The topic of this seminar is EKPHRASIS. The approach will be both historical and contemporary. Questions include: what is ekphrasis? Is it sufficient to define it as "a verbal representation of a visual representation"? How is ekphrasis related to speech and writing, oratory and rhetoric? How is it related to description, criticism, and critique? How does it work inside and outside the domain of the arts? Does ekphrasis differ when it is used in the domains of theater, music, dance, poetry, painting, and sculpture? How is it connected to the contest between the arts? What does it teach us about imaginative and sensory experience? What remains of ekphrasis in a predominantly visual culture? How do changes in technology and material culture change the function of ekphrasis? What role is there for ekphrasis is satire, politics, or cultural commentary? Readings will range from the most ancient to the most contemporary: they will be cross disciplinary: from philosophy, classical, literary, and cultural studies, music and art history, etc. They will also be drawn from different sources: Greek, Latin, Russian, French, German, and English but will all be offered and discussed in English translation.

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▶ Readings
All readings are available in electronic form through CourseWorks, section Class Files, folder Shared Files. Required readings should always be read in advance, according to the schedule below. Essential reading will be specified each week.

▶ Requirements
Reading is required; discussion is expected and will determine a significant part of the grade. For E-credit (letter grade) students, one final essay is due in the last week of classes (15-20 pp.). Topics should be approved in advance and ideally by mid-term. R-credit students are required to attend all classes and participate in a lively manner.
Week 1 January 24th

INTRODUCTION.

Homer. Achilles’ shield
Virgil. Aeneas’ shield
Shadi Bartsch and Jas Elsner. “Eight Ways of Looking at an Ekphrasis”

Week 2 January 31st

SPEECH, WRITING, RHETORIC, AND ORATORY

Plato. The Republic. Book 7
Plato. Phaedrus 274b6-277a7.
Aristotle. Poetics (sections I – IV).
Quintilian. Institutio Oratoria. Bk.1, ch. 10
Cicero. On the Orator, sec. 2

Week 3 February 7th

DESCRIPTIONS

Philostratus the Elder. Imagines. selection
Calistratus. Statues. selection
Philostratus the Younger. Descriptions. selection

Secondary
Norman Bryson. “Philostratus and the imaginary museum."
Simon Goldhill. “The naive and knowing eye: ekphrasis and the culture of viewing in the Hellenistic world.”
Stephen Beal. “Word-Painting in the “Imagines” of the Elder Philostratus”

Week 4 February 14th

UT PICTURA POESIS. CONTEST AND ILLUSTRATION

Leonardo da Vinci. PARAGONE (excerpt)
Goethe. Essay on Philostratus
Blaise de Vigenère [editing Philostratus] [as theme for discussion by TS]
Peter Wagner. “Ekphrasis, Iconotexts, and Intermediality – the State of the Arts(s)”

Week 5 February 21st

LAOKOON

Lessing. Laokoon (selection).
Wolfgang Ernst. “Not Seeing the Laokoon. Lessing in the Archive of the Eighteenth Century”
Alex Potts. “Disparities between Part and Whole in the Description of Works of Art,” in Regimes of Description, 135-150.

Week 6 February 28th  THE DEAF AND THE BLIND

Denis Diderot. Selection from *The Salon of 1765* and “Letter on the Blind”
Grant F. Scott. The Rhetoric of Dilation

Week 7 March 7th  ART HISTORY

Lucian. *Eikones/Portraits* (excerpt On the House)

March 14th – Spring Break!

Week 8 March 21st  DESCRIPTION AND NARRATION

Svetlana Alpers. “Describe or Narrate? A Problem in Realistic Representation”
Bertrand Russell. “Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description”
Arthur Danto. “Depiction and Description”
G. Genette. “Frontiers of narrative.”

Week 9 March 28th  THE GALLERY

Pierre le Moyne. “Les peintures morales” (1645)
Grant Scott. “Shelley, Medusa, and the Perils of Ekphrasis”
Friedrich von Schlegel. Selection from Description of Paintings in Paris… 1802-1804
Andrew Marvell. *The Gallery*
W. H. Auden. "Musée des Beaux Arts"
Grant F. Scott. "Ekphrasis and the Picture Gallery"
Kate Daniels. “War Photograph”
Mussorgsky. “Pictures at an Exhibition” [Music]

Week 10 April 4th  URNS AND JARS

John Keats, “The Ode on a Grecian Urn”
Leo Spitzer, “The ‘Ode on a Grecian Urn,’ or Content vs. Metagrammar,”
James Heffernan, “Ekphrasis and Representation”
Wallace Stevens, “Anecdote of a Jar”
W. J. T. Mitchell, “Ekphrasis and the Other”

Week 11 April 11th  POETRY, DANCE, AND STATUARY

Descriptions of the Statues from the Greek Anthology
Roman Jakobson. “The Statue in Pushkin’s poetic mythology” (1937)
Pushkin. “The Bronze Horseman”
Ismene Lada-Richards. “Mobile Statuary”: Refractions of Pantomime Dancing
from Callistratus to Emma Hamilton and Andrew Ducrow”

Week 12 April 18th  MUSIC, THEATER, PAINTING, OPERA

Lydia Goehr. “How to Do More with Words. Two Views of (Musical) Ekphrasis”
Walter Pater. “Giorgione”
Literature, Modern Scholarship.”
Century"

Week 13 April 25th  THE REALITY EFFECT

Nietzsche. “On music and words” [excerpt]
Gary Shapiro. “Ekphrasis and Translation”
Foucault. The Order of Things [chapter 1 on Les Meninas]

Week 14 May 2nd  Cinematographic/Filmic Ekphrasis
Discussion of:
Sokurov. Russian Ark 2002
Hitchcock Vertigo 1958