

December 2022



The Poetry Collection

Holiday Broadside

Featuring James Joyce and Patrick Tuohy

The Holy Office

(An excerpt)

Myself unto myself will give
This name Katharsis-Purgative.
I, who dishevelled ways forsook
To hold the poets' grammar-book,
Bringing to tavern and to brothel
The mind of witty Aristotle,
Lest bards in the attempt should err
Must here be my interpreter:
Wherefore receive now from my lip
Peripatetic scholarship.
To enter heaven, travel hell,
Be piteous or terrible
One positively needs the ease,
Of plenary indulgences.
For every true-born mysticist
A Dante is, unprejudiced,
Who safe at ingle-nook, by proxy,
Hazards extremes of heterodoxy
Like him who finds a joy at table,
Pondering the uncomfortable.
Ruling one's life by common sense
How can one fail to be intense?
But I must not accounted be
One of that mumming company—
With him who hies him to appease
His giddy dames' frivolities
While they console him when he whinges
With gold-embroidered Celtic fringes—
Or him who sober all the day
Mixes a naggin in his play—
Or him who conduct "seems to own",
His preference for a man of "tone"—
Or him who plays the rugged patch
To millionaires in Hazelhatch
But weeping after holy fast
Confesses all his pagan past—
Or him who will his hat unfix

Neither to malt nor crucifix
But show to all that poor-dressed be
His high Castilian courtesy—
Or him who loves his Master dear—
Or him who drinks his pint in fear—
Or him who once when snug abed
Saw Jesus Christ without his head
And tried so hard to win for us
The long-lost works of Eschylus.
But all these men of whom I speak
Make me the sewer of their clique.
That they may dream their dreamy dreams
I carry off their filthy streams
For I can do those things for them
Through which I lost my diadem,
Those things for which Grandmother Church
Left me severely in the lurch.
Thus I relieve their timid arses,
Perform my office of Katharsis.

[...]

So distantly I turn to view
The shamblings of that motley crew,
Those souls that hate the strength that mine has
Steeled in the school of old Aquinas.
Where they have crouched and crawled and prayed
I stand the self-doomed, unafraid,
Unfellowed, friendless and alone,
Indifferent as the herring-bone,
Firm as the mountain-ridges where
I flash my antlers on the air.
Let them continue as is meet
To adequate the balance-sheet.
Though they may labour to the grave
My spirit shall they never have
Nor make my soul with theirs at one
Till the Mahamanvantara be done:
And though they spurn me from their door
My soul shall spurn them evermore.



Sylvia Beach and James Joyce in Shakespeare and Company, circa 1926. Photographer unknown.

The Poetry Collection's 2022 holiday broadside celebrates the 100th anniversary of James Joyce's *Ulysses*. Published by Sylvia Beach's imprint Shakespeare and Company on February 2, 1922—Joyce's 40th birthday—*Ulysses* is widely considered to be one of the most influential books published in English in the twentieth century. Part of the Poetry Collection, the UB James Joyce Collection is the world's largest collection of manuscripts and other works by and about the renowned Irish writer. For more information about the collection, including the current campaign to create a UB James Joyce Museum in Buffalo, visit library.buffalo.edu/jamesjoyce.



This version of the Poetry Collection's 2022 holiday broadside is published in an edition of 2,000. There is also a limited edition. Copyright © 2022 The Poetry Collection of the University Libraries, University at Buffalo, The State University of New York. Cover image from a portrait of James Joyce by Patrick Tuohy (Irish, 1894-1930), circa 1924, oil on canvas, 24 x 19 3/4". "The Holy Office" by James Joyce was written in 1904 and published circa 1905.