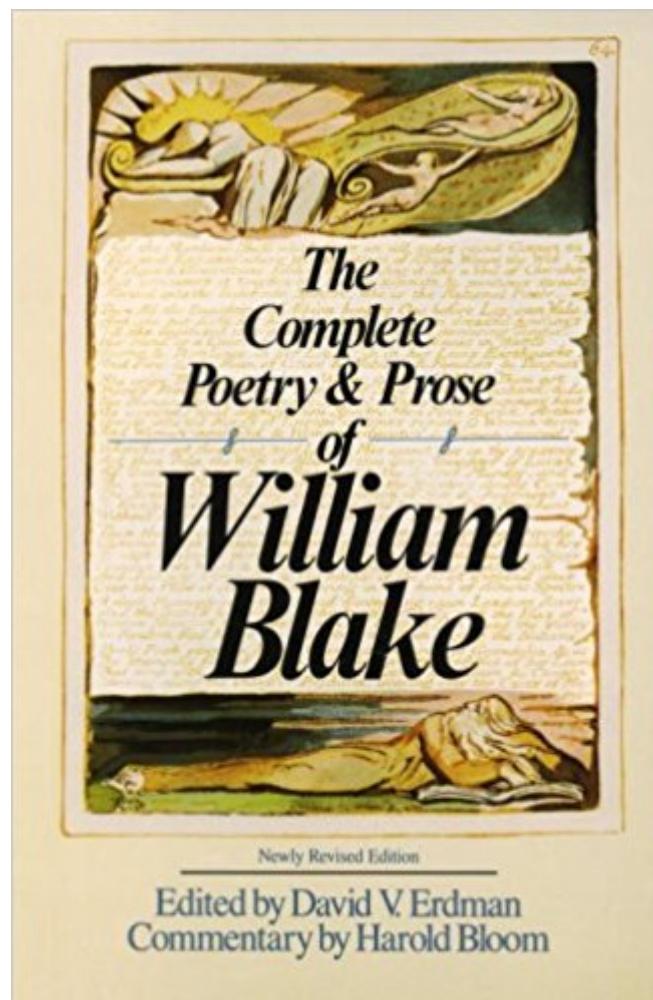


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The Complete Poetry & Prose Of William Blake



Synopsis

Since its first publication in 1965, this editionÂ Â has been widely hailed as the best available textÂ Â of Blake's poetry and prose. Now revised, itÂ Â includes up-to-date work on variants, chronology ofÂ Â poems and critical commentary by Harold Bloom. AnÂ Â "Approved Edition" of the Center for ScholarlyÂ Â Editions of the Modern Language Association.

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Customer Reviews

How is it possible that Blake was able to articulate the full enormity of his vision while keeping up with the complex mythological narrative he invented? Through much of his longer poetical works he so effortlessly associates his mammoth cosmic figures with a riveting and impassioned philosophical discourse. One wonders whether the man was even human. And yet it is precisely this disbelief he and, a bit later and with more severity, Nietzsche preached against. For Blake, the human imagination is the gateway to eternity, and anyone is capable of it. Yet even this vote of confidence in man falls short of Nietzsche's often misunderstood optimism when he asserts that artistic achievement has nothing to do with the "muse" and is wholly within the boundaries of human ability. For Nietzsche, man alone responsible for his great works, and to credit anything else with their sublimity is to undermine human potential. But Blake, a man of profound faith, contends that "When I am commanded by the spirits, then I write; and the moment I have written, I see the words fly about the room in all directions." Yet how telling it is that even this humble explaining-away of his powers is fraught with poetry. But whether or not Blake credited himself with his evident genius, the works speak for themselves. And for "The Complete Poetry and Prose," two of the most competent

Blake scholars join forces to offer a clear, extensive and informed presentation of Blake's output. Astonishing in scope and scholarship, this Erdman/Bloom edition is as indispensable for Blake's work as it is for their notes and commentary. My only complaint is the inconsistency of Bloom's commentary.

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