



Lives of Blake

Henry Crabb Robinson

John Thomas Smith

Alexander Gilchrist

Edited by Martin Myrone

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- Brings together some of the most illuminating writings by people who knew Blake, and brings this astonishing visionary to life

William Blake (1757-1827), hailed as 'the glorious luminary' by William Rossetti, is one of the great mystics in the history of Western art. His hallucinatory paintings, watercolours and, in particular, the illustrations he made for his books of poetry are instantly recognisable, and have inspired generations of artists in his wake. Although he was largely ignored by his contemporaries, or derided as mad, a number of perceptive critics and commentators took great interest in both the man and his work. This volume brings together some of the most illuminating writings by people who knew Blake, and brings this astonishing visionary to life. They include the frank appraisal by the hugely perceptive diarist Crabb Robinson, never before published in full in English, and the first full biography by Blake's friend and fellow artist John Thomas Smith, as well as Alexander Gilchrist's *Preliminary*, which heralded the arrival of Blake in the 19th Century.

