

**Spring 2011 Philosophy G6801 section 001
AESTHETICS AND POLITICS**

Call Number	25943
Day & Time	M 4:10pm-6:00pm
Location	TBA
Points	3
Instructor	Lydia Goehr (PHILOSOPHY) and Tatiana Smoliarova (RUSSIAN)
Type	SEMINAR

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 in 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
Ruth Webb. Intro, chapters 4 & 5 of *Ekphrasis, Imagination and Persuasion in Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Practice*.

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."
Valentine Cunningham. "Why ekphrasis?" *Classical Philology* 102 (2007): 57-71.
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]
John Hollander. "The Poetics of Ekphrasis – Word and Image"
Peter Wagner. "Ekphrasis, Iconotexts, and Intermediality – the State of the Arts(s)"

Week 5 February 21st LAOKOON

Lessing. *Laokoon* (selection).
Murray Krieger. "The Ekphrastic Principle and the Still Moment of Poetry; or Laokoon revisited."
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.

David Wellbery. "Aesthetic Media" in *Regimes of Description in the Archive of the Eighteenth Century*, John Bender and Michael Marrinan, eds. (Stanford CA: Stanford UP, 2005): 199-211.

Week 6 February 28th THE DEAF AND THE BLIND

Denis Diderot. Selection from *The Salon of 1765* and "Letter on the Blind"
Michael Fried. Selection from *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980.
Grant F. Scott. *The Rhetoric of Dilation*

Week 7 March 7th ART HISTORY

Lucian. *Eikones/Portraits* (excerpt *On the House*)
Jaś Elsner, "Art History as Ekphrasis," *Art History* 33 (2010): 10-27.
David Carrier, "Ekphrasis and Interpretation: Two Modes of Art History Writing," *BJA* 27 (1987): 20-31
David Rosand, "Ekphrasis and the Generation of Images," *Arion* 1/1 (1990): 61-105

March 14th – Spring Break!

Week 8 March 21st DESCRIPTION AND NARRATION

Don Fowler. "Narrate and Describe: The Problem of ekphrasis" *Journal of Roman Studies* 81. 25 – 35.
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)
Percy Shelley. "On the Medusa of Leonardo da Vinci in the Florentine Gallery"
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

Tatiana Smoliarova. "The Bronze Horseman and the Tradition of Ekphrasis"
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"
T. W. Adorno. "On Some Relationships between Music and Painting"
Leonard Barkan. "Making Pictures Speak: Renaissance Art, Elizabethan
Literature, Modern Scholarship."
Siglind Bruhn. "A Concert of Paintings: 'Musical Ekphrasis' in the Twentieth
Century"

Week 13 April 25th THE REALITY EFFECT

Nietzsche. "On music and words" [excerpt]
Roland Barthes. "The Reality Effect"
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