

BLAKE@UNION

FROM PRINT TO DIGITAL TO PRINT

This exhibit is a companion to a research website showcasing the works of author, artist, and printmaker William Blake to be released on the Schaffer Library website in late April, 2018. The development of the website would not have been possible without Union College's extensive collection of print facsimiles of Blake's illuminated books and commercial works. The presentation online of an enhanced catalog of this collection and the digitization of selected images, undertaken to inspire and promote student creativity, forever intertwines the digital with the print. Our goal is to use the advantages of digitization to create a greater awareness of the physical collection, draw researchers to it, and perpetuate conversations among students for years to come.

Digitized works are accessible from anywhere, which increases their exposure and also gives researchers additional functionality, such as the ability to enhance an image for more detail. Our website also allows for the archiving of student commentary on Blake, only some of which could be included in this physical exhibit. However, even in a digital world, print remains a vital resource with irreplaceable and tangible benefits. Prints of William Blake's works are breathtaking in any form, but especially stimulating and vibrant on the page. Holding a reproduction of one of his books in your hands, flipping over each individual page, provides an intimate experience between the reader and the text and visuals that cannot be replicated by technology. It is also one step closer to the works that Blake actually produced, vividly demonstrating what the work would have looked like, how big it was, and the overall physical and visual impact that Blake intended.

Together, the website and the print collections allow students to explore and experience **Blake@Union** as fully as possible.

- *Caitlin Williams '18*

