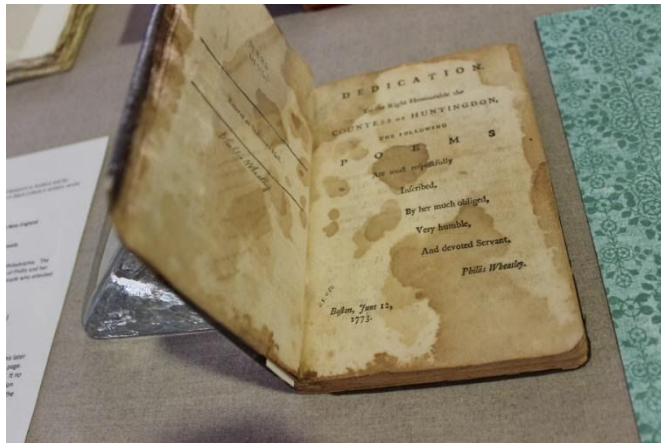




PEQUOT
LIBRARY

Art Inspired by Poetry

Create a work of art inspired by a poem from Phillis Wheatley's *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral* (1773)



Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral

by Phillis Wheatley

Philadelphia: Re-printed and sold by Joseph Crukshank, in Market-Street, Between Second and Third Streets, MDCCLXXXVI [1786]

Presented by Virginia Marquand Monroe

Pequot Library Special Collections

Pequot Library holds the first edition of *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral* printed in America, after the first edition was printed in London in 1773.

An Hymn to the Evening

SOON as the sun forsook the eastern main
The pealing thunder shook the heav'nly plain;
Majestic grandeur! From the zephyr's wing,
Exhales the incense of the blooming spring.
Soft purl the streams, the birds renew their notes,
And through the air their mingled music floats.
Through all the heav'ns what beauteous dies are spread!
But the west glories in the deepest red:
So may our breasts with ev'ry virtue glow,





The living temples of our God below!
Fill'd with the praise of him who gives the light,
And draws the sable curtains of the night,
Let placid slumbers sooth each weary mind,
At morn to wake more heav'nly, more refin'd;
So shall the labours of the day begin
More pure, more guarded from the snares of sin.
Night's leaden sceptre seals my drowsy eyes,
Then cease, my song, till fair Aurora rise.

About Phillis Wheatley (ca. 1753-1784):

Phillis Wheatley is regarded as the first female black published poet. She was the first African American and second woman (after Anne Bradstreet) to publish a book of poems.

Born in West Africa in 1753, Wheatley was captured by slave traders and brought to America in 1761. She was sold to the Wheatley family in Boston, where she was taught to read and write. Within sixteen months of her arrival, she was able to read the Bible, Greek and Latin classics, and British literature.

Wheatley began to write poetry when she was fourteen years old. Her first poem was published in 1767. In 1773, she traveled to London with financial support from Selina Hastings, Countess of Huntington, a wealthy supporter of abolitionist causes, and published her first collection of poems, *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral* (1773). This was the first book published by a woman in America.