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swedenborg house Newsletter Late October 2018...



LATE OCTOBER 2018

swedenborg house newsletter

Tennyson, Blake and Swedenborg talk by Sibylle Erle; book your place for the Swedenborg Film Festival with Susan Hiller; *Medicine, Mysticism and Mythology* book launch and talk with Malcolm Peet in Manchester; news of the 2018 Swedenborg Society AGM; *Swedenborg and the English Romantics* runs until 2 November, with a late opening on Thursday 25 October.



Tennyson, Blake and Swedenborg | a talk by Sibylle Erle



Swedenborg Film Festival 2018 | with Susan Hiller

[book here](#)

Saturday 24 November 2018 | 6.00-

**Thursday 25 October, 6.30-8.30pm |
FREE | Refreshments provided |
Swedenborg House, 20-21 Bloomsbury
Way, WC1A 2TH**

To coincide with the exhibition [Swedenborg and the English Romantics: items from the Swedenborg Collection](#), Sibylle Erle will be giving an in-depth talk on Tennyson, Blake and Swedenborg. The talk will last for 45 mins followed by a Q&A and drinks and snacks.

[BOOK YOUR PLACE HERE](#)

Tennyson had a life-long affinity with the great, Swedish mystic Emanuel Swedenborg. He was an incessant reader, as his wife Emily's journal testifies, and he liked to ponder the reality of the spiritual world with his family and friends. In 1874, Tennyson wrote to Benjamin Paul Blood (1832-1919), confessing to his own visionary experiences: ' "a kind of waking trance" (this for lack of a better word) I frequently had quite up from boyhood when I have been alone. This has often come upon me through repeating my own name to myself silently'. Tennyson, it appears, was open-minded and perhaps unconventional in his personal beliefs about the relationship between the dead and the living; he wanted to be convinced of the immortality of the soul but also had his doubts. He joined the Metaphysical Society but also turned to a little girl: 'if you saw your father's and mother's bones [...] lying in the grave [...] Would you feel

**9.00pm | Swedenborg House, 20-21
Bloomsbury way, London WC1A 2TH**

The Swedenborg Film Festival returns on 24 November with special guest judge, the artist **Susan Hiller**. Featuring 20 new short films by international artists, alongside a special screening of Hiller's work, the SFF is co-curated by **Gareth Evans** (Whitechapel Gallery) and **Nora Foster** (Frieze). Selected films will explore this year's theme of 'Correspondences' – symbols, metaphor and hidden meanings – and screenings will take place at Swedenborg House in Bloomsbury.

Chosen from an open call for submissions, this year's featured artists are: **Jonathan Bryant Crawford, Martin Del Carpio, James Edmonds, Keira Greene, Oona Grimes, Atobe Hiroshi, Andrew Kötting, Mox Mäkelä, Diane Nerwen, James Norton, Julian Olariu, Louiza Orlof, Annette Philo, Jon Ratigan, Victoria Skogsberg, Alkaios Spyrou, John Smith, John Strutton, Huangzhi Tang** and **Sharon Whooley**. Films will span screenings in Swedenborg Hall and installations throughout the grade-II-listed Swedenborg House, 'one of London's most atmospheric venues' (*Guardian*).

The artist Susan Hiller will choose and announce the winner at the close of the festival, as well as present a special screening of her work in Swedenborg Hall.

they were there? That that was all? Think!

How could one cope with the absence of a dead loved one? Tennyson, of course, explores this question in *In Memoriam* (1850), written after the early and unexpected death of his close friend Arthur Hallam (1811-33). In this elegy, he sounds out the emotional impact of his loss but also transcends it whenever he considers the possibility that Hallam still exists.

Tennyson's interest in Swedenborg and belief in spirit communication really needs to be considered as a family matter rather than just as an influence on his poetry. We know that he had long conversations with his eldest brother Frederick as well as his sisters Mary (Ker) and Emily (Tennyson Jesse), Hallam's widowed fiancée.

Tennyson could also rely on his friends William Allingham (1824-89), Coventry Patmore (1823-96) and Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881) who were avid readers of Swedenborg. Indeed, the network of readers of Swedenborg is complex and it also includes Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Dante Gabriel Rossetti. All of them knew the Swedenborgian James John Garth Wilkinson, who had published William Blake's *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* (1839), as well as a biography of Swedenborg in 1847.

Another work with a Swedenborgian tinge is Blake's *Illustrations of the Book of Job* (1826), presented to Tennyson by Benjamin Jowett (1817-93) in 1856. This talk will illustrate how Tennyson's interest in Swedenborg was channelled through



Book launch, talk & AGM in Manchester | Medicine, Mysticism and Mythology by Malcolm Peet

RSVP HERE

Saturday 10 November 2018 | doors open 2.00 pm for a 3.00 pm start | Swedenborg Open Learning Centre, Wellspring House, 25 Radcliffe New Road, Radcliffe, Manchester M26 1LE | FREE ADMISSION (but book in advance) | Refreshments served | Some B&B accommodation available

by tram: Whitefield or Radcliffe

by bus: 513

For more information on Wellspring House, B&B accommodation and how to get there, please visit the website of the [Swedenborg Open Learning Centre here](#).

Dr James John Garth Wilkinson (1812-99) was a pioneer in his approach to medicine. He was an outspoken campaigner for an array of social reforms, including women's suffrage, anti-vivisectionism and the freedom of choice

Blake's early nineteenth-century reception.

SIBYLLE ERLE, FRSA, is Reader in English Literature at Bishop Grosseteste University in Lincoln. She is the author of *Blake, Lavater and Physiognomy* (Legenda, 2010) and chapters and articles on Blake, Fuseli, Lavater, Tennyson, Ludwig Meidner and Frankenstein. She co-curated with Philippa Simpson the display 'Blake and Physiognomy' (2010-11) at Tate Britain, co-edited (and contributed to) with Laurie Garrison the special issue *Science, Technology and the Senses* (RaVoN, 2008) and co-edited with Laurie Garrison, Verity Hunt, Phoebe Putnam and Peter West, *Panoramas, 1787-1900: Texts and Contexts*, 5 vols. (Pickering & Chatto, 2012). She is co-editing with Morton D Paley *The Reception of William Blake in Europe* (Bloomsbury, 2019). Apart from reception, her current research projects are on monsters and monstrosity as well as character in the Romantic period.



for patients. He was an early champion of the poetic genius of William Blake, and he counted amongst his friends and acquaintances such luminaries as Charles Dickens, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Thomas Carlyle, Frederick H Evans, John Ruskin, Sophia and Augustus De Morgan, Josephine Butler, Henry James, Sr, Thomas Lake Harris and Ralph Waldo Emerson. However, in spite of these achievements, he has remained little known outside of the history of homoeopathy and the scholarship that surrounds the eighteenth-century scientist and visionary Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772).

On the occasion of the launch of his monograph *Medicine, Mysticism and Mythology: Garth Wilkinson, Swedenborg and Nineteenth-Century Esoteric Culture*, author Malcolm Peet will provide a much-needed reappraisal of Wilkinson's importance, exploring his interests in mesmerism, spiritualism, Fourierism, environmentalism, poetry, politics, philosophy and mythology, all of which were filtered through Wilkinson's ever-changing yet constant regard for Swedenborg. Malcolm will also reflect on how Wilkinson's spiritual journey might have played out in today's spiritual climate.

The 208th Annual General Meeting of the Swedenborg Society will follow Malcolm's talk. For more details and a full notice of the AGM [click here](#).

MALCOLM PEET is a retired Consultant



[find out more](#)

**Exhibition dates: October 17 -
November 2 | Monday to Friday 10.00
am to 5.00 pm | in association with
Bloomsbury Festival 2018**

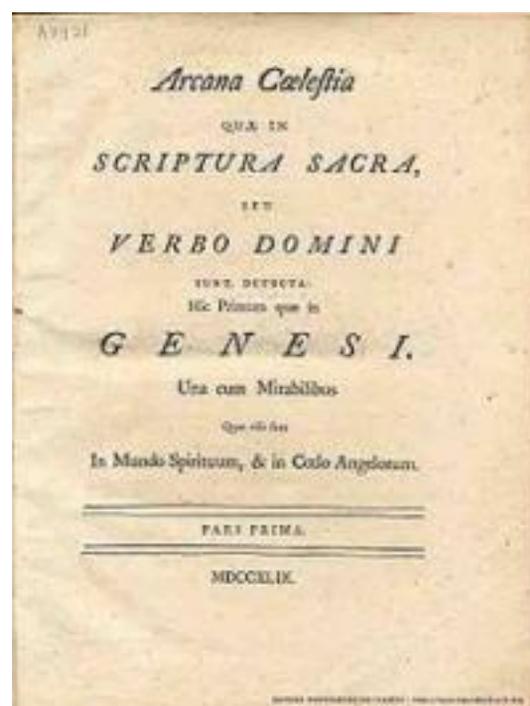
**Late night opening: Thursday 25
October until 8.30 pm**

Drawn directly from the collection at Swedenborg House, *Swedenborg and the English Romantics* illustrates the many previously unexplored links between writers and artists such as William Blake, S T Coleridge, John Flaxman, J J G Wilkinson and others, and their connection to the work of the Swedish visionary and scientist, Emanuel

Swedenborg. The exhibition will include previously unseen archival material.

For more information follow this [link](#).

Psychiatrist and was Honorary Professor in the School of Health and Related Research at the University of Sheffield until 2017. Internationally recognized for his research on the relationship between nutrition and mental well-being, Malcolm also holds a Master's Degree in Western Esotericism. Since his retirement from clinical practice, Malcolm's intellectual focus has been on spirituality, particularly that of Emanuel Swedenborg and his followers.



Arcana Coelestia Reading
Group | update

[Book your place here](#)

**Meeting on Thursday 25 October 2018
has been cancelled due to the
Tennyson, Blake and Swedenborg talk.
All members of the AC group are
invited to attend this instead!**

Next meeting is now: Thursday 29
November 2018 | 6.00 - 8.00 pm



I Gardiner Room, Swedenborg House,
20/21 Bloomsbury Way, London WC1A
2TH | FREE | Last Thursday of every
month

The Arcana Caelestia reading group
continues with volume two of
Swedenborg's magnum opus on 29
November.

Discover the Hidden Treasures of Swedenborg House with Artist Sally Kindberg

Newcomers welcome.

A big thank you to all who made it to
our fun-filled drawing workshop on
Saturday. Dates for the next one will be
announced soon!



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