

A-Muse Yourself



I have to admit to you that the first week that we had great "almost spring" weather my writing muses packed up and went on "vacation"-together! Left alone at my computer I got the idea of writing about the Nine Muses.

A proper discussion of the Nine Muses, starts with the story surrounding their mother, Mnemosyne, one of the first generation of Titans born of Ouranus (Heaven) and Gaea (Earth). A goddess of Time, she represented memorization kept through time in order to preserve

the oral histories of ancient's through both myths and orations of history prior to the written language. The Titans were a race of giant gods and goddesses that were said to be "overthrown" by Zeus and the Olympian gods. Giving people the gift of memory she was also responsible for assigning the names of everything, thus bringing about oral language. Without her influence people would be similar to persons with severe Alzheimer's; not remembering anyone or anything and not finding the words for things around them. Imagine not being able to remember joy, acquire knowledge, and not being able to hold the concept of the progression of time.

Said to have the gifts of the Oracle, Mnemosyne was said to also have beautiful long hair. This may have been what attracted Zeus to her and being predictable in his actions Zeus bedded her down for nine nights. As a result this produced their progeny of the Nine Musai (Muses). This was during the time before Hera became Zeus's wife thus Mnemosyne (and her beautiful daughters) escaped the "Wrath of Hera" consistent with the future consorts of Zeus.

Mnemosyne's daughters are goddesses representing the arts (thereby extending the scope of their mother's role). Blessed with various artistic talents and the beauty and grace of their mother they inspired man to pursue his love of words, song, dance, music, and the pursuit of learning.

The following Nine Muses, presented here in alphabetical order, are:

- Calliope-“She of the Beautiful Voice”, possesses eloquence and inspires man to create epic poetry, persuasive oratory and writing. She is considered the leader of the Nine.
- Clio-“The Proclaimer”, emboldened man to relate history in a glorified manner. She is said to have brought the Phoenician alphabet to Greece.
- Erato-“Lovely”, she heartened man to write love poetry and the lyrics of song. She was also the muse of mimicry and the patron of crows and parrots.
- Euterpe-“Well Pleasing, encouraged man in the writing of lyric poetry. Always cheerful and in charge of joy and pleasure.
- Melpomene-“Songstress”, inspired man to relate tragedy in song.
- Polymnia-“She of Many Hymns”, creation of hymns to the gods and heroes. Beautiful, somber, and thoughtful.
- Terpsichore (also Stesichore)-“ Delighting in the Dance”, energizing man into the expression of dance.
- Thalia-“Blooming” or “Luxuriant”, cheering a man with comedy and color. She loves Nature’s areas of beauty.
- Urania-“Heavenly”, inducing the level of astronomy. Often portrayed carrying a globe and compasses.

It is said that often these Nine Muses worked in three sets of three. This may have led the Roman scholar Varro to state that there were only three muses. But through time the Nine Muses have persisted because Homer and Hesiod are considered the authorities on this.

When struggling with creative blocks feel free to call in one or more of these Muses.

With Gratitude,

Kai