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## Ekphrastic Imageries: A Study in Selected Poems by Ailbhe Darcy

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 Academic Scientific Journals <a href="https://iasj.rdd.edu.iq">https://iasj.rdd.edu.iq</a>	<p><b>Abstract :</b> This research examines the concept of ekphrasis and how it is effectively combined the visual arts with other well-known artistic forms to present a cohesive, harmonious front. Through ekphrasis, this study aims to bridge the gap between various creative genres, from video/visual to written/poetic. This paper examines a number of Ailbhe Darcy's poems using a qualitative analytical method. This ekphrastic approach uniquely integrates technology, art, and literature. The core of ekphrasis is found in both the blurring of boundaries between many creative art genres and the richness of poetic imagery found in the verses. Essentially, ekphrasis enables conversation between the verbal and the visual through details of descriptions. The results indicate that creative artistic processes, both in their creation and presentation, are evolving along with technology. This study reveals how words affect both viewers and non-viewers of tangible artwork.</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Art, ekphrasis, Ailbhe Darcy, artwork, technology, visual art, imagery.</p>

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## تحويل الوسائط الفنية الى صور شعرية (قصائد): دراسة في اشعار ألبى دارسي

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## الملخص:

يتناول هذا البحث مفهوم تحويل الوسائط الفنية الى صور شعرية (اكفراسيس) وكيف لهذا المفهوم ان ينجح في دمج الفنون البصرية مع أشكال فنية أخرى معروفة لتقديم صور متماسكة ومتناغمة. حيث تهدف هذه الدراسة، من خلال المفهوم الإكفراسيسي، إلى رتق الفجوة بين مختلف الأنواع الإبداعية، من الفيديو/الصور البصرية إلى الكتابة/الشعر. هذا وتدرس هذه الورقة البحثية عددًا من قصائد ألبى دارسي باستخدام منهج تحليلي نوعي تجتمع فيه التكنولوجيا بالفن والأدب بطريقة فريدة نتيجةً للأسلوب الإكفراسيسي. ويكمن جوهر الأخير في كل من تلاشي الحدود بين العديد من الأنواع الفنية الإبداعية وثناء الصور الشعرية الموجودة في الأبيات الشعرية. وببساطة، يُمكن لهذا الأسلوب الشعري الفني من التمازج بين ما هو لفظي وما هو بصري من خلال تفاصيل وصفية. كما وتشير نتائج الدراسة إلى أن العمليات الإبداعية الفنية، سواء في إنشائها أو عرضها، تتطور جنبًا إلى جنب مع التكنولوجيا. وبهذا تكشف هذه الدراسة كيف تؤثر الكلمات على كل من مشاهدي الأعمال الفنية الملموسة وغير المشاهدين لهذه الاعمال.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الفن، مفهوم الوصف الفني الشعري، دارسي، العمل الفني، التكنولوجيا، الفن البصري، الصور الشعرية.

## Introduction

The first thing that may leap to mind is, what is the Ekphrasis? The initial response may involve describing a literary piece, an artwork, a poem, or similar works. But the answer is quite unexpected. 'Ekphrasis' refers to the depiction of only literary and artistic works. Writing a poem about a war cannot be considered an ekphrasis. But writing a poem about an expressionist painting about a horrific war full of horror scenes and blood is an ekphrasis, and this is the focus of this research.

To delve deeper into the study of the Ekphrasis concept and for illustrations of it, a few of the poems written by contemporary Irish poet Ailbhe Darcy are examined. The majority of the contents produced by her is her expertise in the 'feminist phase in Irish poetry,' Darcy is best characterized as 'post-feminist,' even if she is occasionally influenced by feminist themes. Also, she writes on her experiences living overseas in a multicultural environment, pursuing various artistic endeavors, and giving

a good sense of identity (Theinová, 2020, p. 20). While none of the studies and reviews have addressed the issue of ekphrasis in Darcy's poetry, critics have examined it in poets like John Keats in "Ode on a Grecian Urn" (1819), Robert Browning in "My Last Duchess" (1842), Elizabeth Barrett Browning in "Aurora Leigh" (1856), and Homer in his depiction of the "forging of Achilles' shield" (Heiniger, 2015). As a result, the significance of the study in addressing a novel, noteworthy, and prominent aspect of Darcy's words becomes apparent.

Based on the previous discussion, this study will examine the ekphrasis technique in some selected poems by Darcy and how she utilizes it with its variety elements. The aim of this current study is to analyze the ekphrastic imagery in selected poems by Darcy to communicate the emotional effect and to enhance or interpret the weight of the subject through bridging the gap between the art and literature.

This study will initially elucidate the theoretical framework of 'ekphrasis,' followed by a succinct background on the Irish poet, reinforced by previous studies of her works. Furthermore, it addresses the methods that are used and the objectives of this study. Lastly, it is required to consider the practical application of more than two poems prior to the conclusion.

### **Ekphrasis Concept: Visual Narratives**

The etymology of this term is borrowed from the New Latin and Greek as follows: 'ecphrasis' and 'ekphrasis', which means 'description'. To delve into the word, it means 'to tell over, recount, describe, point out, show, tell, speak out and explain.' The origin of this word is Greek. In literary terms, it is a literary device that refers to a textual analysis or vivid and detailed description of a piece of visual art expressed through words (verbally). Historically, it is a somewhat new inclusion to our language/dictionary, that the term 'ekphrasis' originally emerged in English around the turn of the 18th century (Merriam-Webster). A more comprehensive definition of ekphrasis is used by Heffernan and Mitchell, who indicate it as a "verbal representation of a visual representation" (Heffernan J. A., 1993, p. 3) (Mitchell, 1994).

It was a neglected art form for a large period of history, but it gained popularity again in the second decade of the 18th century, when there was

a need for detailed accounts of artwork from all over the world. Following the Industrial Revolution, as more people became literate due to the more comprehensive education provided to the working classes, this practice gained widespread recognition. Individuals who could read and afford to buy books, newspapers, pamphlets, and other literary works want to be able to view the magnificent creations of nations, towns, and continents that they would probably never be able to travel to. People depended on ekphrastic authors to create a vivid image in their audience's collective consciousness because it was far more expensive to duplicate a piece of art on paper, especially in the exact detail that was desired. Such instances of ekphrasis are frequently described using terminology that was faithful to the original source Ekphrasis evolves into a poetic method used to engage in a dialogue around an important feature of an object of art. The objective of these ekphrastic authors was to provide a visual experience to their audience (Cacciatore, n.d.).

Ekphrastic poetry has broadened in the 21st century to include postcolonial viewpoints, especially in Indigenous literature that deals with environment and collective identities. However, the ekphrasis promotes a greater understanding of both literary and visual expression by acting as a rich connection of the two. It scrutinizes its formerly Eurocentric obsessions from an Indigenous point of view. At first, ekphrastic poetry served to offer in-depth discussion of a visual artwork's formal and structural aspects as well as commentary on its significance and usefulness (Greene, 2024).

Ekphrasis was originally intended to evoke the imagination and effect a change in the emotional condition of the reader or listener (Webb, 2009, p. 1). This was to be achieved by augmenting the 'vitality' of the mental representation of the described object through language (Henkel, 1997, p. 337). So, the ultimate aim of the ekphrasis is to 'persuade' and evoke emotions in the audience by making a vivid and immersive illusion of 'being present' in the depicted issue (Humboldt, 1972, pp. 1830-35). Heffernan (1991) claims that the purpose of the presentation of artwork is to imply a more overt use of the words as tools for emotional conveyance and connection. Quintilian says in his book *Institutio Oratoria* (1920) specifically in Book VI. Chapter II. Note 29–30) that it was believed that mastering this skill (using of ekphrasis technique)

would provide significant control over the audience's emotions. Even if the reader is 'aware' of the paradox represented by being absent in front of the actual scene, the technique of being 'before very eyes' gives him the impression that he is there at some previous or future occurrence.

Literarily, ekphrasis, or a genre of literature, intertwines visual and verbal elements, encompassing the processes of reading and evoking a visual picture or associated action. It is an effective method for eliciting a profound activation of the reader's or listener's emotions and imaginations by interweaving the domains of perception, feelings of attachment, and logic. According to this viewpoint, ekphrasis is more about representing acts than it is about describing observable events (Gambino, Renata, Pulvirenti, Grazia, 2017, pp. 151-153).

Mitchell posits that our intrigue with ekphrastic discourse arises from its progression through three phases: the 'ekphrastic indifference,' characterized by the common perception that ekphrasis is unattainable; the 'ekphrastic hope,' wherein the perceived impossibility of ekphrasis is transcended through imagination or metaphor; and the 'ekphrastic fear,' which represents the state of resistance when we apprehend that the figurative, imaginative aspiration of ekphrasis could be actualized literally (Mitchell, 1994, pp. 152-154).

Discussing ekphrasis necessitates addressing the intricate dynamics between word and picture, time and place, activity and stasis, within the constructed realms of language, to effectively evoke the reader's imagination, the literary form, the creative process, and the emotions elicited by engaging with a work of art (Lino, 2016). Ekphrastic poetry can have several forms. It may be as a sonnet, a haiku, or an extended poem composed in free verse with numerous stanzas. Regardless of their format, ekphrastic poems serve to engage with a work of art in a critical, analytical, and respectful manner (Ekphrastic Poetry Explained: How to Write Ekphrastic Poems, 2021).

There are four primary categories of ekphrasis: 'actual/descriptive, mimetic/structural, notional, and abstracted.' Descriptive ekphrasis, the most prevalent kind, involves writing about an actual artwork. Mimetic or structural ekphrasis emulates the form of the artwork and is particularly prevalent in relation to music or abstract artwork. Notional ekphrasis refers

to the depiction of a work that is inspired by a fictitious artwork that is not present in the actual world. Ultimately, abstract ekphrastic writing transcends the limitations of both reality and conventional writing (Phillips, 2024).

In this context, it is fitting to refer to an 'iconoclastic ekphrasis': a depiction of an image or visual artwork that seeks to illustrate the inability of the picture to encapsulate the meaning of what it represents. This process results in words transforming into "things" that can be observed: inscriptions in nature and natural histories that grow ever more challenging to interpret (Cammarata, Valeria, & Mignano, V., 2016, p. 124). Research on this notion revealed a new type, leading to a debate on 'reverse ekphrasis,' defined as 'a visual representation of a verbal representation.' These disputes highlight ekphrasis as a potential bridge between architecture and literature (Sommer, M. P., & Erdem, A., 2015).

However, ekphrasis is sometimes mistaken for pictorialism, which is the practice of describing a scene or item in a poem as vividly as if it seemed a piece of artwork. All great poetry employ imagery in this way. However, ekphrastic texts constantly relate in some manner to either previously created or newly created works of art (sometimes referred to as 'fictional' or 'notional'). In that instance, a poem describing a painting of the tree is ekphrastic, but a poem of the same tree is not (Robillard, 2017).

In examining the characteristics of ekphrastic poems, Verdonk asserts that such a poem represents an interaction triangle including the writer/poet, the poet's identity, and the listener/reader (Verdonk, 2005, p. 273). The key characteristics of the technique of the ekphrasis are: 1- (Depiction of the visual artworks) Poetry regarding visual (actual or conceptual) artworks comes to be particularly referred to as ekphrasis in the 18th century. 2- (Impact on Emotions) Ekphrasis has expanded to encompass interpretations and emotional reactions to the artworks through addressing issues of identity and societal criticism (Greene n.d.). 3- (Captivating Language and Images) To capture the spirit of the work, use language that is active, vivid, figurative, and emotive (Ramirez, n.d.). 4- (Interaction with the Artwork) Interact/engage directly with the subject matter and significance of the artwork in question. The poetry serves as an intermediary between the written word and the visual item being observed.

5- (The absence of strict formalities) There are no particular formal prerequisites or additional standards of any type (Huyssteen, 2024). 6- (Possibility of Interpretation) Several levels of interpretation can produce ekphrastic poetry by including many narrative voices as well as using symbolism and images to explain difficult concepts through urging readers to examine the artwork from all angles (Lee, 2025). 7- (Conversation between the Image and the Word) The history and development of ekphrasis, which encompasses the usage of both parts, may be used to better understand the tension between word and image (Welsh, 2007).

The ekphrast should not be perceived as an individual who writes on nature and humanity. Instead, he serves as a conduit for the expression and communication of both nature and humanity. The ekphrast transforms into a cognitive observer, articulating observations through a language derived from physicality, thus evolving into a thinker through words. The reader must replicate this process by recalling the material (as well as intellectual, emotional, and sensory) facets of the content conveyed in that language. By doing this, the reader and the ekphrast will have both conducted a cognitive analysis of the pictorialized material (Al-Joulan, 2010, p. 51).

Consequently, the circle oscillates between the word and the image, with one exerting influence on the other. An artwork, such as architecture, influences the recipient, leading to a literary text. At other times, the text exerts impact, resulting in a multitude of a visual varied artworks. Thus, both (the word and the image) are essential for generating the ekphrasis, which is the focus of this study. More significant than the aforementioned is the ekphrast who evokes feelings in the reader or listener regarding something they may not have previously seen/heard, through a literary text about an artwork, encompassing description, critique, analysis, perspectives, interpretations, and nuanced perceptions. Remember that the ekphrasis highlighted many works after it addressed them, not before. If it indicates anything, it demonstrates the standing and significance of this mode of writing, which has not vanished but rather evolved over time to encompass not only poetry but also novels, theatre stages, sculpture, and even music, making the ekphrasis a mediator between two distinct worlds (a spoken world and a visual world).

## Ailbhe Darcy: Biography and Career

In her self-introduction page, Ailbhe Darcy (Dr Ailbhe Darcy) (1981 Dublin, Ireland) writes on the Cardiff University website, 'I am a poet and a critic.' In September 2016, she became a member of ENCAP. She was a lecturer and additionally awarded her 'an MFA' in Innovative Writing. Her work has taken part in festivals and readings in 'South Bend,' 'New York,' 'Boston,' 'Paris,' and other places in Britain and Ireland, and translations of her writing have appeared in Portuguese, Greek, and Polish. She has contributed poetry-related articles to magazines including 'The Critical Flame,' 'Poetry Ireland Review,' 'Dublin Review of Books,' and 'The Stinging.' While 'Imaginary Menagerie,' her debut poetry collection, was released in 2011. 'Insistence,' her most recent poetry collection, was published in June 2018 and was awarded the 'Pigott Prize for Poetry' (2019) and 'Wales Book of the Year' (2019). It was a finalist for the 'T.S. Eliot Prize' (2019) and the 'Irish Times Poetry Now Award' (2019). On 'BBC Radio 4,' she delivered a programme on 'Alphabet' in February 2020. Her areas of expertise are in 'Irish poetry,' 'women's poetry,' 'contemporary Irish literature,' and 'lyric theory.'

Darcy often reviews newly published poetry for *The Burning Bush 2*, *The Stinging Fly*, and *The Dublin Review of Books*. Additionally, she has penned scholarly papers about Dorothy Molloy in the field of contemporary women's writing. She authored a book titled *Subcritical Tests* (2017) in collaboration with S.J. Fowler. Alongside Fowler, Patrick Coyle, and Sam Riviere, she showcased experimental work as part of the 2014 reading tour "Yes, But Are We Enemies?" in London and Ireland (Murray, 2014). For more examples, she reviews others, including *Wild Persistence* by Katrina Naomi's third full collection (Darcy, 2021) and *The Dead Zoo* (The Gallery Press, 2013) by Ciaran Berry (Darcy, Frolicking in the Ether, 2014).

Darcy participated in Damien O'Reilly's comic/zine, *Paper Cuts*, during the years 1998-1999. She and Clodagh Moynan also co-edit *Moloch*, an Irish electronic journal that combines literature and visual art. In 2006, the two collaborated to produce *Watermarks*, an intervarsity collection of student writing and artwork from all around Ireland (Ailbhe Darcy, n.d.).

In an interview with the poet S.J. Fowler for the (Maintenant) programme of (3 A.M. magazine) on September 25, 2011, the Irish poet discussed her most significant pieces from the first collection 'Imaginary Menagerie' (2011), mentioning in particular one of the vivid poems and its impact on her poetic development. She says:

I wrote 'Gone Fishing' in Paris in 2003, soon after those enormous protests against the Iraq war took place around the world, when I heard that an Irish woman I knew was planning to travel to Iraq to act as a 'human shield' – ... so that the Western powers would be reluctant to bomb it. And that moment, those protests and the invasion that followed, are among a handful of events that color the whole collection ..., I genuinely believed at the time that we were making something happen. But of course the invasion still went ahead, ... It was the moment my poetry grew up, because now it was broadly about something, now it was bewildered and frantically trying to work something out (Fowler, 2011).

Concluding the inventory of the Irish poet's works, with David Wheatley (2021) she is co-editor of *A History of Irish Women's Poetry*. Then, there is a chapbook in (2009), *A Fictional Dress*. She has also made several notable contributions to anthologies, such as Four Poems (2010) in *Identity Parade: New British and Irish Poets*, Six Poems (2010) in *Voice Recognition: 21 Poets for the 21st Century*, "He Tells Me I Have a Peculiar Relationship with My City" (2014) in *If Ever You Go: A Map of Dublin in Poetry and Song*, Selection of poetry (2017) in *The Wake Forest Irish Poetry Series*, and [Twenty-first-century migrant Irish poets in the UK: Martina Evans and Fran Lock in Fogarty](#) (2024). In addition to her composition of certain articles: "Dorothy Molloy's Gurlisque Poetics" (2014) and "Melancholy in Contemporary Irish Poetry: Mahon and the 'Metre Generation'" (2017). Again, she has the wonderful essay titled "Or, how I learned to keep worrying: Collaborative writing, motherhood and the atom bomb" (2017). During the year (2017), she composes a complete chapter for a book, "Dorothy Molloy: Dual Citizenship in the Kingdom of the Sick". While the following are the latest poems: (2013) 'Ultrasound' and 'Service Not Included,' (2015) 'Sushi,' 'Panopticon,' 'Hair,' 'After my

Son was Born,' and 'Ansel Adams' Aspens,' (2016) 'Martinstag,' and 'Honk for Peace,' (2017) 'Alphabet,' and 'Seizure.'

### Literature Review

Miriam Gamble (award-winning poet) reviews '*Imaginary Menagerie*' as an exceptional debut. Style and content are both present in Darcy's poetry; in fact, in all her writing. At the core of Darcy's work is a frantic need for poetry to be meaningful and valuable in the context. However, her insatiable need to always question herself and return to "doubting [her] own innocence" is one of her most endearing and persuasive traits. Then, she adds that her attention to detail includes the unpleasant realization that the identical strategy she uses to upset the status quo is also how she copes with, systematizes, and makes her world bearable. All in all, the text of '*Imaginary Menagerie*' is completely cohesive, and its title reflects diversity. In spite of, the ground these poetries walk on is variety. Moreover, the mix of it is bold and consistently spot-on. Last but not least, linguistic and artistic innovation is highly valued, easy, and spot-on (2011).

Kevin Higgins, an Irish poet, discusses a submitted poem titled "Gavrilo Princip" by Ailbhe Darcy in the Galway Advertiser (2019), a free newspaper in Galway city, in *The Burning Bush* (magazine), for which he served as a co-editor. He was really struck by this young poet's capacity to transcend her current experience and create a poem that is both striking and subtly provocative. Higgins subsequently unveils her second complete poetry collection, *Insistence*, which has been nominated for the 'T.S. Eliot Prize.' It is evident that, despite Darcy's poetic voice having significantly evolved over the past two decades, she remains acutely aware of the impending apocalypse, which is now more readily available than it was in the very beginning of this century. The Irish poet then discusses her remarkable and stylistically daring 20-page poem "Alphabet," in which her optimism at growing into a mother (for the first time) clashes with pessimistic ideas about the status of the planet Earth:

We are not doomed yet//juggle the numbers//some of us are  
doomed/but not the 3 of us//or not the three of us/just yet//or  
maybe 1 of us, /the smallest, //the 1 of us/still

learning/numbers, //who doesn't know/what 2 of us/are keeping to ourselves (5).

Joey Connolly (poet) in his article, analyses the poet's work *Insistence*, addressing both the cover and the text, stating that while not explicitly mentioned in the collection itself, the emblematic picture of 'Insistence' may be an immigrant family seated on the outdoor area of their American residence, gazing at the encroaching darkness of the sky. The collection's material revolves around this implicit image where symbolizing the interaction between the enclosed/intimate other of the world and the restricted or private us of the ego or family. This is an example of one of *Insistence's* core principles. This is not a book of Eco poetry but it does not shield its analysis of the need of establishing a family with the environmental devastation occurring far beyond the back gate. Take a look at the front cover picture, which shows a gloved hand nailing to the trunk of a family tree, slicing, impaling, and binding its fruit (Connolly, 2019).

Mary Hendriksen (2021) (writer and editor) shares a remarkable experience that Irish poet Darcy had with poet David Wheatley in 2021, which led to *A History of Irish Women's Poetry*. Darcy serves as the co-editor of this new publication. It seeks to provide an innovative and exhaustive examination of Irish women's poetry from its inception to the contemporary era, utilizing several perspectives—mythology, gender, history, and nationalism—alongside meticulous analyses of the poetry itself. It encompasses writing in both English and Irish. The editors and authors examine the diverse contexts in which Irish women's poetry has been created and received, spanning from the anonymous compositions of the early mediaeval era to the bardic period, the emergence of modernism, the 'Irish Literary Revival,' the patriot balladeers of Younger Ireland, and the entourage of poets of Anglo-Ireland (August 30, 2021).

But before what is mentioned above, especially in an interview by Hendriksen with the contemporary Irish poet under the title Three Questions with ... Albie Darcy (Jan. 20, 2021) the latter describes the current work, *A History of Irish Women's Poetry*, as follows:

Their (Irish Women) visions and revisions of who we have been, and who we might be, are our essential inheritance, and

we lose out when we do not let them speak to who we are ... I can't tell you how proud I am of this volume, which has contributions from twenty-six brilliants, masterful scholars in the field and ranges from the medieval to the present day who have labored tirelessly in the face of a misogyny that has often seemed undefeatable. I feel sure that it will be a valuable teaching resource and a spur to further research. (2021)

Julia Obert (2022) (Associate Professor) finds that Ailbhe Darcy's *Insistence* examines the significance of intimacy and the essential irreducibility inherent in it. The collection emphasizes familial connections while acknowledging an inherent weirdness within such bonds. Darcy's principal issues are refugeeism, particularly the European migrant crisis, and environmental degradation.

Regarding the former argument, *Insistence* envisions a global community, urging us to transcend sadness and cultivate inspiring empathy for displaced individuals. In addition, Darcy elucidates our interspecies ties as the inhabitants of our common ecosystem. At long last, *Insistence* teaches us to care deeply for every living thing around us (2022).

### **Methodology**

This current study will investigate Darcy's use of the ekphrasis technique in a few chosen poems, examining its many aspects, types, elements, and strategies through the qualitative approach. It appears that there will be a text-based study of particular lines. Some data analysis methods consist of critical poetic evaluation and examination of various imageries. This analytical technique is particularly suitable for the thesis statement since it provides a clear image of thoughts, meanings, and sentiments to the description of any item (real or fictional) in order to bring it alive. Furthermore, the qualitative approach allows the reader to appropriately evaluate the artwork, which aids in achieving the study objectives. A poet examines or practices meditation on a work of art, taking in its details.

The limitation of this study is that it does not address the photography, performing arts: music and dance, architecture, design, and crafts.

## Objectives

The goal of this research is to close the gap between textual works and visual art. The final one encourages writers to develop literary works about them. Literature is a reflection of both art and life. Thus, by analyzing the artworks ekphrastically, there is a sort of comparison. The writer uses words to portray the art that the artist has created before. Besides, most critical content about Darcy is based on her reputation for investigating feminist issues, marginalization, and empathy with immigrants only.

## Results

The findings of this study had converged between the domains of art and Literature. Thus, Darcy's poems were an interpretation of many works of art, including paintings, sculptures, and visuals. These poems were a part of these artworks and completed them in another way. The ekphrastic imageries in the selected poems attempted to analyze these artworks profoundly and literarily with a sense of agreement.

## Discussion

### “Terminus”

The poem “Terminus” is from Darcy’s debut collection *Imaginary Menagerie* (2011). It consists of five stanzas. This poem is inspired by the six-part science fiction film series Terminator, with the inaugural installment published in 1984 and subsequent sequels concluding in 2019. The film featured Arnold Schwarzenegger as the protagonist championing the struggle for existence (Payne, 2025).

“Terminus” initially begins by referencing "Arnie," the film's protagonist, by the Austrian-American actor Arnold Schwarzenegger. Simply said, the opening picture of the first stanza is a representation of contemporary technology—more especially, machine vision—connected to a scenario from the film. Arnie amputates a limb in a symbolic gesture of surrender to the dominance of robots and technology over himself and possibly all of mankind. In the last words of the verse, he goes even farther and demands that the innovator stop innovating. He seems to be yelling out in defiance of the impact of technology unfolding around him in the poem

or film. Ekphrasis is evident from the outset of the poem and throughout its entire trajectory:

When Arnie sliced a transept from his own burgeoning arm  
the inventor went loose all the way through.  
You could see it in his face, clear as a dolly zoom,  
that he would do anything the Terminator said:  
and Arnie said he ought to quit inventing. (1-5)

In the next stanza, Darcy's profound and insightful poetry is highlighted, which discusses memory and the multidimensional character of the human experience. The speaker recalls a time of discovery and adventure, when every second appeared to be an opportunity. These memories are a touching reminder of the joy and innocence that often accompany childhood. The speaker notes that one can "pick holes" in the movie (critically criticize), while also expressing enthusiasm and nostalgia for it and for Edward Furlong (the actor). Then, the question in line eight explores the nature of creativity and innovation while challenging the notion of managing or limiting development. The speaker admits and reiterates the film's shortcomings but praises the experience, stating that it was worthy of taking "the leap for:"

Even then – a boy joy-maddened with explosions,  
the adrenal-squeezing soundtrack, my private crush  
on Edward Furlong – I could pick holes in it.  
Would topping one inventor really halt invention? Still,  
it was a flick worth making the leap for.(6-10)

Here, in the third stanza, again the ekphrasis stands effectively to capture the reader's imagination by depicting a person imprisoned in a particular location and moment, giving rise to suspicions about his innocence. Though in a diminished form, "Arnie" is still there in the scene and in the readers' memory. It then highlights the difference between expectation and actuality, as the "planes" they wanted to annihilate are still in flight. This indicates that technology continues to act as a barrier between man and reality in spite of protesting, which confirms the disparity between what man seeks to achieve and what exists:

Not yet unstoppable as Arnie,  
 I'm halted at Hardington, hemmed in outside Heathrow,  
 doubting  
 my own innocence. The planes we'd hoped to cull  
 buzz overhead. We rally, sing  
 protest without Sarah Connor's conviction.(11-5)

In the penultimate stanza, the author combines sardonic irony with cultural allusion, typifying Darcy's audacious and challenging tone. The individual speaking wants the 'Terminator' character to intervene, but with a modification to defend marginalized individuals and punish the oppressors. The speaker's dissatisfaction and rage at institutional injustice are emphasized by the explicit and powerful words (violent and resistant imagery). The saying "take His pound of flesh" refers to "The Merchant of Venice" by Shakespeare, which emphasizes the themes of greed and punishment (cultural allusion). There is a rude tone with dark humor of a speaker who has a spirit of resistance and confrontation with authority:

I'd half kneel to pray to the future wiser me:  
 Couldn't you send back a Terminator?  
 Not only would He lop the knees off those police cocks  
 picking round our squats, but take His pound  
 of flesh and lay it on the table:(16-20)

Darcy's comments highlight her accusations against modern arrogance, failure to act towards climate, and the possible outcomes of human acts in the last stanza. The situation described above, which shows machines dominating people, is repeated. The speaker envisions a future in which machines take over and abandon (people and animals) after they have accomplished what humans have long dreamt of reaching high surface. She goes on to claim that the speaker believes that machines would take over our planet, so this makes human acts worthless (dark fatality). As a result, 'the ice caps' melting indicates to climate change and emphasizes how humans are to blame for deteriorating the environment highlighting how humans have neglected the world and its residents. The machinery's capacity for adjustment and flourish contrasts with humans' failure to respond, calling into doubt human supremacy. So, via the technology

humans that he created, the machine's vision triumphed over humanity's idea of a governing figure:

How the machines, having what we've always dreamed -  
the ability to fly to the high ground  
when the ice caps dissolve –  
take for themselves what's left of the world,  
leaving nothing for us and the bystander animals –

But perhaps, as I've mentioned, it wouldn't matter what he  
said.(21-6)

Consequently, Darcy chose to dedicate one of her poems to a detailed parody of the six-installment Terminator film series. The poet discovered that ekphrasis serves as a powerful tool in a harsh critique of the overdependence on robots and computers that has permeated people's lives, even their dreams and those of children. Their detriment now surpasses their advantage. Undoubtedly, the essence of all this is humanity. Humanity is the origin of malevolence and the catalyst for the unexamined technology in which people are currently enmeshed. The poem serves as a caution rather than a criticism. The planet is decaying before people, and they remain passive. The poem's intent would have been less evident without the imagery utilized by the author, which evokes recollections for readers familiar with the film. Moreover, she adeptly creates a vivid depiction for those who did not get the chance to view the film, and perhaps it is an invitation to see it with an awareness that film critics have not addressed.

### “Mrs. Edgeway”

This poem is from her collection *Imaginary Menagerie* (2011). The twenty-three lines of this poem emulate the portrait of Thomas Eakins' Mrs. Edith Mahon; Mrs. Edgeway (1904). Eakins (1844–1916) was a leading artist figure in American painting throughout the 19th century. He switches from the narrative realistic art to psychological realistic art between the 1870s and the early 20th century. He begins with colorful outside portraits of muscular effort and ends with people in softly lit

interiors, motionless due to introspection or self-awareness (Wilmerding, 2010).

In the portrait, the lady sits on a barely noticeable chair and stares outright at us with a look that both reveals and conceals. Mrs. Mahon is an accomplished pianist (Wilmerding 2010). While in the poem, Mrs. Edgeway (the lady) is a married woman who feels burdened by the constraints of marriage at a young age, having matured prematurely. Her fake smiles were only there to go along with her marriage ceremony, unlike the face of Eakins' lady, which appears perplexed and calm. Maybe Mrs. Edgeway is more restricted than Mrs. Mahon. However, what limitations do the two ladies face? Both seem confined by the limitations imposed by tradition and societal norms that have regulated women throughout history:

“so skinny!” her greeting.

I had not seen her  
since the wedding, when I dressed in green; she,  
of course, in white. Everyone said  
how young she was,  
how decked-out in smiles.

I was unsurprised.

She'd had her period in fourth class,... (4-11)

Ekphrasis examines the topic of gender in society and how it has penetrated many literary works, as demonstrated by a painting and a poem. In the third stanza, the formal and substantive consequences of marriage on women are represented here. The marriage provides them with weight in a formal sense, but it also subtly weighs them with responsibilities and hardships. Ekphrasis links this stanza's imaginative image to the culture of a civilization where women's plumpness is seen as a sign of affluence and luxury. The last line of this stanza points out that pregnancy is not always the cause of this plumpness, which might occur at any time:

And now

she was displaying the weight  
bestowed by marriage, as though  
her husband was provider, fattened her  
like a rich Ghanaian wife.  
No child yet, but her belly ripe. (12-7)

The final stanza exhibits a shift in tone, mood, and contemplation. The lady begins to perceive herself (her body) from a different perspective, entering a level of self-awareness through two conflicting images: "jut hard" and "translucent skin." Analytically, the notion of a pursuit of self-discovery is considered to convey the complexity of how one views oneself and the human looking for identity:

Later, I eye my body in the mirror:  
not skinny. But hip bones  
jut hard; between my breasts is a space  
where the sky opens wide; my skin is translucent.  
I trace the veins,  
try to find something of substance. (18-23)

In this poem, Darcy illustrates the effect of marriage on a lady who appears to have been "fattened" by it. Every aspect is taken over by the ekphrasis to provide a clear image of one's identity and self-perception.

### “from Telephone”

This poem is taken from her popular collection *Imaginary Menagerie* (2011). It is based on Nam June Paik's artwork "Telephone X" (2000). Paik (1932–2006) is a Korean-American artist who is known as the "father of video art," or he is a pioneer/founder of the video sculptures. One of his most famous sayings is, "The moon is the oldest TV" (Wu, 2023). He becomes a 'visionary artist' who interconnects technology with the arts. In the pre-internet age, Paik foresaw that "technology would enable people to communicate immediately" (Williamson, 2019).

Paik's artwork "Telephone X" (2000) is a future interpretation of contemp

orary mobile phones, manifested as a sculpture with “translucent amber resin, fuzzy wire brush, digital clock, and electronic parts.” According to reports, the piece is on exhibit at the 'Whitney Museum of American Art's permanent collection in New York (Art, n.d.)

The technological concepts that Darcy highlights in her poem "from Telephone" are reflected in this pre-time artwork. Through imaginative mixing, the artist conveys how art always reflects realism. In this artwork, the relationship between communication theory and technological medium is profound. While in her poems, Darcy uses the telephone as a symbol to suggest that communication may be simpler or more difficult in the age of technology. It depends on whether there is a need for seclusion or the need for communication. Ugly technology is currently holding the entire planet captive.

Starting with the poem, in the first stanza an amazing picture of nature may be found. A landscape with tree branches and little animals brimming with vitality that takes the reader right into the heart of nature. The stanza ends with an invitation to touch everything described, as though nature aims to appeal to many senses at once—a sight of deep harmony, interaction, and connection amongst living objects:

What’s given by the blast  
is deep rain, an orgy of worms. Trees  
shake their manes, each branch a business  
of sexy division. Each bud has a drop for aureole  
I want you to touch. Spring, and all  
that. (1-6)

In the next stanza, the poet uses the past tense in order to call up a picture from the past. Here, the ekphrastic imagery suggests a different kind of sensory connection—this time between individuals—against the backdrop of the natural world. The scene is still dominated by nature: " in rain," and “in a field.” The relationship's ups and downs are reflected in the lovers' communication, which alternates between arguments and reconciliations. Subsequently, the prohibited transpires: the liquid from the bottle overflows, signifying the overflow of emotions between them, their loss of control over their sentiments, and their heading home:

We must have kissed a hundred times  
 in rain like this: I fell flat on my back  
 in a field; we waltzed about the fountain in that  
 Barcelona square, fought like  
 cats and dogs, and made up; or when I  
 dropped the bottle we were keeping  
 and it crashed a Gloria of crimson rivulets.  
 You took me home, all the same. (7-14)

The next three stanzas address the digital era, depicting robots, “data drive,” and “the internet” in such repugnant imagery that people have ceased to engage in intimacy and to experience love “we make nothing with our love.” Technology has consumed every minute of our days and every facet of our lives. This is especially evident in the last stanza when Darcy’s phone finally makes an appearance, imitating Paik’s phone. Here, the telephone should have brought people closer together, but it started to have a detrimental effect on the closeness of our personal and familial connections. For everyone who wants to spend time alone and maybe with his loved ones, friends, and family, the mere hint that the phone is calling and requesting to be recharged is an obvious nuisance. Technology seems to be telling us that its purpose is to disrupt/hinder our lives rather than to help human beings or fulfil their needs:

all these years,  
 only my crazy new hairdo,  
 wet and wild against a field of white pillow,  
 and the maddening blip of your phone,  
 a little machine  
 demanding to be plugged in again. (34-9)

It is obvious that there is a need for sensory connection in spite of the advanced technology. The shadow of digitization causes people to forget their humanity. Darcy’s artwork at the beginning of the poem is full of naturalistic elements. Through the colors and motions of the items,

nature is the scene's hero in the opening stanza. Life is full of vitality, unlike nowadays when one sticks behind the electronic devices' screens. Unconsciously, humans become robotic. The image of cats and dogs encapsulates the idea of the words: life was full of vigor, 'fought like cats and dogs.' The digitization has left society paralyzed and fatigued of electronic instruments. Although, the blue planet is dependent on the latter, but in exchange, it has deprived its residents of humanity, pity, and compassion among them.

The entire poem serves as an illustration of successful communication that does not call for technology or digitization. The dynamic, living relationship is essential and does not require any resources or effort. Being a living person connects me to my environment. However, the concluding stanza paints an image of inadequate digital communication.

## Conclusion

Ekphrasis is a literary technique or device that studies the connection and re-use of a visual art in poetry. The resulting work tries to create a harmony between two distant fields, literature and art. Through images exposed, the poet tries to communicate a new meaning through words. This what Ailbhe Darcy tries to do in her poetry.

Darcy's poem "Terminus" is inspired by a film whose protagonist Arnie whose role is played by the American super – star Arnold Schwarzenegger. The images utilized by the poet evoke memories in the minds of those who might have watched the film. She also invites them indirectly to re-watch the movie again to have an awareness of things which passed unnoticed by critics. The poem intends to draw the attention of the readers to the dangers threatening the world which people are unaware of.

In her other poem "Mrs. Edgeway", Darcy depicts a lady in a portrait who stares at those who look at her. The poem can be read as a gender-study revealing feminist issues concerning marriage at an early age. She gradually gets mature and through her self-discovery, she gets at awareness of her present situation.

In third poem discussed in this paper "From Telephone", Darcy speaks about a telephone which was on exhibit at Whitney Museum of

American Art. She uses this device as a symbol or a means of communication. According to the poet, communication depends on people not on technology. It could be simple or difficult depending on people themselves if they have the desire to isolate themselves or to communicate. Technology depends on how one uses it. She concludes that successful communication does not need technology or other resources,

In her poems then, Darcy uses the literary device ekphrasis to bring life and give blood to her words. The descriptions of the visual arts in her work; the film, the portrait and telephone are intended to express her main concerns.

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