Brueghel, Van Gogh, and Chirico: Inter-Animation of Painting and Writing in Some Ekphrastic Poems

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Abstract

This article examines a critical reading of some selected ekphrastic poems to underscore the ways an ekphrastic poem re-presents or subverts the meaning of the original work of art and offers new ways of consumption. Ekphrasis, in its purest form, is the vivid verbal or literary description or reconstruction of a visual piece of art, real or imaginary. An ekphrastic poem is an amalgam of the poet's intellectual and emotional responses to the art and oftentimes varies in meanings and expressions from the work it took inspiration from, that is, an ekphrastic poem may add to, and sometimes even deconstruct or subvert the meanings of the art. An ekphrastic poem not only appears as an independent form of art but also mobilizes the readers. This article unfolds in two ways. It offers a comparative reading of some select ekphrastic poems that are premised on the same work of art. It investigates three sets of poems that re-imagine Pieter Breughel's *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus* and Vincent van Gogh's *The Starry Night*. This article also addresses some poems based on Giorgio de Chirico's Conversation among the Ruins and demonstrates how Sylvia Plath's eponymous poem subverts the male gaze accentuated in Chirico's painting. This article contends that ekphrastic poems are not mere descriptions of the paintings, rather they stand alone as independent forms of art as a result of being outcomes of the poets' creative and emotional responses.

Keywords: Ekphrasis, ekphrastic poems, art, painting

Introduction

The bards of ekphrasis have created museums of words about artworks, paintings, or sculptures. Heffernan demonstrates how ekphrastic poetry commemorates the power of a silent image, even if it somehow curbs that power within the command of language. Besides bringing a silent painting to life with words, a poet oftentimes instills or shifts the voice within a male into a female, redirecting the gaze from the masculine to the feminine, thus, re/deconstructing the painter's artwork. This paper intends to argue that the ekphrastic poems, known to verbalize a work of art, do not always literally describe them in words, but change due to the poet's intellectual or creative response. Drawing from Saussure's and Pierce's theories of Semiotics and the

gaze theory, the paper wants to uncover how the ekphrastic poems may add, re/deconstruct, or subvert the meanings and expressions from the source of their inspiration, that is, painting. This study aims to observe how the changes brought about in the perspectives or meanings in the ekphrastic re-imaginings may influence the reader. (Heffernan 1-3) Heffernan also points out:

> Ekphrasis fascinates me for several reasons. First, it evokes the power of silent image even as it subjects that power to the rival authority of language, it is intensely paragonal. Second, the contest it stages is often powerfully gendered: the expression of a duel between male and female gazes, the voice of male speech striving to control a female image that is both alluring and threatening, of male narrative striving to overcome the fixating impact of beauty poised in space. (4-5)

Explorations about ekphrasis have concerned writers and critics throughout the ages. Horace Walpole proved literature to be an art that is comparable to painting, "As is painting, so is poetry: some pieces will strike you more if you stand near, and some, if you are at a greater distance" (Walpole 20). Wallace Stevens (1951) focused on some common attributes of poetry and painting, "No poet can have failed to recognize how often a detail, a remark, in respect to painting, applies also to poetry" (160). On the other hand, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing argued that both arts are similar in the result or experience they produce, but the arts themselves differ both in the objects and in the methods of their imitation.

Ekphrasis

Ekphrasis (ecphrasis), a rhetorical or literary exercise, sometimes defined as a sub-genre of poetry, in its cardinal form, means verbalizing or describing a visual form of art. Originating from the Greek word 'ek' and 'phrasis', meaning "out" and "speak" respectively and also from the verb, ekphrasis, meaning "to proclaim or call an inanimate object by name" (13), its history dates back to the eighth century when Homer in his eighteenth book of *The Iliad* described Achilles' shield. The word entered English language in 1715 and even when Keats' ekphrastic poem "Ode on a Grecian Urn" was written, the word ekphrasis was not used.

Murray Kierger's essay, "Ekphrasis and the Still Movement of Poetry; or, *Laokóòn* Revisited", was the first and the single most influential work to articulate ekphrasis. Heffernan defines ekphrasis as "ekphrasis is the verbal representation of a visual representation" (299). Influential Western poets, ranging from Chaucer, Shakespeare, Wordsworth and Keats to Auden, Carlos Williams, and Plath have composed ekphrastic poems of merit. It has been commonly employed in the East also, especially in the Arab-speaking world. For Kierger, "ekphrasis is a general principle of poetics, asserted by every poem in the assertion of its integrity" (45). The poet here reads the painting as a text rather than a static object. Pictorialism and iconicity are the two aspects that contrast literature and art. Over the years, theorists have been aware of the importance of

Ekphrasis and its journey. Mitchell Foucault puts forward the idea of the relation between a visual and a verbal such as "imagination and metaphor bridging the gap" between the two art mediums. (Foucault 156)

Michel Foucault shifts his description from ekphrasis to the relation of language and painting, on the painting *Las Maninas* (1656), and Foucault opines, "But the relation of language to painting is an infinite relation [...] Neither can be reduced to the other's terms" (10). The earliest work of ekphrasis is in the tenth book of The *Iliad* where Homer describes Achilles' shield made by Hephaestus. This sort of ekphrasis is the verbalization of an imaginary work of art, but surely Homer's verbal depiction surpasses even the most real of artworks. Another early instance of ekphrasis is found in Virgil's *Aeneid*, where the carvings on the temple in Carthage are narrated from the remnants of the Trojan War. Dante's *Purgatory* also contains.

Ekphrastic description in Canto X, where the sculptures curved out of marble at the side of the Purgatory Mountain. Ekphrasis is found in Spenser's *Faerie Queene* where tapestries which explore Jove's amorous exploits are narrated. During the era of the Italian Renaissance, William Blake wrote a few ekphrastic poems, namely, "The Tiger", 'The Clod and the Pebble" and "Hole Thursday". In the second half of the eighteenth century, poets such as John Ruskin and Walter Pater wrote ekphrastic poems about older arts. After the time of Milton, shorter ekphrastic poems were composed. Among the popular are P.B Shelley's "On the Medusa of Leonardo da Vinci in Florentine Gallery", Keats' "Ode on a Grecian Urn" 1915 and Robert Browning's "My Last Duchess."

Since the twentieth century, ekphrastic poems on imaginary arts have become lesser in quantity. Works on sculptures and paintings began to flourish. Examples are- W.C Williams "Pictures from Breughel", Rilke's "Archaic Torso of Apollo", John Berryman's "Hunters in the Snow", W.H Auden's "The Shield of Achilles", and many more. The modern ekphrastic poems are noticed to introduce innovative ideas with some presenting new perspectives and meanings if compared to the original paintings they are produced from. There is a "mutual convertibility" of art and literature which is based upon the negotiation between two different sign systems- Peirce's sign, i.e., icon, painting communicates through icons, i.e., a sign that physically resembles what it stands for.

Ekphrastic manifestations of *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus*

The ekphrastic manifestations of the paintings, *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus* which are composed by Auden, Carlos and Hamburgher, and *The Starry Night*'s ekphrastic adaptations, by Anne Sexton and W.D Snodgrass are closely analyzed and compared with their respective paintings from which they are derived, following two politics, as to how they are represented by the poets and how they affect consumption.

'Musee des Beaux Arts,' or 'Museum of Fine Arts,' is an ekphrastic response to Peter Breughel's painting *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus* by W.H. Auden, which he wrote in 1938 while living in Brussels, Belgium. Taking the imagery from Breughel's painting, Auden focuses more on the philosophical aspect of human life and not focus on Icarus's fall as of the title of the painting. With this, one gets the idea that Auden intends to add and make changes to his poem, even though his is an ekphrastic poem. Auden adds more symbols, more subject matter and figures in the poem that do not exist in Peter Breughel's painting.

People in his poem are walking around leisurely. The elderly people are waiting for a miraculous birth and the children are skating gayly. Daily or even minor activities are mentioned, such as, "Someone is eating", or "opening a window". When Icarus' white legs drown in the sea, in some unnoticed corner of the landscape- dogs are on with their doggy life, the torturer's horse stands outside the house that scratches its behind and the animals on the street are seen to mind their businesses. These imageries or icons are not present in Breughel's painting. While some dreadful martyrdom was taking place in the poem, neither there is any seriousness, nor does any of the figures in the poem seem to be aware of any trouble happening nearby. There is a ploughman, and a woman seaming. Auden says that the ploughman "may have heard the splash / the forsaken cry" (Auden 4-5). This means that the ploughman is so immersed in his work that he may not care about anything else happening around him. These icons and images symbolize the mundanity of human life. Auden juxtaposes this mundanity of the lives around them with Icarus' unnoticed tragedy. Life goes on while a miraculous birth occurs, but nobody is concerned about Icarus' forsaken cry. The ship carries on its journey. Being composed in free verse without any care for rhythm, the figures in the poem also show no concern for Icarus' death.

William Carlos' poem, "Landscape with the Fall of Icarus" (1960), is one of the most famed poems from his book entitled *Pictures from Breughel and Other Poems* (1962). It is yet another ekphrastic response to Breughel's painting, *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus*. Unlike Auden, Carlos names his poem with the same name as of the painting, but this time he focuses more on the landscape of the painting, since the landscape is vaster and more focused than Icarus' death. He focuses on human indifference like Auden did. William establishes through the imagery of the painting that the achievements of humans are meaningless compared to the great fortunes of nature and very often the most brilliant or tragic incidents are overlooked. Just like Auden, Carlos describes the daily activities of the people. He mentions that it was spring when Icarus fell. The shepherd is in the fields along with his animals. But he does not notice or even want to notice Icarus' cry beside him in the ocean in a way as if Icarus' death was not a serious matter at all. The melting of Icarus' wings and his subsequent drowning is unsignificant and unnoticed. Off the coast, Icarus falls into the ocean of which only a splash occurs. In Breughel's painting, there is a farmer. The poem continues without any punctuation or stops. In response to painting, Carlos uses subtle language and structure in the poem. William's presentation of landscape to the nomenclature of his poem adding it to the

painting's name *The Fall of Icarus*. This aids in conveying the message that the landscape and the surroundings are more or equally important than the fall of Icarus. The readers are bound to understand the juxtaposition of the painful irony of death and the mundanity of human lives. Ekphrasis in Auden's painting is used to convey poetic ideas about human suffering, while Carlos depicts what Breughel mentions in his painting. The two ekphrastic adaptations also differ from each other despite being the adaptations of the same paintings.

Another ekphrastic poem of Breughel's painting is Michael Hamburgher's "Lines on Breghuel's Icarus", which has a much different reaction than Auden's and Williams'. Being opposed to William Carlos and Auden who give little to no concern to Icarus' death, Hamburgher invests more importance in Icarus' drowning by calling him an angel: "Too late. The worst has happened: lost to man, / The angel, Icarus, forever failed" (Auden 13-14). In Hamburgher's poem, amidst the daily activities of people, Icarus' waxen wings melted, and the angel fell off into the ocean, unnoticed by everyone. Hamburgher reckons that it is the worst that happens to the man. If Breughel's painting had not been named after Icarus, one would not find his feet drowning in water. The figures present in the scenery also did not notice his death. Hamburgher did not move his focus from Icarus and so named his poem after Icarus.

Hamburgher portrays certain figures and icons in the poem to emphasise the insignificance of Icarus' death. The ploughman in the poem is the same as in the painting, but he adds a fisherman in the poem who is dreaming of fish. The sailor who might be inside the ship in the painting is feverish with memories of girls forsaken. Everyone is entangled in his work. The sailor does not stop his journey to look around. The fisherman whom people assume to look around and care for his surroundings, also does not care. He dreams of discoveries. The animals that Hamburgher adds up in the scenario are either grazing in the fields or are into a sheepish present. They only see the greens, yellow, browns. There is also an eagle in the poem that gapes uncertainly. None of these icons are present in Breughel's painting. Hamburgher brings additional symbols to emphasize the indifference of both humans and nature. Unlike Auden and Carlos, who portray Icarus as a victim of everyone's indifference, Hamburgher implies that Icarus has rightfully faced his demise for not obeying his father's command. Hamburgher also mentions that by disobeying Daedalus' warning, Icarus' demise is just as he scorned the ordering planet when he fell into the ocean. The poet wants to express to the readers his perception of the myth of Icarus, as well as complement Breughuel's painting. Icarus is hardly conceivable while he is facing his demise.

Poets are found to foreground a certain theme or aspect of the painting to imply and emphasize their messages and ideas. The sinking feet of Icarus bring forth different responses in different poets- for Auden and Williams they are as unnoticeable as daily chores, while for Hamburgher, it symbolizes the demise of an angel that scorns the earth. Three of the poets, Auden, Carlos, and Williams do not simply portray or describe Breughel's painting but have added certain themes and symbols**.**

Ekphrastic Representation in Van Gogh's *The Starry Night*

The article discusses how the change or additions in the ekphrastic renditions of Van Gogh's *The Starry Night* (1962) affect consumption and how the reader re-negotiates a work's meaning. *The Starry Night* is Anne Sexton's ekphrastic adaptation of Gogh's *The Starry Night*. Sexton's *The Starry Night* is an impassioned spiritual reaction to beauty and an emotional yearning for her own demolition. Sexton and Gogh's souls are much alike, tormented and wounded as they were until they committed suicide, so do their poetic and artistic oeuvres go hand in hand. Sexton views the world through Gogh's eyes, his longing is hers, and his woes are also hers. Eventually, his suicide becomes her suicide. Sexton who is known as a psychologically troubled poet, is inspired by the painting of someone as tortured and wounded as Gogh. This is why Sexton chooses to write *The Starry Night* and taking the overwhelming night landscape, pours her heart out,

Oh, starry starry night! This is how
I want to die. (26-27)

The poem evokes even stronger emotions in the reader as one unites with Sexton's point of view, her tortured soul. The poem is rich in imagery just as Gogh's painting is filled with natural elements in a night landscape. The meaning and significance of an artwork are never fixed and are often prone to the mobilization of the reader. The readers are free to interpret the meaning of the poem and this evokes several emotions in the reader until the end when Sexton writes that he wants to die. She idolizes the night sky which evokes a certain kind of sadness and mystery in the audience. The stars are bright and the night sky is as dark as it can be. The painting contains a cypress tree swirling that stands in the middle corner of the painting which Sexton personifies as a black-haired tree that swirls up like a drowned woman. The town is silent in the poem, as the night landscape in the painting is dark and quiet too. The large cypress tree in the middle of the painting foregrounds the rest of the imagery.

Van Gogh's brush strokes appear like a black-haired tree in the hot sky. Sexton engages in several symbols and figurative language to express her emotions and ideas about the night landscape. The movements in the sky appear to be serpents to her. The night is boiling with hot stars which might evoke in the readers as if the night has reached its peak with eleven stars. The eleven stars are overwhelming, and she expresses her desire to die as a 'rushing beast' of the night as if she has reached the ultimate spiritual transcendence she dreamt of. The moon bulges in the sky as if it were tied by orange irons and as if it is giving birth to children from its eye. The moon is like a god for her. She wishes to be swallowed up by the great dragon and get herself consumed by the madness and whirling colours of the night. She imagines as if an unseen serpent devours up the stars in the night sky. The poet is restless to embrace death silently and plunge into eternal peace, freedom from her pain. The readers are mesmerized by Sexton's use of symbols and are automatically drawn into the emotional intensity in her poem.

These imagery and icons are not present in the original painting. Sexton adds up these certain symbols to deepen the emotions that she wants her readers to be aware of. The reader becomes one with her feelings and views the painting from her point of view. The poem evokes fresh ideas and responses from the painting that they were previously unaware of. The reader is thus affected by the point of view of the poet. Sexton never makes it clear if it is Van Gogh speaking through the speaker in the painting, or if is it her own tortured soul trying to reach her readers. The poem is an example of how the emotions and experiences of an artist and poet unite, also uniting art and literature in the process.

Ekphrastic Projection in Snodgrass' "Van Gogh: The Starry Night"

W. D. Snodgrass' ekphrastic poem, "Van Gogh: The Starry Night" contains even more minute observations and deeper themes than Gogh's painting, *The Starry Night*. Even though an artwork has no fixed meaning, Snodgrass takes the readers to a new dimension that the painting might not have taken its viewers. To Snodgrass, the little town that stands calm in Van Gogh's masterpiece is old as a memory. "Old Dutch town" in the poem is as calm as Van Gogh's clear night sky filled with luminous stars. For Snodgrass, the town speaks to the readers itself, as if it were some lighthouses showing the way in the darkness:

How could I possibly be in any way of any
Use to anyone? I am good at something! (Snodgrass 29-30)

The night sky in Van Gogh's painting is luminous with bright stars and the yellow moon and the town with tiny houses are as calm as the stars as if it were the aftermath of a wild storm or disaster. One may get the same effect from Snodgrass' poem. The painting has been presented in his poem, narrating its story of standing still after a hurricane with its dead center swept above the town.

The town remains standing after an imaginary calamity has taken away its charm. Snodgrass describes every minute detail of the town in van Gogh's painting like no one has ever done before. The tiny houses are grey cottages that lie row on row. He mentions this town to be an old Dutch town with browning red houses and bright stoops, the doors are white or yellow. The angled roofs lay like an old memory. Snodgrass may have wanted to express that the town was once a centre of all charm and vigour. But now it only remains like a memory. He adds details of the natural beauty of the town where flowers are blossoming, the fruits are ripe, the father's sermon and the nightingale had not been heard yet. Further details include slate roofs ascending and stone stairs descending step by step.

Snodgrass at this point, reveals that this village is now a dead-centre, hurricane's eye, where the chapel is small and perhaps insignificant as a child's toy. The Father is also described as narrow-minded, icy cold, like iron. The clouds silently spiral up into

the sky keen as mother's needle, breaking the gloominess of the night-sky. There is still hope after the hurricane swept away the dead-centre of the town. The town speaks of hope, of some lighthouse showing the way amid darkness. As van Gogh's *Starry Night* is a clear night-sky illuminated with numerous bright stars, so is the town clear and calm after a hurricane takes place. The painting and the town both speak for themselves. The town speaks of hope, that it is good for something and will illuminate the paths where there is no light.

Snodgrass describes van Gogh's painting most vibrantly, contrasting van Gogh's calm night sky with his poem's calm village. The addition of certain symbols and signifiers adds new dimension to the poem, making the reader dive deeper into wider horizons of imagination. He describes the painting and reconstructs it, too. Like Gogh's swift and mesmerizing brushstrokes, Snodgrass builds his words such a way that a reader is evoked with feelings of sleepiness and heaviness spiraling into a poetic mystery. Like the impressionistic strokes of the artist, the stanza about the sky is filled with swirling and energetic words. Through the use of words and creative imagery beyond painting, Snodgrass takes his readers to another medium.

Both Sexton and Snodgrass celebrate *The Starry Night* in their own ways. The poetic response of the same painting in two poets is thus seen to be different. This ambiguity suggests a powerful ability and experience of art and beauty to not only cross the horizons of time and space but also dissolve the boundaries from one person to another. The ekphrastic poem has opened up more for the readers to ponder upon the painting and widened their perception. Art has tempered wounded souls, their pain and anguish, relieving them from their loneliness and anxieties.

Ekphrastic Interpretation in *Conversation among the Ruins*

Ekphrastic poems sometimes subvert or deconstruct the perspectives of their original paintings. Plath's eponymous ekphrastic poem, *Conversation Among the Ruins* will be observed in this section, if and how it subverts the perspective of Giorgio de Chirico in his painting *Conversation Among the Ruins*. The poem, in a surrealist style, depicts a destroyed and barren domestic scene with a man and a woman who are in direct conflict with each other. The position of the dominant and destructive man and the victim woman portrays the dynamic of power play in their relationship that reveals some greater themes of the painting as well as Plath's poem. The destroyed landscape shows a woman who is sitting. Only her back is seen and not her face. A man faces her, standing tall in his heroic attire. This position in the painting shows the subordinate role of the woman in comparison to her destructive partner. Plath incorporates the symbolic imagery out of the painting with some creations of her own, to dive deeper into the poem. In the painting, the man is standing tall, stalking with wild furies, who destroy the happy relationship that they once had. Their relationship was like magic, but it has been destroyed by whirlwinds by the dominating man. The woman whose face is not seen seems to have no agency or power over her male counterpart. She is wounded and her love is vulnerable. Plath compares him with the monsters of Greek tragedy, such

cruelty is Plath's depiction of the masculine. The woman is sitting vulnerably with a Grecian tunic and psyche-knot. Psyche is the wife of Eros, the god. She had to survive trials to preserve her marriage with the god. Similarly, Plath says that the woman is wounded by her love, and it is the man who is the cause of this destruction.

Although the woman in the painting is powerless, Plath re-creates her in her poem, giving her a voice to narrate and dominate her own story in the poem. She writes that the woman is a daunted witch, quitting castle when real days break. Witches in literature are usually frightening and scary characters. The poetess employs it as a symbol of feminization against the dominating man. The romantic relationship has become a persecuted witch that wants to turn away from the abundance of the castle and hide from the spotlight. In the Octet, she focuses on the man's power and remains voiceless herself. But in the Sestet, she takes the power into her own hands and turns a scary witch into a daring character.

In the painting, the woman does not have a face and does not have a voice in Plath's poem until in the Sestet. The poetess refuses to keep her the victim, and so, in the sestet, she gives the agency to speak for herself. She speaks that the man has damaged her to such an extent that she and the relationship cannot be reconciliated anymore. This shift from her being powerless to having an agency in the second half of the poem reconstructs, or in a sense, subverts the original theme of the painting. Plath refuses to project victimization on the part of her female character and thus makes her speak for herself by subverting the point of view of Chirico's painting.

Reversing the Gaze

This article attempts to demonstrate how Plath redirects the gaze in her eponymous ekphrastic poem, subverting or deconstructing Chirico's painting and how it affects the mind of the reader. Plath redirects the readers to view Chirico's painting from a new perspective by inserting agency and voice to the oppressed woman in the painting. The woman in the painting sits submissively, while in Plath's poem, she speaks about how the masculine brought destruction in their relationship,

> Through the portico of my elegant house, you stalk
> With your wild furies, disturbing garlands of fruit (Plath 1-2)

As Plath says, "through my elegant house you stalk", she exerts power by asserting the house to be hers and informs that it is the dominating man who disturbed the whole situation. Although the woman does not speak about herself in the first part of the poem but talks about the dominating man and how he destroyed their relationship single-handedly, in the sestet, she takes her power back like a daunted witch, and leaves the stormy eyes of the cruel man. The readers who expect the mute and submissive woman in the painting to be the same in the poem, are forced to view her from a new perspective. Her face is not seen in Chirico's painting. A small painting of hers hanging on the wall

of the fractured wall may be her portrait, or even be a mirror reflecting her face. Interestingly, the audience can view the dominant man as he stands but the submissive woman is seen through his eyes. This dynamic of power prevails throughout the painting. Thus, the woman is represented through the man. Her hair is also tied in a psyche-knot, symbolizing the vulnerability of psyche, the wife of Eros who fought to preserve her marriage. All these signifiers in Chirico's painting indicate the woman's powerlessness, while in Plath's poem, the perspective shifts as she speaks for herself and narrates the situation herself, instead of being a silent observer in the painting. The power-play that exists in Chirico's painting is reversed by Plath for the readers to experience a newer perspective. Chirico made the masculine play dominant in the painting, keeping the woman away from the eyes of the viewers, only to be seen through the male gaze. The painting or the reflection of her in the mirror enables the viewers to see her as she cannot in any other way. Contrarily, Plath speaks through the female in her poem. Plath intentionally reverses the gaze onto the female by turning away from the masculine. By giving voice to the voiceless, she invests new dimensions and meaning to her poetry while deviating from Chirico's painting.

Plath provides alternate ways for a reader to show Chirico's painting. By redirecting or reversing the gaze from the masculine to the oppressed feminine in the poem, Plath enables the readers to consider new perspectives that the reader did not ponder upon. The reader is free to criticize the painting from his point of view, as well as from the perspective of Plath. An artwork largely depends on a viewer's perception and point of view and the audience is free to interpret and appreciate artworks according to his or her own choice. Plath has added fresh dimensions to the painting by which the reader shifts his or her focus from the patriarchal setting to the female becoming stronger in the sestet of her poem. It redirects the male gaze from the masculine to the feminine in Chirico's painting through subverting or deconstructing the perspective or gaze of the source of inspiration, that is, the painting. Giving voice and agency to Chirico's powerless feminine, Plath changes the interpretation of the reader providing them with an alternative path of thinking.

Conclusion

Ekphrasis categorizes itself as the rhetorical device giving voice and language to the otherwise mute art object which serves as a medium that is intended to bring forth a picture before the mind's eye. Ekphrasis, according to Heffernan, is the verbal representation of a visual representation. When Davidson juxtaposes calling it a painterly poem, he brought forth a strategy elaborating that ekphrasis generates an equivalence and is not dependent on the painting. The ekphrastic manifestations are expected to show dialogism since one is animated from the other, one is enhanced by the other and hence no one stands secondary in this aspect. By analyzing the ekphrastic poems critically, it is noticed that the ekphrastic re-imaginings of Breughel, Van Gogh and Georgio Chirico add to the existing contexts, foreground, or reject certain aspects

and also redirect the gaze of the paintings, rather than merely verbalizing their original source of inspiration, that is, the paintings. Thus, they serve as an independent form of art by providing fresher perspectives and widened new dimensions for the audience and readers. Ekphrastic poems show how the emotions and experiences of an artist and poet unite, also uniting art and literature in the process.

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