

M. M., "To Mr. Zealy, the Distinguished Artist," (poem) April 1852

(keywords: J. T. Zealy, history of the daguerreotype, history of photography)

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—Our friend, Zealy, of Columbia, S. C., is peculiarly favored of the Muses. The following poem sent to us is the second we have had to record to his praise.

TO MR. ZEALY, THE DISTINGUISHED ART-
IST, IN RETURN FOR THE PRESENT OF
MY HUSBAND'S DAGUERREOTYPE.

My Husband's picture to the life,
O, bless the art to which I owe it!
Her thanks would, now, a grateful wife
Return to him, who did bestow it.

Who, without fee, without reward,
Conferr'd on her, so great a treasure,
One, that her heart and eyes regard
Above all price, beyond all measure.

A happiness to her for life,
Her husband, evermore, beside her,
Death, absence, howsoever rife,
Now, cannot, from him, all divide her.

"The art that can immortalize,"
Hath, to her latest gaze, ensur'd him;
Hath given, ever, to her eyes,
All, all that to her soul endeared him.

The experience of that guileless heart,
The beamings forth of that pure spirit,
These, evermore, this noble art,
Hath given, for her, to inherit.

Not hers, by what dim time confess,
Not hers, alone, by dream or vision,
But her, aye, *demonstrably* hers,
While sight and light perform their mission.

M. M.

Columbia, August 18th, 1851

[End of text.]

EDITOR'S NOTES:

The daguerreotypist J. T. Zealy, of Columbia, North Carolina, is best known for his series of daguerreotypes (commissioned by Louis Agassiz) of African-born slaves working in plantations near Columbia. The daguerreotypes are now in the collection of the Peabody Museum, Harvard University.¹ For a discussion of the daguerreotypes, see Brian Wallis, "Black Bodies, White Science: Louis Agassiz's Slave Daguerreotypes," *American Art* 9:2 (Summer 1995): 39–61.

1. <http://preserve.harvard.edu/daguerreotypes/browse-studios.html>

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