When Poetry and The Visual Arts Meet: A Case Study of Jorie Graham's Use of Ekphrasis

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Abstract

The relationship between poetry and the visual arts is an undeniable fact. Both are vehicles of literary expression and communication. Many works of the visual arts, some of which are not necessarily famous, have driven poets to inspire their ideas. One of the recurring literary techniques in the poetry of Jorie Graham is ekphrasis. The paper defines and tries to provide a brief historic account of the term *ekphrasis.* It also analyzes some of Graham's selected ekphrastic poems that reflect her persisting philosophical view that the visual arts is of a vital role in bridging the gap of language inadequacy that a poet encounters.

Keywords: Ekphrasis, Jorie Graham, Postmodern Poetry, The visual arts.

عندما يلتقي الشعر والفنون البصرية: دراسة التجسيد الشعري للأعمال الفنية البصرية في شعر جوري كراهم

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المستخلص

ان العلاقة بين الشعر والفنون البصرية هي حقيقة لا غبار عليها، فكلاهما وسيلتان رئيستان للتواصل والتعبير الادبي فالعديد من الاعمال الفنية البصرية وعلى الرغم من ان بعضها لم يحظى بشهرة واسعة الا انها الهمت بعض الشعراء لكتابة قصائد عنها وان أحد أكثر الوسائل الفنية استخداما وتكرارا في اعمال الشاعرة جوري كراهم هو التجسيد الشعري للأعمال الفنية البصرية ويحاول البحث ان يعرف ويقدم نبذة تاريخية عن مصطلح التجسيد الصوري في الشعر. كما سوف يقدم تحليلا لبعض القصائد المختارة للشاعرة جوري غراهام والتي تعكس نظرتها الفلسفية الثابتة القائلة بان الاعمال الفنية البصرية تلعب دورا فاعلا في غلق هوة قصور اللغة في التعبير عما يوجهه الشاعر.

الكلمات الدالة: التجسيد الشعري للأعمال الفنية البصرية، جوري كراهام، شعر ما بعد الحداثة، الفنون البصرية.

I.   Ekphrasis: Definitions and Historical Review:

The poet's eye, in fine frenzy rolling,

Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;

And, as imagination bodies forth

The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen

Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing

A local habitation and a name.

Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Soul-soothing Art! which Morning, Noon-tide, Even

Do serve with all their changeful pageantry!

Thou, with ambition modest yet sublime,

Here, for the sight of mortal man, hast given

To one brief moment caught from fleeting time

The appropriate calm of blest eternity.

Wordsworth, "Upon the sight of a beautiful Picture", *Poems.*

In ancient classical literature ekphrasis was commonly used as an exercise of rhetoric. It was mainly concerned with the process of representing verbally a visual work or a given scene which in turn affirms a mutual relation between poetry and art. In his *Ars Poetica*, Horace indicates a long time ago: "as is painting so is poetry" or "as in poetry so in painting" (quoted in Wagner ١٩٩٦: ٥). Horace, here, asserts that poetry can re-introduce a visual work verbally. In other words, it can "translate the arrested visual image into the fluid movement of words … when the narrative halts and the poet intervenes … it breathes words into the mute picture, it makes pictures out of the suspended words of its text … (and it) appropriates and liberates the image, captures and enables it…." (Scott, ١٩٩٤, p. xii)

In recent times, the term *Ekphrasis,* a literary genre and a rhetorical and poetical device, has acquired the attention of literary critics and artists alike. Many studies in this field have been written and the circulation of the term became quite common in various domains of art such as painting and writing especially poetry. Ekphrasis or (ecphrasis) is

a compound Greek word the first part of which 'ek' means 'speak' and the second 'phrasis' means 'out' (Wagner, ١٩٩٦, p. ١٢). To speak out, in this context, means to give detailed and vivid description of the thing seen or an experience lived. In ancient Greece, ekphrasis was widely used during the third and fourth centuries particularly in the Sophists' tradition as basic rhetoric exercise of oration. "It [was] not coincidental that ekphrasis was developed by the Sophists as a rhetorical exercise, for it is primarily an art of make- believe and it fosters illusion both at the semiotic and at the representational level" (Fort,١٩٩٦, p. ٥٨). "Its use [then] was unrestricted: it referred, most broadly, to verbal description of something, almost anything, in life or art" (Krieger, ١٩٩٢, p. ٧). With the passage of time ekphrasis took a different direction and became mainly associated with poems that describe pictorial work of art as their subject matter which is a fact that does not deny the ekphrastic quality in other forms of writing particularly works in fiction.

Literature becomes the voice of the voiceless. It makes the silent pictorial and plastic works (pictures, paintings, photographs, and sculptures) speak through the poet's voice which in turn will reflect the poet's ability to recreate and render in the verbal medium a work of art. David Mikics (٢٠٠٧) clarifies that "an ekphrastic text describes a work of art, usually a painting or sculpture. Ekphrasis is the word for this verbal evocation of the visual: for literature's conversation with a silent counterpart." (p. ٩٨). It is, thus, literature's verbal articulation of art's visual and silent representations. In this sense, the novel recreation and rendering of the seen work of art is flavored by the poet's temperament and personal influence the work of art inflicts up on him. What makes ekphrasis more intriguing is the fact that it reconciles between two separate semiotic disciplines which are the verbal and the visual (Krieger, ١٩٩٢, p. ٦).   Umberto Eco argues that "the image possesses an irresistible force. It produces an effect of reality, even when it is false. It cannot say by itself that it does not exist or that it is false, whereas the text can do that. Without text, the image lies or gives way to a multitude of interpretations" (quoted in Wagner, ١٩٩٦, p. ٣٠). It allows words to express verbally what pictures, paintings, photographs and sculptures cannot express or make audible. The term highlights not only the link between the word and the image but the rivalry between the two.

The rhetorical quality of ekphrasis is heightened when it is connected to literary works because it implies that the verbal description must be vivid and persuasive at the same time to influence the reader and the listener. "And it pretends that this substitution can produce on the mind's eye as powerful and vivid an impression as is produced on the retina of the real eye by the impression of the art object itself." (Webb, ٢٠٠٩, p. ٥٨) This implies that for an ekphrastic work to be successful, it must recreate an image in the reader's mind that is as identical and effective as possible to the one the beholder perceives when standing in front of a work of art. Generally, ekphrasis refers to and creates a description that visually brings before a mind's eye a thing, a place, a person or a painting or and image.

II.   Ekphrastic Poetry:

Ekphrastic poetry is a technique-like type which is written in response to other forms of visual arts, especially, painting, sculpture, and photograph. In his discussion of the term, the American poet and critic professor John Hollander describes ekphrastic poetry as "poems addressed to silent works of art, questioning them, describing them as they could never describe—but merely present—themselves; speaking for them; making them speak out or speak up . . . . They seek to break open the self-absorption with which all images seem to be veiled" (quoted in Mikics, ٢٠٠٧, p. ٩٨). Poems become the medium of confrontation of these works of art and through them poets draw by words in the reader's mind and imagination images that reflect the confronted work of art. It is through the visible quality of poetic language that readers can construct images of a piece of plastic art. In his book *Picture Theory* W. J. T. Mitchell (١٩٩٥) answers these two canonical questions: "How do we say what we see? And how can we make the reader see?" stating that "we can construct a "visible language," a form that combines sight and sound, picture and speech that "make us see" with vivid examples, theatrical gestures, clear descriptions and striking figures"(p. ١١٤). Thus, ekphrasis helps poets to cross the boundary of language inadequacy by becoming the main vessel towards effective linguistic expression by the virtue of the suggestive quality of the plastic work of art.

It is very important to note that the traditional use of ekphrasis is different from the modern application of the term. "Earlier forms of ekphrasis often depict imagined works of visual art, as opposed to their twentieth century counterparts, which refer more to

existing works of visual art. [T]hese respective types of ekphrasis [are] "notional" and "actual" (Clarridge, ٢٠١٥, p. ٢)". The notional ekphrastic models are based on imaginative items rather than actual ones as in the case of actual ekphrastic models which are based on actual works of art. This difference is mainly a result of the availability of art museums at modern times.

Modern poetry abounds with ekphrastic poems that many of us have read and are not aware of. In addition to the visual poetry of William Blake, there are many examples of ekphrastic poems in English poetry the most famous ones are: Keats' "Ode on A Grecian Urn", Shelley's on "the Medusa of Da Vinci in The Florentine Gallery", W. H. Auden's "Muse Des Beaux Arts" and John Ashbery's "Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror.

Finally, the ability to minutely scan silent pictorial and plastic works and recreate them in the mind's eye of the reader seasoned with the poet's temperament and vision is the main aim of ekphrasis.

III.   Jorie Graham: A Poet's Life Sketch.

Jorie Graham (١٩٥٠-   ) is one of the contemporary poets who is closely associated with postmodernity. Despite the fact that she was born in New York City, she was raised in Rome, Italy by her parents therefore Italian is considered her mother tongue language. Her mother Beverly Pepper was an artist and her father Curtis was a writer and editor. They formed a lasting influence on her poetry. As a result of growing up in Europe she became multilingual. Her multilingualism played a vital part in sharpening her sense of sounds and rhythm. It has in fact, affected her careful attention to sounds, meanings, cadences, and nuance of language (Miltner, ٢٠٠٢, p. ١٥٤). After studying philosophy in France at the Sorbonne, she returned to New York where she got a degree in film making from University of New York in ١٩٧٣. She joined University of Iowa and gained a degree in creative writing in ١٩٧٨ after entering Writer's Workshop in. She gained reputation and poetic acclaim as one of the major practitioners of visual and ekphrasis in postmodern poetry. Works of visual arts, photographs, sculptures and in many instances the style and the technique of painting are always present in her works. She usually

reanimates the movement and style of painting and adopts them as forms and techniques for her poems.

Graham's poetry is a reflection of her experiences. It brings about, usually in a complex an incomprehensive way, her personal feelings and subjective attitudes to some of the main historic events; she either witnessed or took part in, especially the French students' demonstration which is decisively contributed in formulating her thought and beliefs toward life, religion, society, and art. Experimentations with many defining techniques of postmodernism such as pointillism, pastiche, collage, disruptive language and fragmentation set forth her chaotic style which imitates the nature of modern life. In fact, her style in each one of her books differs from the previous one. "Stylistically, Graham's poetry is characterized by an interplay of long sentence units and short, strung fragments that seem spun out of the innate logic of each individual poem, giving her poems a kind of visual urgency and conversational immediacy." (Miltner, ٢٠٠٢, p. ١٥٥)

Graham first step in the practice of poetry writing began with the publication of her first book *Hybrid of Plants and of Ghosts* in ١٩٨٠. In ١٩٨٣ she published her second book *Erosion* and in ١٩٨٧ she wrote *The End of Beauty*. *Region of Unlikeness* appeared in ١٩٩١ in which Graham explores the dichotomy of life and death. The constant element that links all these books together is "her visual delight in the world [which] is matched by an opposing resistance to the visible" (Spiegelman, ٢٠١٠, p. ١٤١).

Poetry for Graham is spiritual and physical. In an interview with Graig Lambert she describes the symptoms one undergoes when reading a poem saying " [i]n poetry, you have to feel deeply something inchoate, something which is coming up from a place that you don't even know the register of." (https://harvardmagazine.com/٢٠٠١/٠١/image-and-the-arc-of-fee.html). In the introduction she wrote for *The Best American Poetry of ١٩٩٠*, that poetry:

> describes, enacts, is compelled by those movements of supreme passion, insight or knowledge that are physical yet intuitive, that render us whole, inspired. Among verbal events... poetry tends to leap, to try to move more vertically: astonishment, rapture, vertigo—the seduction of the infinite and the abyss" (Graham, ١٩٩٠, p. xviii).

Thus, poetry is not only a unique amalgam of the spirit and the body but the only medium where both can meet, interact and even blend. Graham believes, accordingly, that poets must use language to have the experience and not to report it. Poetry is a means to

explore the unknown and to find new things. The nature of her poetry is basically binary depending on a pair of odds or dichotomies such as body and soul, imagination and reality, and the outer and the inner. Miltner goes further to say "by posting dichotomous and contradictory impulses at the heart of her poetry, Graham reflects the challenge of the postmodern artist: the exploration of the irrational through the rationality of language."(Miltner, ٢٠٠٢, p. ١٥٦).

IV.   Ekphrasis in Graham's Poetry

Graham's treatment of ekphrasis as a poetic strategy is curiously innovative. She is deeply influenced by the visual works and their spatial and atemporal qualities that she constantly seeks to experiment this strategy in new ways, ways that cope with the needs and changes of modern life. These ways are no more conventional or traditional i.e. they do not necessarily include vivid description of a visual work. In this sense Graham dares to lend her "attention not only to the physical qualities of visual work but to try to embody qualities beyond the physical aspects of the work she observes" (http://www.srpr.org/blog/tag/jorie-graham/). Going beyond the visible qualities is a means by which Graham can explore the invisible qualities that a given visual work cannot express and thus she enables the reader to ponder over the work of art and its relation to history, memory, and the human experience.

Poetry and the visual arts are interconnected in Graham's view. There is a long-standing relationship between the two systems of human expression. A great deal of her poems resonates to visual works in their treatment of personal, social and religious issues. Her reliance on pieces of the visual arts to be the backbone of poem writing stems from her belief of their free and independent nature. She uses sources of literary imagination that motivate her to transform and explore through her poems. In an interview with Gardener in ١٩٩٥, she states:

> I don't use the paintings so much as spring off the scene in them which is strangely fixed and free from us and so makes especially evident our desire for transformation, our tiny imperialisms of the imagination. Paintings are "finished" and stilled in ways few things in nature are, and therefore resistant in ways that make my rage to change more visible to me. This idea of description is more transformative than representational.

(https://www.joriegraham.com/gardner_interview_٢٠٠٦)

What makes Graham's ekphrasis peculiar and special is her unconventional use of this technique. She breaks away from the conventional use by not describing a plastic work but by referring to one work or method indirectly.

The paper discusses Ekphrasis from two different viewpoints or categories: explicit and implicit ekphrasis. the Explicit ekphrasis refers to the poems which refer to the work of art directly. The reference to the work of art in this category is complete as in "San Sepolcro" and "Le Manteau de Pascal." In this type Graham ostensibly uses the technique according to the traditional method. Though she describes a given piece or more of visual art yet her description is charged with personal implications of thoughts, memories and events she experienced. "San Sepolcro" in her ١٩٨٣ *Erosion* is an example of her use of explicit ekphrasis. It describes a fresco by the Italian ١٥th century artist Piero della Francesca which depicts Virgin Marry's laboring moments. It is composed of seven stanzas each of six short lines and an unusual three ending lines. Graham evades straightforward description of the painting. She instead invites the readers to accompany her in show around short tour. She first shows them the place (her small house in the Italian village) then she starts to describe the fresco. However, she does not entirely provide enough description of it forcing the readers to take part in the process of image creation. Through the first three stanzas, Graham concentrates on the details of the place around her house then she moves on to connect between artistic creativity and mind's purity. She focuses on 'how clean the [creative] mind is considering it a 'holy grave':

> ….. It is this girl
>   by Piero
> della Francesca, unbuttoning
>   her blue dress,
> her mantle of weather,
>   to go into
>
> labor. Come, we can go in.
>   it is before
> the birth of god. No one
>   has risen yet
> ……………………….
> ……………………….
>   …… This is
> what the living do: go in.
>   It's a long way.
> And the dress keeps opening
>   from eternity

to privacy, quickening.
   Inside, at heart,
Is tragedy, the present moment
  forever stillborn,
              (Graham, ١٩٨٣, p.٢)

  Ekphrasis in the poem begins when the poet introduces the painting to the reader. Suddenly the identity of the girl is revealed. The girl in the painting is Virgin Marry who is in the labor stage. Though the lines are short and brief they provide incomplete, yet basic, details in the readers' mind's eye to embark into ekphrastic description of the girl. The simple and incomplete details of the girl who is "unbuttoning blue dress" with her "mantle of weather" during Christ birth-giving drive readers to resort unconsciously to their prior knowledge and imagination to fill in the gaps and make the painting complete. On the personal plane, Graham undermines the very foundation of history and religion. Christ whose figure is customary and traditionally depicted as savior for humanity becomes the source of all human tragedy. Graham swiftly takes the reader inside to the heart of the painting where the true tragedy is, revealing the forgotten truth that this tragedy "forever stillborn."

      "Le Manteau de Pascal" is another poem from Graham's ١٩٨٧ volume *The Errancy* in which ekphrasis is explicit. The poem is a reflection on Rene Magritte's painting La Manteau de Pascal (Pascal's Coat). As is the case with many poems in this volume, the poem is narrative and long. Apparently, the tone is generally pessimistic and the controlling voice is the voice of the poet herself. Pascal's coat is both the main topic and symbol of the poem:

I have put on my great coat it is cold.
It is an outer garment.

Coarse, woolen.
Of unknown origin.
……………………
……………………
……………………
I have a coat I am wearing I was told to wear it.
Someone knelt down each morning to button it up.
I looked at their face, down low, near me.
What is longing? What is a star?
Watched each button a peapod getting tucked back in.
Watched harm with its planeloads folded in the sleeves. (Graham, ١٩٩٧, p. ٤٥)

The description of the coat is typically fit with Graham's style. She does not provide it in details and instead she gives glimpses of it to the reader through the poem. The coat is woolen, dark, tattered, and of an unknown origin. Through the poem the speaker admits that she is unwillingly wearing the coat which stands for the intellectual detritus of postmodern period. The poem main drive is to find significance in postmodern life by blanketing or [making] protective belief system constructed to protect humanity. (Karagueuzian, ٢٠٠٥, p. ١٤٤). Symbolically the coat in this poem stands for hope in finding meaning in the cultural, intellectual and religious pile of postmodern thought.

While implicit ekphrasis refers to poems where the reference is not to work of art but to a specific style of an artist as in "For Mark Rothko," "Pollack on Canvas," and "Fission." The poem "For Mark Rothko" which appears in *Hybrid of Plants and of Ghosts* does not describe a given work of art neither comments on one and proves Graham to be an unconventional ekphrastic poet. Instead, it imitates the abstract painting expressionistic style of Rothko who is one of the imminent innovative abstract painters of the ٢٠[th] century. In her interview with Gardner, she describes Rothko's style and expresses her admiration of his work. She believes that creativity begins in "the gap between the end of his gesture and the beginning of the painting". (https://www.joriegraham.com/gardner_interview_٢٠٠٦). More importantly, it registers the poet's "inability to still the moment of the bird's arrival in the backyard and to convey the loss that vision in general entails" (Karagueuzian, ٢٠٠٥, p. ٤٤). Graham who is viewing a natural scene through a window frame uses the abstract color field oil technique that appears at the very beginning of the poem. This technique is remarkably characterized by its open suggestiveness that Graham finds impossible to encompass via language. Thus, by referring to this painting technique the poet attempts to bridge the gap of language inadequacy through inviting the readers to take part in the poem. Graham's readers are not passive. To understand her open-suggestive poems the readers must be well informed and equipped with sufficient knowledge of the topic Graham presents. To formulate this understanding, readers must know that "Rothko's method of field painting contains no element of representation and the artist's presence is inherent in his

brushstroke, composition and color choice."[1] Red is the dominating color that casts the scene of the poem and opens the poem to many possible interpretations on personal, historical, and philosophical levels. Moreover, it is the controlling symbol in the poem alongside the Persian-red bird:

> *Shall I say it is the constancy of Persian red*
> *that permits me to see*
> *this persian-red bird come to sit now*
> *on the brick barbecue*
> *within my windowframe.*
>   (Graham, ١٩٨٠, p. ٣٦)

The first stanza of the poem juxtaposes the poet's visible experience with the artist painting style. The poet here appears viewing a natural scene from her window frame. The dominant red color of the scenery recalls the abstract painting style of Rothko and here the ekphrastic experience is registered.

Through the second and the third stanzas the poet continues her pleasing experience with the red bird despite the fact that the bird has left and can no more be seen by the bare eyes. The very beginning of the second stanza is a turning point in the poem because it heralds the transformation from the present moment into the poet's own memory and personal experience. "*When I look again he is gone./ He is easy to imagine / in flight: red extended flame* (Graham, ١٩٨٠, p. ٣٦). To compensate the lost view of the red bird, she resorts to her memory to recreate the viewed reality.

Stanzas four and five fluctuate between imagination and reality and memory and the present moment. Very interesting in these two stanzas is the poet's declaration of his inability to formulate sufficient understanding of the visible which is here the red view in which he has seen the red bird. Rothko's style is compatible and fitting to the poet's style in the poem because of its suggestiveness. Graham's inability of comprehension and expression is seen in these lines:

> There is no way to understand
> the difference. Some red
>
> has always just slipped from
> our field of vision, a cardinal

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[1] (http://wiredspace.wits.ac.za/bitstream/handle/١٠٥٣٩/٢٠١٧/Research٪٢٠Paper٪٢٠١٪٢٠B.pdf?sequence=٢ &isAllowed=y)

dropping from persian to magenta to white so slowly
in order that the loss
be tempted,
not endured.
                    (Graham, ١٩٨٠, p. ٣٧)

Despite the fact that it is very challenging if not impossible, Graham attempts to covey Rothko's style of painting into her poetry by inviting the reader to imagine a painting while reading the poem. "The image of the color red's almost imperceptibly changing value coincides with Rothko's methods" (Karagueuzian, ٢٠٠٥, pp. ٤٤-٤٥). Readers have to envision seeing, from a distance, the poet and the scene she is looking at in a frame. Within this frame the color red and the bird are fading away triggering to the readers conscious experience the lost experience the poet has had and no longer can catch or still. The loss experience and the poet's inability to express it is conveyed through ekphrasis in this poem. Commenting on this point C. S. Karagueuzian (٢٠٠٥) states:

> Having recognized the futility of ever seizing the bird's visible presence in language, Graham proposes that an abstraction such as Rothko's can not only suggest what she has seen but also convey the experience of loss inherent to both looking and language. … Graham explores in much greater depth the possibility that visual art might convey meaning that escapes language. (p. ٤٥)

Graham believes that language as a tool of human communication is, in certain situations, short and inadequate therefore she resorts to other mediums and systems of expression to aid it become reliable in conveying the experience she lived.

"Pollock on Canvas" in *The End of Beauty* which was published in ١٩٨٧ is another example on Graham's use of implicit ekphrastic technique. The poem again does not describe a specific work of visual art. It describes, instead, the Pollack's method of painting. It pays considerable attention to "Jackson Pollack's drip techniques, and the moment between the touching of paint and canvas as exemplary of the fluidities the poet finds in existence and the ideal of an artwork that is not closed or enclosed" (Richie ٢٠١٣, p. ٩٣).

In its third part the poem expresses the poet's admiration of Pollack's technique and describes his method of painting. It suggests that the painter's genuine and novel method results from his inability to express his thought by the conventional and classical

methods of painting. A case that can, by extension, be applied on Graham's poetry. The third part reads:

Where does the end begin?
 where does the lifting off of hands become love,
 letting the made wade out into danger,
 letting the form slur out into flaw, in
 conclusiveness? Where does the end of love
 begin? (Where does that love begin?)
And then He rested, is that where the real making
begins—the now—Then He rested letting in
 chance letting in any wind any shadow quick with minutes, and whimsy,
 through the light, letting the snake the turning in.

(Graham, ١٩٨٧, p. ٨١).

Graham is not questioning in these lines. She is in fact wondering admiringly over the painter's technique and his creativity. They express her paramount need to convey this technique into poetry therefore she uses empty spaces in the lines and between the lines to imitate the space between the brush and the canvas. She attempts to convey various religious and philosophical implications by adopting Pollack's drip method which becomes a source of suggestiveness in her poetry. Her poetry thus, defies closure and takes openness as a chosen path.

The other poem in which ekphrasis is implicit is "Fission" which appears at the beginning of *Region of Unlikeness*, opens with:

The real electric lights light upon the full-sized
screen
on which the greater-than-life-size girl appears,
almost nude on the lawn—sprinklers on—
voice-over her mother calling her name out—loud—
camera angle giving her lowered lids their full
expanse—a desert—as they rise.

(Graham, ١٩٩٥, p. ٩٩)

In the poem Graham takes the ekphrasis into a new level by using it to describe film images. She dares to undermine the traditional use of the technique by" using non-figurative art she evades the pressure of description, because, apart from shapes and colours, there may be almost nothing that can be pinned down by words contained within the picture." (https://www.joriegraham.com/gardner_interview_٢٠٠٦)

To conclude, Graham's drawing on the technique of ekphrasis is pivotal to her poetry. She uses this old technique mainly to enrich her poetic visual experience adding to it a classical effect and more importantly to find solution for language inability to express her ideas and thoughts. Very innovative in her use is her personal touch with which she tints her poems. She breaks away from the traditional use of ekphrasis in the fact that her ekphrasis is not completely descriptive. Her poems do not provide full and complete description of the work of art in question. Instead they invite the readers to take part in image making process and therefore are active rather than passive. The way in which she utilizes the technique is equally remarkable and postmodern. Explicit ekphrasis is manifested in her poems through describing a specific work of visual art especially paintings. While implicit ekphrasis is present in poems that do not describe a work of the visual arts but instead describes a style of an artist, and thus their works implicitly.

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