

Dead Poets

I'm livin' every day with the dead poets' society
Rioting inside my head, so it requires me
To keep every word I've read close beside me
Inspiring me to never go quietly

I'm posturing like I'm the offspring of Oscar Wilde
The foster child of Geoffrey Chaucer; now
Hip-hop's the trial I face here, so I adopt the style
But first I'd better make clear that since my eighth year
I've been possessed by Shakespeare and William Blake's spirits
And still I wait to hear a voice like T.S. Elliot's
And Percy Shelley is the first to tell me just
How to speak out of turn and keep my verse rebellious
I read Keats and learn from a grecian urn
How to reach eternity through the gyre where Yeats turns
So I can meet Traherne, plus I'm a freak like Burns
With his twenty-some children, though I'm still a young pilgrim
And I'm buildin' a temple from the skills my tongue's yieldin'
So I feel like John Milton; paradise is lost
For the thrill; I'm John Skelton crossed with Wordsworth
But my zeal is unwelcome in George Herbert's church

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For a challenge I'm known to approach talent shows with
Poems that I stole from Edgar Allen Poe's lips
Opium hits dope Alexander Pope's wits
I was Samuel Coleridge in a trance when I wrote this
And I awoke with the whole song done
I felt the soul of John Donne; Andrew Marvel
Taught me to chase the sun; I can't make it stand still
So instead I'll make it run, with puns denser
Than Edmund Spencer's, and modern lyrics
Modeled on Robert Herrick's; when I dispense words
It's like a forge is firin', and I'm strikin' the iron
Inspired by Lord Byron when I'm writin' the Siren
Song; evidence of desire went wrong
And lost innocence; my memory's gone
In a sense, Tennyson has been reborn
In a form with the fingerprints of Henry Vaughn

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As a poet I'm conscious of the goals I accomplish
That I owe to accomplices, and when I'm feelin' honest
My conscience bids me to admit to stealin' sonnet
Styles from Philip Sydney; I'm fulfillin' a promise
I gave Dylan Thomas to rage against the dyin'
Of light; I'm like Adonis: I'm still a novice
But I already got the skills to thrill a Goddess
Or start a riot in the heart; that's why it's pounding
I'm Thomas Wyatt's foundling; on Ezra Pound's wings
I fly, quietly grounding my weight on the past's crutches
I'm Robert Browning, and this rap is "My Last Dutchess"
I'm puttin' the last touches on the way it's sounding
In strange surroundings my grasp clutches
For balance; I spin words, recalling how fast structures
Fell and splintered at my feet like Alan Ginsberg
That's how I'm ensured power of speech, and now I've been heard

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