works of art with his ample inspiration and imagination. This paper has elaborated William Blake's poems and paintings from two of his works in general.



Since this method was used to present the majority of Blake's artistic works, it is important to examine the subtle differences between and similarities between his poetry and paintings in order to help people better understand these two genres and his mode of creation. They can therefore enjoy it in an aesthetic way. His poetry and paintings are typically two essential components of his works, which can be seen as a remarkable way to interpret his deepest emotions if his works are to be understood and known as an imaginative kingdom. In doing so, he stimulates the vitality of his painting art, achieves the integration of the inner spirit, and captures a peaceful image of his inner world. Poetry and painting complement one another throughout the entire work while gradually convergent.

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