



My Business Is to Create: Blake's Infinite Writing (Muse Books)

Eric G. Wilson

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For William Blake, living is creating, conforming is death, and “the imagination . . . is the Human Existence itself.” But why are imagination and creation—so vital for Blake—essential for becoming human? And what is imagination? What is creation? How *do* we create? Blake had answers for these questions, both in word and in deed, answers that serve as potent teachings for aspiring writers and accomplished ones alike. Eric G. Wilson’s *My Business Is to Create* emulates Blake, presenting the great figure’s theory of creativity as well as the practices it implies.

In both his life and his art, Blake provided a powerful example of creativity at any cost—in the face of misunderstanding, neglect, loneliness, poverty, even accusations of insanity. Just as Los cries out in *Jerusalem: The Emanation of the Giant Albion*, “I must Create a System, or be enslav'd by another Man's; / I will not Reason and Compare: my business is to Create,” generations of writers and artists as diverse as John Ruskin, William Butler Yeats, Allen Ginsberg, Philip K. Dick, songwriter Patti Smith, the avant-garde filmmaker Jim Jarmusch, and the underground comic-book artist R. Crumb have taken Blake’s creed as inspiration.

Unwilling to cede his vision, Blake did more than simply produce iconoclastic poems and paintings; he also cleared a path toward spiritual and ethical enlightenment. To fashion powerful art is to realize the God within and thus to feel connected with enduring vitality and abundant generosity. This is Blake’s everlasting gospel, distilled here in an artist’s handbook of interest to scholars, writing teachers, and those who have made writing their way of life. *My Business Is to Create* is indispensable for all serious artists who want to transform their lives into art and make their art more alive.

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