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Ut Pictura Poesis:

Visual Poetics of Pre-Raphaelite Art

Magisterská diplomová práce

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Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto magisterskou diplomovou práci vypracovala samostatně a uvedla úplný seznam citované a použité literatury.

V Olomouci dne: 19. 8. 2013 …….

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Introduction

Throughout history the art of painting and the art of poetry have been developing next to one other in a close relationship. It can be argued that a painter and a poet have much in common in terms of creating art. Both are creating images representing ideas, emotions or personal expression of thoughts and opinions. They use similar devices. A painter uses a brush to convey their message on canvas in the form of a visual image, as well as a poet uses a pen or voice to form words which will produce a literary text.

I also observe asymmetrical similarity in the manner of perception of these two genres. On the one hand, a painting could be analyzed by deconstructing it into words, hence the "reading" of a picture using various techniques and methods examining the piece from a different point of view, e.g. subject, composition, colours, frame, purpose, perspective and impression. On the other hand, a poem is an image "painted" in the reader's mind by using words and the visualization of such an image helps to comprehend the poet's idea.

To provide an argument I based my work on the concept of *ut pictura poesis*, a Latin phrase, defition of which is provided in Judith Harvey's entry for the glossary on the Chicago University website and it can be literally translated as "as is painting, so is poetry". This argument was based on an analogy between the art of painting and poetry introduced by Horace, a Roman lyric poet living in the first century before Christ, who sees these two arts sisterly related.[1] The origins of this theory date back to classical philosophers such as Simonides, Plutarch or Aristotle. [2]

In the nineteenth century, the English art critic John Ruskin, adopted the idea of *ut pictura poesis* and refers to it repeatedly in his major work entitled

[1] Judith Harvey, "ut pictura poesis," *The University of Chicago*. Winter 2002. http://humanities.uchicago.edu/faculty/mitchell/glossary2004/utpicturapoesis.htm (accessed May 12, 2013).
[2] Harvey

Modern Painters.[3] Ruskin is considered the most important art critic and aesthetician who influenced the entire artistic generation of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. The members of the brotherhood devoted their work to painting and poetry, in some cases to both arts. Thus they and their work represent a relevant example of the theory of *ut pictura poesis* and the theme of the interconnection between the visual arts and poetry in general.

Professor Aaron Kashtan states in his lecture named "Pre-Raphaelite Approaches to *Ut Pictura Poesis: Sister Arts or Sibling Rivalry?*" published online on the Victorian Web that "the most concrete application of *ut pictura poesis* appears in the even older tradition of *ekphrasis*."[4] The term *ekphrasis* is defined by the Merriam-Webster's Dictionary as "a literary description of or a commentary on a visual work of art."[5] In Pre-Raphaelite art, three different types of this phenomenon can be observed. They are *ekphrasis proper*, i.e. the technique when the artist firstly creates an image and consequently produces the written piece; *reversed ekphrasis* which is achieved in the opposite way, i.e. a picture is produced based on a previously composed poem. Finally, the last type and a combination of the preceding is known as *self-ekphrasis*, which occurs when the painter and the poet are the same person. A pertinent example according to Kashtan is Dante Gabriel Rossetti who mastered both of these arts. This thesis will present practical demonstrations of all of these three theories.[6]

The first part is dedicated to the personality of Dante Gabriel Rossetti who represents a Pre-Raphaelite painter as well as a poet and thus perfectly embodies the argument of *ut pictura poesis* and of *self-ekphrasis*. His work contains numerous poems and images which were mutually inspired. He draws his themes from ancient Greek mythology, historical figures and of course from his cult idol – the Renaissance author Dante Alighieri. I have gathered nine poems and

[3] George P. Landow, "Chapter One, Section I: Ruskin and the tradition of ut pictura poesis," *The Victorian Web*. Last modified July 25, 2005. http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/ruskin/atheories/1.1.html (accessed June 10, 2013)
[4] Aaron Kashtan, "Pre-Raphaelite Approaches to *Ut Pictura Poesis*: Sister Arts or Sibling Rivalry?," *The Victorian Web*. Last modified December 20, 2004. http://www.victorianweb.org/painting/prb/kashtan12.html (accessed June 10, 2013)
[5] "ekphrasis," *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*. http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ekphrasis (accessed June 14, 2013)
[6] Kashtan

corresponding paintings amongst them the most famous *The Blessed Damozel* or *Aspecta Medusa*, *Proserpina* or *A Sea Spell*. Rossetti's works are examined in the first part of this thesis to demonstrate a practical example of poetic and visual art interconnection. They are listed in alphabetical order, analysed each by each with respect to Rossetti's poems and accompanied by my personal comments. An interesting fact is that Rossetti used to create his "double work of art"[7] usually in the *ekphrasis proper* tradition except for two cases: *The Blessed Damozel*, which is included in my list and *The House of Life*. In these two cases he proceeded from the written poem to the visual representation.[8]

The second part examines the Pre-Raphaelite paintings that were inspired by British poets of the nineteenth century and thus one can talk about applications of *reversed ekphrasis*. As the best examples of the Pre-Raphaelite visual representation, I chose firstly Tennyson's "The Lady of Shalott" depicted by Hunt, Waterhouse, Meteyard or Siddall and Keats's "La Belle Dame Sans Merci", another favourite literary theme for various Pre-Raphaelite painters, in this case Rheam, Cowper, Waterhouse, Crane and Hughes. I will focus on the aptness and fidelity with respect to the original poetic text and will also provide a brief comparison of these visual representations by different painters. Last but not least. I will demonstrate how the mutual influence follows the concept of *ut pictura poesis* concentrating on the supposition that the painting draws the art of poetry to the higher level.

The third part, itself divided into two sections, provides examples of the Pre-Raphaelite poets who were inspired in their work by Pre-Raphaelites or other painters in the tradition of *ekphrasis proper*. In the first section I come back to Dante Gabriel Rossetti who composed poems based on paintings by other various artists. As the first illustration I include "For *The Wine of Circe*" by the Pre-Raphalite Edward Burne-Jones. A selection of Rossetti's poems inspired by additional renowned artists such as Da Vinci, Botticelli or Michelangelo follows. The second section, which closes the thesis, introduces a British poet Emily

[7] Kashtan
[8] Kashtan

Pfeiffer and her poem "To Edward Burne-Jones, On His Picture of The Annunciation."

The main goal of my thesis is to provide an overview work demonstrating the relationship between the textual and visual arts based on the example of the Pre-Raphaelites and supported by the theory of *ut pictura poesis*. I want to point out the interconnection of literature (poetry) and visual arts analysing the chosen examples and observe to what extent the Pre-Raphaelites succeeded in following the *ut pictura poesis* concept. There are three different points of view that are examined. Firstly, it is self-ekphrasis or the double role of an artist as in the case of Dante Gabriel Rossetti; then *reversed ekphrasis* or the influence of poetry on painting and as the last *ekphrasis proper* or the influence of painting on poetry. The analyses will concentrate on chronological aspects of the artistic production (i.e. "What came first? Image or text?") but it will also depict the mutual relationship between the painting and poem itself.

Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood Background

John Ruskin and *ut pictura poesis* in the 19th century

John Ruskin (1819-1900) was a British painter, writer, scientist, poet, philosopher and art critic and is considered to be the most significant supporter of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.[9] In his third volume of *Modern Painters* (1846) Ruskin develops the theory of *ut pictura poesis* and "unlike most advocates of sister arts theories, however, Ruskin did not argue that painting and poetry are allied arts because they both imitate reality"[10] but he states that the both arts instead express the feelings and imagination of the artist. For him "painting is properly to be opposed to *speaking* or *writing*, but not to *poetry*. Both painting and speaking are methods of expression. Poetry is the employment of either for the noblest purposes."[11] Ruskin was a great admirer and studied in detail the work of Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775-1851), an English painter who was familiar with and followed the concept of *ut pictura poesis*. Turner frequently accompanied his paintings with short texts, titles or epigraphs that enhanced the connection between painting and poetry. According to Ruskin, such a connection enables a better understanding of the artist's intentions. [12]

This phenomenon of accompanying paintings by words or texts can also be traced in Pre-Raphaelite art. A similar example is *Ophelia* (1852) by the Pre-Raphaelite artist Arthur Hughes, where the painter included the original Shakespearean text that was a source to this image.[13]

The alliance between art and poetry and the theory of the sister-arts supplied by John Ruskin is clearly apparent in the works of members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.

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[9] Martina Glenn. "John Ruskin," *Artmuseum.cz*. Last modified October 11, 2007. http://www.artmuseum.cz/umelec.php?art_id=964 (accessed June 14, 2013)
[10] George P. Landow. "Introduction," *Victorian Web*. Last modified September 9, 2007. http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/ruskin/pm/intro.html (accessed June 23, 2013)
[11] John Ruskin, *Modern Painters Vol. III, Project Gutenberg*, February 19, 2012, 15, http://www.gutenberg.org/files/38923/38923-h/38923-h.htm. (accessed June 27, 2013)
[12] Landow, "Chapter One, Section I: Ruskin and the tradition of ut pictura poesis."
[13] I have treated this topic in my bachelor thesis entitled *Representations of Ophelia's Death in British Art*.

PRB – members, style and shared themes

For the following information I am indebted to Professor George P. Landow and his article "Pre-Raphaelites: An Introduction" published on www.victorianweb.org. When speaking about the Pre-Raphaelites, it is necessary to specify the generation as there were two of them, the latter having come out of the first. In the first case, The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood is meant. It was a movement of English painters connected with John Ruskin and founded in 1849 by William Holman Hunt (1827-1910).

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood gathered either painting artists, the most famous of those are for example Dante Gabriel Rossetti, John Everett Millais, Edward Burne-Jones, etc. Amongst the Pre-Raphaelite poets can be found D.G. Rossetti and his sister Cristina Rossetti, who never was an official member but is given a great deal of importance with respect to the group, George Meredith, William Morris, etc.[14] A manifesto by these artists had never been published, however they adopted Ruskin's ideas as they "attempted to transform the resultant hard-edge realism by combining it with typological symbolism" [15] and they succeeded in producing "a magic or symbolic realism, often using devices found in the poetry of Tennyson and Browning."[16]

Pre-Raphaelites believed that there was a close alliance between poetry and painting and they even encouraged one another to practice those arts. Nevertheless, a real remarkable success in this interconnection was achieved only by Dante Gabriel Rossetti being both a great poet and an excellent painter.[17]

It is Rossetti who was the originator of the second stage of the Pre-Raphaelitism. It is in this form of Pre-Raphaelitism where we can find "most relevance to poetry; for although the earlier combination of a realistic style with elaborate symbolism appears in a few poems, particularly those of the Rossetti's,

[14] George P. Landow, "Pre-Raphaelites: An Introduction," *The Victorian Web*. Last modified June 7, 2007. http://www.victorianweb.org/painting/prb/1.html (accessed July 02, 2013)
[15] Landow, "Pre-Raphaelites: An Introduction."
[16] Landow, "Pre-Raphaelites: An Introduction."
[17] Landow, "Pre-Raphaelites: An Introduction."

this second stage finally had the most influence upon literature. All the poets associated with Pre-Raphaelitism draw upon the poetic continuum that descends from Spenser through Keats and Tennyson — one that emphasizes lush vowel sounds, sensuous description, and subjective psychological states."[18]

[18] Landow, "Pre-Raphaelites: An Introduction."

1. Rossetti: a unique merger of Pre-Raphaelite painting and poetry

1.1. Dante Gabriel Rossetti

Gabriel Charles Dante Rossetti, an English poet, painter and translator, was born in 1828 in London to a family of an Italian expatriate. Despite living in England the Rossetti's kept the traditional Italian lifestyle that influenced their children. Gabriel became a great admirer of a Renaissance artist Dante Alighieri and changed the order of his first names to honour his idol. Since young age Rossetti dealt with a dilemma of being a painter or poet. He solved this by unifying the both tendencies and considered poetry and painting as two inseparable parts of his artistic feeling.[19]

Rossetti began his studies of fine arts in 1841 and five years later was accepted to the Royal Academy. He left the Academy soon after, however, as he did not identify with the attitude of teachers nor he mastered the technique of oil painting, which was emphasized in Academy's teaching. Rossetti was determined to acquire the art education on his own.[20]

In 1848 together with William Holman Hunt and John Everett Millais, Rossetti created the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. An artistic movement bringing to the nineteenth century England new painting principles that represented a digression from the Classicism and late Renaissance and that worship the art of the painters that had been working before Raphael - hence the name of the movement the Pre-Raphaelites. During time Rossetti diverted from the Pre-Raphaelites in terms of ideas. Nevertheless, he still respected the painting principles and themes that were often found in Old and New Testament or medieval legends about the king Arthur and the Knight of a Round Table. Not

[19] Martina Glenn, "Dante Gabriel Rossetti," *Artmuseum.cz*. Last modified May 25, 2008. http://www.artmuseum.cz/umelec.php?art_id=962 (accessed July 05, 2013)
[20] Glenn, "Dante Gabriel Rossetti."

occasionally, Rossetti took inspiration from literary works of Shakespeare, Coleridge, Poe, Goethe and mostly his adored and beloved Alighieri.[21]

An important milestone in Rossetti's life was meeting John Ruskin. It was Ruskin who named Rossetti the leader of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. Rossetti was influenced by Ruskin to such measure that he started to focus more on the poetic painting, i.e. he concentrated on mutual combination of these two arts. Since that Rossetti was adding to his paintings sonnets or brief comments to explain the symbol and colour meaning of his works.[22] "The reciprocity between word and image was a means of enlarging both."[23]

In his works Rossetti celebrates feminity and women in general. As a model for the most of his paintings of drawing he captured Elizabeth Siddall, his muse and wife, whose death meant a tragic turnabout for the depressed Rossetti. He stopped writing poetry and gradually abandoned painting as well. Dante Gabriel Rossetti died of a combination of drug addiction, alcoholism and a mental disease in 1882.[24]

1.2. Selected examples of *self-ekphrasis* in Rossetti's art

A Sea Spell

Rossetti's sonnet called "A Sea Spell (For a Picture)" was published in the collection *Ballads and Sonnets* of 1881. This sonnet is written in iambic pentameter and Rossetti presents his idea of the importance of the music of sirens.[25] The corresponding oil painting that bears the same name was produced in 1877. It depicts a beautiful red haired lady with an absent internally-focused look in her eyes playing a stringed instrument. She is dressed in light voluminous robe in golden colour. The woman's figure takes the majour part of the picture and is

[21] Glenn, "Dante Gabriel Rossetti."
[22] Glenn, "Dante Gabriel Rossetti."
[23] Julian Treuherz, "The most starlingly originál living," in *Dante Gabriel Rossetti*, ed. Edwin Becker and Suzanne Bogman, 11-50. (Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 2003) 15.
[24] Glenn, "Dante Gabriel Rossetti."
[25] Rossetti Archive, "A Sea Spell (For A Picture)," *Rossetti Archive*. http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/23-1869.s248.raw.html (accessed July 08, 2013)

surrounded by various symbols: a bird reminiscent of a seagull, an apple, flowers, etc. Unlike the panting, the poem is more dynamic. It does not focus in detail on the siren's physical appearance but it rather on the process of luring the mariner into her trap. The reader learns from the poem that the instrument she plays is a lute, which "hangs shadowed in the apple-tree."[26] The lute is usually associated with romantic love music and its aim is to raise the interest of and attract the beloved. The painting shows an apple reminding of a pomegranate, the biblical symbol of temptation and in Greek mythology was sometimes referred to be "the fruit of death". Hence the analogy of a Siren tempting a mariner, represented by a sea-bird in the poem that eventually falls for the spell and dies. The different perspective is very interesting. While the sonnet suggests distance and vast area of the sea, the painting is a close portrait of a woman playing the music. The mariner is represented by the sea-bird who "for those branches leaves the sea."[27] In the painting the idea of sea, which is stated clearly in poem, is expressed implicitly via symbolic: the sea-bird and the woman's hair and most especially her dress which reminds of waves in its wrinkly structure and light floating material. The sea association is emphasized by alliterative lines as "flashing fingers weave the sweet-strung spell"[28] or "But to what sound her listening ear stoops she?"[29], where Rossetti used fricatives to evoke the sound of the fizzing water and soughing breeze.[30] The text of the poem definitely gives the lyrical painting an epic dimension by sketching in the story behind respecting and staying very close to the visual artwork.

Aspecta Medusa

When looking at the chalk drawing entitled *Aspecta Medusa*, it is almost impossible to interpret the story without the additional explication provided by the poem of the same title. The picture commissioned by C.P. Mathews in in 1867

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[26] Dante Gabriel Rossetti, "A Sea-Spell," *PoemHunter.com*. January 03, 2003. http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/a-sea-spell/ (accessed July 09, 2013) Line 1.
[27] Rossetti, "A Sea-Spell," Line 4.
[28] Rossetti, "A Sea-Spell," Line 2.
[29] Rossetti, "A Sea-Spell." Line 5.
[30] Scribd., "Close Analysis of 'A Sea Spell' by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Scribd.com. May 2012. http://www.scribd.com/doc/104518818/Close-Analysis-of-%E2%80%9CA-Sea-Spell%E2%80%9D-by-Dante-Gabriel-Rossetti (accessed July 10, 2013)

was never made in oil as originally planned as Mathews did not like the drawing result and wished to change the subject.[31] The original pencil drawing shows a couple in a close contact. The female figure is seated and leans rightwards holding the left hand of a male figure which looks as if he was preventing the woman from falling down. The coloured chalk version depicts a close-up of a young lady. She has long loose brown hair gently falling along her shoulder as she leans. She is dressed in brownish dress of a rather coarse material. Her face expression is deeply focused reflecting eagerness as if she was refusing something, trying to escape from the male embrace to gain what she desires to. Strong determination can be observed in her eyes.

With a closer look at the drawing and bearing into consideration the title, the viewer can possibly recognize a little pool and the decapitated head of snake-haired Medusa. The poem which was believed to be written after the commission of the painting is now found to date back to 1865 where it was noted in Rossetti's notebook.[32] It undoubtedly serves as an additive explanation to the picture. Since the very first word, the reader learns that the protagonist of the story depicted is Andromeda. A mythical female character, who was saved from being killed by a sea monster by Perseus. The first line is faithful to the original legend but the fact that Andromeda "Hanker'd each day to see the Gorgon's head"[33] was most probably added by Rossetti as there is no such reference in the myth itself.[34] The first part of the poem is a poetic narrative that sets the scene: Perseus after killing Medusa keeps her head in a fountain where the reflection of the water surface creates a kind of mirror and thus provides safety before its fatal petrifying magical powers. Andromeda is captured by Rossetti in the very moment when she wants to lean to the fountain and see the head of Medusa. In the second stanza Rossetti adopts the role of a moral preacher and he addresses the reader directly by using

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[31] Rossetti Archive, "Aspecta Medusa," *Rossetti Archive*. http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/s183.rap.html (accessed July 10, 2013)
[32] Rossetti Archive, "Aspecta Medusa," *Rossetti Archive*. http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/1-1865.s183.raw.html (accessed July 10, 2013)
[33] Dante Gabriel Rossetti, "Aspecta Medusa (For a Drawing)," *PoemHunter.com*. December 31, 2002. http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/aspecta-medusa-for-a-drawing/ (accessed July 10, 2013) Line 2.
[34] Rossetti Archive, "Aspecta Medusa," *Rossetti Archive*. http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/1-1865.s183.raw.html (accessed July 10, 2013)

the imperative and pronouns of the second person of singular "thine" and "thee."[35] This second part could be interpreted as the moral advice from Perseus to Andromeda that she should avoid the "forbidden".

A question arises from this point of view whether Rossetti wanted to raise the problematic theme of woman education and the contemporaneous new arising of feminine emancipation and desire for knowledge. Nevertheless, Aspecta Medusa remains a spectacular example of the theory of the symbiotic *ut pictura poesis* as the text and the visual representation of the theme enable better understanding and aesthetic experience.

Astarte Syriaca

Rossetti's largest painting of a female figure called *Astarte Syriaca* is a portrait of his second most favourite muse Jane Morris, who is here represented as Astarte, the Syrian goddess of love, a precedent to classical Venus.[36] The focal point of the painting is a female figure of a voluptuous shape with somewhat masculine traits reminiscent of Michelangelo's models. The woman is dressed in a long flowing green robe of a light transparent texture, which exposes her right shoulder. She is touching two silver girdles, one belting her breast and the latter her hips. The sensuality of the figure is enhanced by the chest and her corporal details that are visible through the cloth and by the woman's full red lips evoking sexuality.

She is surrounded by two figures of young females in a symmetrical composition placed on the left and right sides. They are bearing torches and their looks are directed upwards. In the background two light circles are placed. Rossetti started to work on this painting in 1875 and completed it in 1877 when he also produced the sonnet accompanying the image. Introduce quote "The poem is not one of Rossetti's great sonnets, and it pales before the majestic painting it was written to accompany. Nevertheless, it is quite an interesting and important text.

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[35] Rossetti, "Aspecta Medusa (For a Drawing)," Line 6 and 9.
[36] Elizabeth Prettejohn, "153 Astarte Syriaca," in *Dante Gabriel Rossetti*, ed. Edwin Becker and Suzanne Bogman. (Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 2003) 214.

Both sonnet and painting deliver one of Rossetti's most strenuous statements about his artistic purposes."[37] The sonnet emphasizes the mysterious character of feminity effectively depicted in the painting by using the *pudicitia* pose which was extremely popular with classical artists. The gesture of touching or gently covering the breast and genital area is elaborated in the text: "In silver sheen Her twofold girdle clasps the infinite boon Of bliss whereof the heaven and earth commune:"[38] refers to the concept of female fertility or to the womb itself.[39] In the painting just above Astarte's head there is a small object of a round, almost heart-shaped, form with a star reminiscent of the shape in its centre. Its colour is in a reddish shade and is situated between the two light circles which are meant to be the sun and the moon as the reader can ascertain from the text. It does certainly remind one of an "amulet, talisman, and oracle"[40] perhaps a symbol of the womb mentioned above which could metonymically represent the idealized woman herself.

The sonnet definitely lends the painting, which is highly sexual, a more spiritual aspect and can be seen as another beautiful example of *ut pictura poesis* in Dante Gabriel Rossetti's art.[41]

La Bella Mano

Rossetti's oil painting called *La Bella Mano* was produced in 1875 and it is a celebration of female beauty and purity. The canvas presents a young lady of delicate pale skin tone. She is captured during an intimate moment when washing her hands being assisted by two other girls. The principal female figure is situated on the left side of the picture with her hands reaching towards the sink on the right and thus creating the focal point, which is reflected in the Italian title of the work and can be translated as "a beautiful hand." The hands are enhanced by symbols which surround them. Firstly, it is the lemon tree planted in a pot just under the

[37] Rossetti Archive, "Astarte Syriaca (for a Picture)," *Rossetti Archive*. http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/1-1877.s249.raw.html (accessed July 12, 2013)
[38] Dante Gabriel Rossetti, "Astarte Syriaca," *PoemHunter.com*. April 12, 2010. http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/astarte-syriaca/ (accessed July 13, 2013) Lines 3-6
[39] Prettejohn, "153 Astarte Syriaca." 216.
[40] Rossetti, "Astarte Syriaca." Line 13
[41] Prettejohn, "153 Astarte Syriaca." 216.

sink taking place in the foreground. The lemon is known as a symbol of Buddha's hand.[42] Behind the sink there is a tray with jewels held by one of the girls. More precisely they are jewels that usually decorate women's hands like rings and bracelets representing the feminine delicacy and beauty. The latter servant is offering the lady a towel of apparently soft silky texture that corresponds with the fineness of the hands. The mirror placed behind woman's head give the painting more spiritual character as it looks like a halo emphasizing the virginity of the protagonist. Hair of the two young girls is decorated with veils reminiscent of angelic wings.

Rossetti wrote the *ekphrastic* sonnet which was meant to accompany the picture originally in Italian and subsequently translated it into English. This happened in 1875 but it was not published until 1881 when it appeared in his collection called *Ballads and Sonnets*.[43] It opens with exclamation "O LOVELY hand"[44] and continues a song of adoration of the young lady's hand. The author used many qualities to develop the story of the painting, e.g. "sweet," "pure," "white," "soft" or "proper" that underline the delicacy of the young woman. He mentions the act of washing as well as the jewels that are explained to be the gifts from lovers.

The sonnet raises the hand to an object of desire of a potential lover. It does recall the social custom to ask the lady's hand because intimate or physical relationship suggested in the poem would be possible only after marriage. The delicate "white and soft" hand itself represents the virginity and chastity of the young lady, which is visualized in the painting and celebrated in the sonnet.

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[42] Sven Frotscher, *5000 znaků a symbolů světa* (Praha: Grada Publishing a.s., 2008), 225. (Further reference only Frostcher)
[43] Rossetti Archive, "La Bella Mano (For a Picture)," *Rossetti Archive*. http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/34-1875.s240.raw.html (accessed July 13, 2013)
[44] Rossetti, "La Bella Mano," *PoemHunter.cz*. April 12, 2010. http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/la-bella-mano/ Line 1.

Pandora

In this case Rossetti again takes the source theme for his painting in Greek Mythology. As the title reveals, the painter depicts the antiquity character Pandora. The oil painting started in 1868 and finished in 1871 was based on a photograph of Rossetti's muse Jane Morris.[45] The subject of the image is quite easily recognizable as it shows a young woman with a mysterious expression in her face holding a casket surrounded by blurred smoke escaping from it. The myth says that Pandora was made by gods to become a wife of Prometheus but she finally married his brother, who opened the box she was given by Jupiter and thus let all the evils of the world out but hope that remained inside on the bottom.[46] Rossetti produced another version of Pandora in 1878, this time it was a drawing and it differed in the colour range used but the composition remained unchanged. The earlier version is a contrast to the latter. It is generally darker; the background is black as well as the woman's hair. She is dress in deep claret rob which reflects the same colour shade as the "smoke" coming out of the casket she is holding. Her face and right hand are very bright and stick out of the picture. On the contrary, the drawing version is slightly lighter.

On the one hand brown hair, light dress and greyish background and on the other darker face as if shaded and an eager piercing view are making opposite effect. The "smoke" is here more detailed; the spectator can even recognize heads of winged creatures. As far as the sonnet is concerned, it was written around 1869 and published for the first time in 1870 in the collection *Poems*.[47] Rossetti uses rhetorical questions to learn if it was Pandora who consciously broke the rule and opened the forbidden casket; thus he raises the theme of *cherchez la femme*, a French saying which means that a woman is a cause of every action. He even mentions other examples from mythology like Juno, Pallas or Venus. The answer to poet's questions is reflected in the face expression of Pandora in the painting. It all remains unclear, mysterious and uncertain. At the end of the sonnet Rossetti

[45] Rossetti Archive, "Pandora," *Rossetti Archive*. http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/s224.rap.html (accessed July 14, 2013)
[46] Rossetti Archive, "Pandora (For a Picture)," *Rossetti Archive*. http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/22-1869.s224.raw.html (accessed July 14, 2013)
[47] Rossetti Archive, "Pandora (For a Picture)."

concentrates on the theme of hope, which is supposed to be conserved in the box. Here again there is a link between the painting and the text as the casket in the drawing version contains a Latin inscription "Ultima Manet Spes", which means "Hope remains last."[48]

Pandora is said to reflect an autobiographical topic – the relationship of the painter himself and his model Jane Morris, who "as Pandora holds out a last hope to Rossetti."[49]

Proserpine

Proserpine together with *La Bella Mano* is an exceptional work as in both cases the original painting is completed by a sonnet written in Italian and then the author produced the English translation as well. Rossetti was fascinated by the theme of Proserpine and he started about eight versions of the picture. The version discussed in this thesis is the eighth and last one – oil replica from 1882. This version was completed shortly before Rossetti's death and it is the only version where the sonnet in English appears.[50]

"Proserpina was the unwilling wife of Pluto, who abducted her as she was picking flowers in the vale of Enna and carried her down to the Underworld to become his queen. Her mother, Ceres, obtained permission from Jupiter for her return to earth, provided she had eaten nothing in the Underworld. But she had partaken of a pomegranate; thus she was doomed to spend half a year underground, and only half on earth. This tale of a woman trapped in an unhappy marriage has often been interpreted biographically, as a representation of Jane Morris."[51] Jane was the model for the painting; Rossetti even used the same colour for her dress as in *Astarte Syriaca* but in this version changed her raven black hair for the ginger shade. He depicts Proserpine in the Underworld in a meditative

[48] Elizabeth Prettejohn, "146 Pandora," in *Dante Gabriel Rossetti*, ed. Edwin Becker and Suzanne Bogman. (Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 2003) 209.
[49] Prettejohn, "146 Pandora," 209.
[50] Elizabeth Prettejohn, "155 Proserpine," in *Dante Gabriel Rossetti*, ed. Edwin Becker and Suzanne Bogman. (Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 2003) 217.
[51] Prettejohn, "155 Proserpine," 217.

mode, still holding the "dire fruit"[52] and her eyes reveal unhappiness, sadness and regret. In the background there is a flash of light that is, as referred in the poem, for "one instant and no more"[53] a reminder of the world above.

The woman is holding a pomegranate in her left hand, which is a symbol of temptation and evil[54] but also appears in Christian symbolism as the symbol representing the hope of resurrection and thus evoking Proserpine's return to earth.[55] Her head is surrounded by ivy that stands for loyalty and immortality and which was used by early Christians to lay their dead on.[56] It symbolizes as well memory and remembrance that constitute the main theme of the picture.[57] Beside the sonnets the author also wrote a *prose ekphrasis* where he comments on the topic:[58]

"The picture represents Proserpina as Empress of Hades. After she was conveyed by Pluto to his realm and became his bride, her mother Ceres importuned Jupiter for her return to earth, and he was prevailed on to consent to this, provided only she had not partaken of any of the fruits of Hades. It was found however that she had eaten one grain of a pomegranate, and this enchained her to her new empire and destiny. She is represented in a gloomy corridor of her palace, with the fatal fruit in her hand. As she passes, a gleam strikes on the wall behind her from some inlet suddenly opened, admitting for a moment the light of the upper world; and she glances furtively towards it, immersed in thought. The incense-burner stands beside her as the attribute of a goddess. The ivy-branch in the background (a decorative appendage to the sonnet inscribed on the label) may be taken as a symbol of clinging memory."[59]

Both versions of the sonnet were written in 1872 but they differ in metre: the Italian one is in iambic hexameter, while the English one in iambic pentameter. It differs from other *ekphrastic* sonnets in its monologue form as if

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[52] Rossetti, Proserpine, Line 5.
[53] Rossetti, Proserpine, Line 2.
[54] Frotscher, 225.
[55] Prettejohn, "155 Proserpine," 217
[56] Frotscher, 223.
[57] Prettejohn, "155 Proserpine," 217
[58] Rossetti Archive, "Proserpine," *Rossetti Archive*. http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/1-1872.s233.raw.html (accessed July 15, 2013)
[59] Dante Gabriel Rossetti, "The Works of Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1911)," *Rossetti Archive*, 635, http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/pr5240.f11.rad.html#p635. (accessed July 15, 2013)

Rossetti was speaking through Proserpine's mouth. The last line changes its perspective and seems to be an external commentary made most probably by author himself.[60] The sonnet develops the mood of the painting and gives it more general meaning by emphasizing the estrangement from one's homeland realizing that the return is for the moment impossible. Rossetti builds these feeling with the repetition of the word "afar" that reappears five times in the text. The sonnet occupies the right upper corner of the painting. Proserpine can be considered the most exemplary work of the *self-ekphrasis* process in Rossetti's work, where the image, the poem together with the prose bit contribute to maximal level of artistic expression.

The Blessed Damozel

In this particular and unique case of Rossetti's artistic production we find an example of the reversed self-ekphrasis as the poem "The Blessed Damozel" was prior to the painting. Rossetti wrote the first draft of the poem even before the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was formed and its early version was published in *The Germ* magazine in 1850. More elaborated version of the text became an opening poem of the collection from 1870. A year later, Rossetti started the "pictorial version" and later painted a second canvas very similar in composition.

One of the authors of the book about Rossetti's life work, Elizabeth Prettejohn asks: "Does it make a difference, then, that in this sole case Rossetti devised the visual composition after the verbal form of the work? At first glance, no: the composition is more elaborate than many of the other pictures of half-length female figures, but recognizably of the same type. Yet this demonstrates an interesting reflection on Rossetti's career: the painting argues, retrospectively, that the pictorial type of the late paintings is thoroughly consistent with his earliest poem – that one imaginative impulse connects Rossetti's earliest thoughts with his latest work."[61]

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[60] Rossetti Archive, "Proserpine," *Rossetti Archive*. http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/1-1872.s233.raw.html (accessed July 15, 2013)

[61] Elizabeth Prettejohn, "Beautiful women with floral adjuncts," in *Dante Gabriel Rossetti*, ed. Edwin Becker and Suzanne Bogman, 51-110. (Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 2003) 100.

The first two stanzas are a physical description of the female protagonist. This is also quite unique as Rossetti never tends to describe in detail the physical appearance of the model in his texts. From the very first word he is creating a thorough picture inside the reader's mind. Gradually, Rossetti sets the composition of the scene with particular images like "It was the rampart of God's house That she was standing on;"[62] or "Until her bosom must have made The bar she leaned on warm, And the lilies lay as if asleep Along her bended arm"[63]. The author tells a story of a young couple in love that was separated by the death of the girl, who is in Heaven now, where according to Rossetti the lovers can be united in timeless eternity. She looks down to the Earth at her lover and wants him to join her in the other world. Her lover is hearing her voice during his dream vision. The notion of separation is underlined by the polarity of poetic elements: life and death, Heaven and Earth, woman and man. However, all of these are often connected in a unity. The poem was inspired by medieval bard Dante Alighieri and his *femme fatale* icon Beatrice. Rossetti was also familiar with the poem by Edgar Allan Poe "The Raven," where it is the living male lover who is begging for the return of his beloved back to the Earth but Rossetti in his cases switched the roles. A great deal of the poem is influenced by the autobiographical issues. The author was married to Elizabeth Siddal who died of an overdose of laudanum and whose personality haunted the devoted painter long after her death.[64]

Three perspectives can be found in the poem: the one of the damozel (her voice in Heaven), the lover's (in his dream vision on Earth) and the lover's conscious thoughts marked in brackets.[65] The poem starts with the with the lover's description of the girl, the Heaven were she dwells and reveals that she spoke to him. In this place the text is intercut with the direct speech of the girl as heard by her lover. This dream brings a sense of reunion of the couple but finishes

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[62] Rossetti, "The Blessed Damozel," *PoemHunter.com.* December 31, 2002. http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/the-blessed-damozel/ (accessed July 16, 2013) Lines 25-26.
[63] Rossetti, "The Blessed Damozel," Lines 45-48
[64] Rossetti Archive, "The Blessed Damozel," *Rossetti Archive*. http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/1-1847.s244.raw.html (accessed July 16, 2013)
[65] see Rossetti Archive, "The Blessed Damozel"

(with waking up?) with enlargement of the "distance" between the two young and the girl ends in desperate tears.

The story is too complex to be fully conveyed and represented in its visual version. Anyway Rossetti made it to visualize the scene in a brilliant way, closely respecting the original text. The first version was finished in 1878. The painting is divided into two parts, the larger one with the portrait of the damozel in Heaven and the *predella* (defined as the base of an altarpiece, esp. one containing decorated panels depicting scenes related to the main panel or panels[66]) with picture of the lover on earth. In the centre of the main part, there is the half-figure of the deceased girl leaning against a bar. Her face is the focal point being highlighted with light colours and her mouth is half-open as if she was speaking. As described in the text she is holding three white lilies, has a halo of stars around her head but only six of them are visible (while the poem states that there are seven of them, "they are laid down in the form of the Pleiades, and in the picture the missing seventh recalls Merope, 'the lost Pleiade,' who was cast out of the classical heavens for having fallen in love with a mortal man"[67]) and she is surrounded by roses. Lilies are symbols of innocence, chastity, hope and purity. For ages they have been attributes of many goddesses. Roses most usually symbolize love and tenderness.[68] The background is made up by a romantic nature full of roses and trees on the horizon. There are many couples in amorous embrace, kissing and cuddling.

At the very back there is a symbol of the Holy Ghost, a little dove, which is also mentioned in the text (line 87). In the foreground there are three golden haired angels. The main part representing Heaven is approximately twice bigger than the *predella* where Rossetti placed the lover, lying on the ground by the river with his look going upwards. The painter reflected the season as mentioned in the poem "Surely she leaned o'er me – her hair fell about my face . . . . Nothing: the

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[66] "predella," *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary* http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/predella. (accessed July 16, 2013)
[67] Rossetti Archive, "The Blessed Damozel (with predella)," *Rossetti Archive*. http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/s244.rap.html. (accessed July 17, 2013)
[68] Frostcher, 221.

autumn-fall of leaves"[69] by painting a tree leaning over the river and with its leaves that are slowly turning yellow falling down on the water surface.

The painter resolved the theme of separation (of worlds) but at the same time union (of love) in a ingenious way by using the *predella* and thus creating a diptych or in other words two parts creating one whole. This even corresponds with the idea of mutual interconnection between poetry and painting; they are different genres but can perfectly work together in a sisterly relationship defined by *ut pictura poesis* theory. The second version of the painting accomplished in 1879 is identical in composition just simplified in certain aspects. The middle one of the three angel figures is missing, the background is taking less space and the embracing lovers were substituted by infant angels. *The Blessed Damozel* remains Rossetti's most famous and celebrated work. Certainly it is a unique masterpiece of *self-ekphrastic* art.

The Day-Dream

The story of production of *The Day-Dream* is quite long. It started as a draft drawing of Jane Morriss in 1872, who was portrayed as "a lady seated in a tree with a book on her lap."[70] The book and the tree are complex symbols analogous in a certain way. The book represents knowledge and education, as well as the tree is associated with the biblical Tree of Knowledge. The commission for the painting came in 1879. Firstly, Rossetti dealt with the theme of spring. He even gave the piece an Italian title *Vanna Primavera* (after a figure from Alighieri's literary work *Vita Nuova*) but he changed it later to *The Day-Dream*. "The new title preserves the emphasis on dreaming characteristic of many Rossetti's Dante subjects."[71] Rossetti depicts in his composition a young lady with raven black hair, of rather well-built figure and with delicate lines of hands with long thin fingers. She sits in a sycamore tree, holding its branch with her right hand and having her left hand softly resting on a book in her lap. A piece of

[69] Dante Gabriel Rossetti, "The Blessed Damozel," Lines 21-23.
[70] Elizabeth Prettejohn, "154 The Day Dream," in *Dante Gabriel Rossetti,* ed. Edwin Becker and Suzanne Bogman (Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 2003) 216.
[71] Prettejohn, "154 The Day Dream," 216.

honeysuckle freely lies in her left palm making the book and left hand more intensely contrastive and together creating the focal point of the picture. The artist used again his famous shades of green on the woman's dress, which is masterly processed. The green colour merges with the tree leaves and surrounding landscape, giving thus the impression of the woman's coalescence with the nature. The flower is a symbol of beauty and most precisely the honeysuckle stands for growing love.[72] The absent face expression evokes dreaming awake which the female figure is drowning in.

Rossetti wrote the sonnet for this picture in September 1880 and it was printed for the first time in 1881 as a part of *Ballads and Sonnets.* The author tenderly captures the changing of seasons and emphasizes the "vicissitudes" of beauty (of nature and also in general terms). In the first part he describes the seasonal transition when the spring is already gone but the "sycamore still bear young leaflets half the summer through;"[73] and expresses certain sadness upon the evanescence of natural beauty with time. In the second part he focuses on the dreaming lady saying that "Dreams even may spring till autumn; yet none be Like woman's budding day-dream spirit-fann'd."[74] In the last two lines he focuses on the poetic description what is visualized in the painting referring to her look deeper than the skies and points out that her meditation occupied her mind to the extent that she forgets about her book and "Drops the forgotten blossom from her hand."[75] Rossetti by writing this sonnet instilled the painting a new dimension a special atmosphere that perfectly sketches in the final impression and the theme of beauty. In one of his two manuscripts he provided a short prose commentary to accompany the sonnet:

"This Subject is simply one of natural sublimity. The time of year is about April, some branches of the sycamore tree in which the lady is seated being still quite young in spring

[72] Frostcher, 223.
[73] Rossetti, "The Day-Dream," *PoemHunter.com.* April 12, 2012. http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/the-day-dream-3/ (accessed July 17, 2013) Lines 1-2.
[74] Rossetti, "The Day-Dream," Lines 10-11.
[75] Rossetti, "The Day-Dream," Line 14.

foliage while in places the leaves are already larger though with spring-buds also clinging here & there."[76]

The dreaming concept of the painting together with its *self-ekphrastic* sonnet opens several questions about the subject the lady is pondering about. Is the sadness of transient feminine beauty reflected in her traits and in the surroundings? Is it the lust and right of women for knowledge symbolized by the book? Or is it love represented by the "forgotten" honeysuckle flower in her hand? The answer remains the objective of the spectator's and reader's own imagination.

Venus Verticordia

Rossetti worked on the painting called *Venus Verticordia* between 1863 and 1868. "The title, 'Venus, turner of hearts', derives from Latin literature, where it designates Venus's role in turning women's hearts towards virtue and chastity (Valerius Maximus, VIII.15.12; Ovid, *Fasti* IV.160). However, Rossetti at first took it in the opposite sense, to mean turning men's hearts away from fidelity."[77] The painting presents a female half-figure who is bare-breasted situated in the middle of nature full of flowers. She has ginger hair and hypnotic big greenish eyes. In her left hand she is holding an apple and in her right hand she wields a dart pointing at her heart. Her head is lined by a golden halo evoking the sense of godlike personality, which sounds unusual with Greek deities; nevertheless this fact was proven to be true.[78] Subtle butterflies are flitting around and in the upper right corner a singing bird can be spotted. The title reveals her identity to be Venus, the antiquity goddess of love. By sides she is encircled by roses, the symbol of love and tenderness, while the honeysuckles can represent growing love and "can be seen as a more earthly sexual symbol."[79]

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[76] Rossetti Archive, "The Day-Dream (for a Picture)," *Rossetti Archive*. http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/7-1880.s259.raw.html (accessed July 17, 2013)
[77] Elizabeth Prettejohn, "104 Venus Verticordia," in *Dante Gabriel Rossetti*, ed. Edwin Becker and Suzanne Bogman (Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 2003) 189.
[78] Prettejohn, "104 Venus Verticordia," 189.
[79] Prettejohn, "104 Venus Verticordia," 189.

The image is supported by the sonnet of an identical name, written in 1868 and firstly published in Rossetti's *Poems* in 1870.[80] In the first eight lines of the sonnet the author introduces the personality of Venus and explains her principles in turning people's hearts, which is only a game to her. The apple is mention twice in the first two stanzas. It suggests the idea of Eve's temptation by the Devil. According to the text, Venus Verticordia finds a person and then turns them from their fidelity by using an enchanted dart similar to the Cupid's. The sextet brings the story of Paris, referred to be the "Phrygian boy"[81], who was in charge to settle a contest between goddesses. He finally gave the apple to Venus, who promised him to give him the most beautiful woman of all, who was Helen of Troy. Thus she turned their hearts from their beloved towards each other but it did no good as the Trojan war burst.[82] The attributes from the painting are thus mentioned in the sonnet, even the little bird has its own reference in line 12: "Then shall her bird's strained throat the woe foretell,"[83] but there is no mention about the butterflies, which symbolize traditionally the human soul.[84]

The *self-ekphrastic* poem serves as an explanation of the title and also provides a link to mythology and better understanding of Rossetti's main theme: sensual beauty of women.

[80] Rossetti Archive, "Venus Verticordia. (For a Picture)," *Rossetti Archive.* http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/4-1868.s173.raw.html (accessed July 17, 2013)
[81] Rossetti, "Venus Verticordia (For a Picture)," *PoemHunter.com.* April 12, 2010. http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/venus-verticordia-for-a-picture/ (accessed July 17, 2013) Line 11.
[82] Prettejohn, "104 Venus Verticordia," 189.
[83] Rossetti, "Venus Verticordia (For a Picture)," Line 12.
[84] Prettejohn, "104 Venus Verticordia," 189.

2. Reversed *ekphrasis*: Pre-Raphaelites inspired by work of 19th British poets

The principle of *reversed ekphrasis* that can be considered as a practical realization of the ut pictura poesis theory consists in backward procedure of producing a double piece of art. In this case, there is always a first, which serves as a basis for its visual representation. This work will concentrate on visual representations of poetry by English writers of the nineteenth century who inspired the Pre-Raphaelite painters.

2.1. Alfred Tennyson and "The Lady of Shalott"

Alfred Tennyson born in 1809 had to struggle a financial crisis before he became one of the most popular poets of Victorian era in the half of the nineteenth century. The collections *Poems* published in 1842 and later *In Memoriam* brought him success and shortly after in 1850 he was appointed a Poet Laureate. Gradually he was admired and supported by Prince Albert and Queen Victoria, which made him an honoured man. An interesting fact is that Tennyson was extremely short-sighted so that he was not able to read and write at ease. This strongly affected the manner of his creative process. He basically created his works in his mind that sometimes took him many years to accomplish them.[85] Thus with analogy to visual arts, we could say that he was painting the idea on the internal imagination canvas represented by his mind. The link is even more complex when taking into consideration that the text produced on basis of this "projection" was later visualized by other Pre-Raphaelite artists, which contribute in strengthening the theory of *ut pictura poesis*. Tennyson died at the age of eighty-three in 1892.[86]

Long narrative poem "The Lady of Shalott" was originally written in 1832 but published ten years later. Tennyson was inspired by medieval theme that

[85] Glenn Everett, "Alfred Lord Tennyson: A Brief Biography," *Victorian Web*. Last modified November 30, 2004. http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/tennyson/tennybio.html (accessed July 19, 2013)
[86] Everett

already appears in *Morte d'Arthur* by Thomas Malory.[87] The text consists of four parts, the first two of them containing four stanzas in each and last two comprise five stanzas each. There are always nine lines per stanza and the rhyming is AAAABCCCB.

The first part of the poem sets the scene introducing the reader to the imaginary land of Camelot and a neighbouring island called Shalott on a river that flows to Camelot. The river is surrounded by fields of barley and rye with a road going through. On the island of Shalott there are only few kinds of flowers growing and a high tower with grey walls, which hides a lady that is a mystery to local people, who hear her singing.

The second part deals with the description of the lady. It reveals that she is reliant on her fate of weaving a web of "gay colours" and if she ceases to do so in order to look down to Camelot, she will be punished. She fears the curse and continues her work honestly. In front of her there is a mirror, through which she sometimes sees the near passers-by on their way to Camelot or the funeral or wedding procession. However, she dedicates her focus on the weaving task.

Until the third part when the brave knight Lancelot passes on this road and in the moment when he sings a song he captures Lady's of Shalott attention. The young woman leaves her activity and hurries to watch the man. Suddenly she remembers the curse and during the sound of cracking mirror and losing her web that has flown away she realizes that her triste fate is going to be fulfilled.

The fourth part opens with emphasis on the darkening change of weather that went from being pleasant and bright to gloomy like "heavily low sky raining"[88] and windy. The lady went down to the river, found a boat that she marked with her name. She set off for Camelot becoming weaker and weaker, she lay down in the boat and started to sing a song. At night she slowly floated taken by the river stream until she reached the town of Camelot and her destiny was

[87] Spark Notes, "Tennyson's Poetry," sparknotes.com. http://www.sparknotes.com/poetry/tennyson/section2.rhtml (accessed July 20, 2013)
[88] Alfred Tennyson, "The Lady of Shalott (1842)," *PoemHunter.com*. January 01, 2004. http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/the-lady-of-shalott-1842/ (accessed July 20, 2013) Line 121.

accomplished. She died singing her song. The local people came out of their houses to watch the pale dead lady when reading her name on the prow they asked who possibly it could be. The poem closes with the words of Sir Lancelot who made space to reach the boat and said: "She has a lovely face; God in his mercy lend her grace, The Lady of Shalott."[89]

Pre-Raphaelite painters and The Lady of Shalott

Elizabeth Nelson, the author in her lecture *Pre-Raphaelites: Pictorial Interpretations of* "The Lady of Shalott" published on Victorian Web claims: "Pre-Raphaelite artists found a rich source of pictorial inspiration in "The Lady of Shalott." It attracted them in part because it emphasized the spiritual nobility and the melancholy of the more sorrowful aspects of love, such as unrequited love, particularly the embowered or isolated and therefore unattainable woman; the woman dying for love; the fallen woman who gives up everything for love; the special "tainted" or "cursed" woman; and the dead woman of unique beauty."[90]

The theme inspired artists, who even produced various versions and scenes depicting different parts of the poem, such as William Holman Hunt, John William Waterhouse, Sidney Harold Meteyard, John Everett Millais or the only woman among male artists Elizabeth Siddal. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, to who was dedicated the first part of this thesis, made an engraving in 1857 on this theme as well.[91] He chose to portray the very last scene of the poem:

> "But Lancelot mused a little space;
> He said, 'She has a lovely face;
> God in his mercy lend her grace,
> The Lady of Shalott.'"[92]

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[89] Tennyson, "The Lady of Shalott (1842)," Lines 169-171.
[90] Elizabeth Nelson, "The Pre-Raphaelites: Pictorial Interpretations of 'The Lady Of Shalott'," *The Victorian Web*. November 30, 2004. http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/tennyson/losprb.html (accessed July 21, 2013)
[91] Dorice Elliot, "Courses," The University of Kansas. http://people.ku.edu/~delliott/courses/314/victorianvisuals.htm (accessed July 21, 2013)
[92] Tennyson, "The Lady of Shalott (1842)," Lines 169-171.

Rossetti depicted Lancelot in his medieval costume with many details. He also worked out the details of his face traits giving him a look full of compassion and sadness, while the Lady is painted only in hints of her features as she is half-covered by a little shelter and her body is hidden in the boat. Rossetti represented a touching moment of reunion of unfulfilled love and in his illustration "remained essentially true to the original text."[93]

It is interesting to observe what part of the text and which situation they chose to represent the poem visually. This work deals with the most important and relevant of them.

2.1.1 William Holman Hunt: *The Lady of Shalott* (1857)

William Holman Hunt was born in 1827 into a strongly religious family in London. He started working early at the age of twelve but soon found the delight in visual arts despite not possessing any spectacular talent for it. However, he managed to convince his parents, who supported him to be able to study at the Royal Academy and he became a painter. It was at the Academy where he met Millais and Rossetti and later took part in establishing the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. In his art he tended to return to religion and moral ideals that he depicted in his paintings. He had never become a member of the Royal Academy, though he applied for it and his works were not selling well. Nevertheless, during his long life he produced many paintings and visualized a lot of themes of English literature. He died at the age of eighty-three in London in 1910.[94]

Hunt was immensely inspired by "The Lady of Shalott" and by Tennyson himself, thus he made several version and representations of the picture. The very first attempt is the drawing from 1850, where he wanted to show as many details as possible corresponding with the original poem which did not turn very successful in result. "What the 1850 drawing does do, however, is to mark Hunt's

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[93] Peggy A. Fogelman, " Illustration for Tennyson's "The Lady of Shalott" by D. G. Rossetti," *The Victorian Web*. December 30, 2006. http://www.victorianweb.org/art/illustration/dgr/8.html (accessed July 21, 2013)
[94] Martina Glenn, "William Holman Hunt," *Artmuseum.cz*. http://www.artmuseum.cz/umelec.php?art_id=1033 (accessed July 22, 2013)

debut as a literary illustrator, showing itself to be the first attempt of a young artist to do the justice to one of the best-known works of England's foremost poet, and also to come to terms with the hallowed tradition of *ut pictura poesis*."[95] A version from 1886-1905 is also one of the most significant ones; anyway, this thesis will deal only with the 1857 most famous painting in detail.

In comparison to the 1850 drawing Hunt made several important changes in the 1857 version (sometimes also called the Moxon version). He portrays the Lady of Shalott at the moment when she beholds Lancelot. She is standing inside the loom construction, in front of the the large round mirror. It has a form of a triptych; the central part is accompanied by wing-like two smaller ovals depicting biblical themes. The left part shows the Virgin Mary praying above infant Jesus. The right one captures a man figure, most probably Adam, who is picking an apple from a tree and a lady figure sleeping under the apple-tree; most probably standing for Eve. The Lady of Shalott is dressed in a long colourful robe that tightly fits her delicate feminine shape. Her black hair is loose and very thick floating in the space. The strings of the web are twisted around the woman's body. The mirror reflects fields of yellow colour, the river lined by trees and a knight on his stallion holding a lance in his left arm.

Some of the changes caused an argument between Hunt and Tennyson. It was the freely floating hair as if blown by strong wind and the threads of the web that were added by Hunt. Tennyson argued that an illustrator cannot add any of the details that are not included in the original text that says "Out flew the web and floated wide"[96]; Hunt defended himself by stating that he was limited by space unlike the poet who used fifteen pages to express his idea. Hunt also added the lance to Lancelot's hand; it is a phallic symbol that evokes the theme of a fallen woman that was destroyed by her sexual awakening, a topic very popular with artists in the Victorian times.[97] The painter here shows the Lady of Shalott at

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[95]Andrew Leng, "'The Ideology of 'eternal truth': William Holman Hunt and *The Lady of Shalott* 1850-1905'(II)," *The Victorian Web*. Last modified June 12, 2007. http://www.victorianweb.org/painting/whh/leng/2.html (accessed July 22, 2013)
[96]Tennyson, "The Lady of Shalott," Line 114.
[97] Leng

the moment of her doom and he tries to emphasize this by setting chaos (hair, web) in her room. She broke the rule and the inevitable punishment is coming.

This painting is evidence that not always the painter respects the original text that he is visualizing. By adding the specific details to this scene, Hunt diverged from the theory of *ut pictura poesis* as he created a new interpretation that differs from the original poem and set a conflict between the poet (Tenyson) and the painter (Hunt).

2.1.2 John William Waterhouse and his visual representations

John William Waterhouse was born in Rome, Italy to family of English painters in 1849. Few years later, they returned to England where Waterhouse as a small boy started helping his father in his art workshop. Gradually he gained skills in painting and sculpting and in 1870 was accepted to the Royal Academy, of which he became a full member in 1895. Waterhouse adored Italy and its landscape that he often reflected in his art. He was inspired by Italian themes in his early work. In the course of time he concentrated on Pre-Raphaelite topics, such as classical mythology or historical and literary subjects. He was particularly inspired by Keats and Tennyson, the foremost English classic poets. Unlike the others, Waterhouse was an exception because his financial situation was very good already during his lifetime. He died in February 1917 at the age of sixty-eight.[98]

The Lady of Shalott by Waterhouse (1888)

Waterhouse's first representation of Tennyson's poem is The Lady of Shalott from 1888. As setting he chose the scene from the fourth part of the text. More particularly the second stanza:

"And down the river dim expanse

[98] JWWaterhouse.com, " John William Waterhouse (1849-1917)," *JWWATERHOUSE.COM*. http://www.jwwaterhouse.com/index.cfm#about (accessed July 23, 2013)

Like some bold seer in trance,
Seeing all his mischance –
With glassy countenance
Did she look to Camelot.
And at the closing of the day
She loosed the chained, and down she lay;
The broad stream bore her far away,
The Lady of Shalott."[99]

The painter captures the Lady as a young woman with a rather girlish appearance, fair hair and delicate pale skin. She is dressed in white, seated in a boat that bears a sign "The Lady of Shalott." In her right hand she holds a chain that bounds the vessel to the shore of an island in the middle of a river. With ingenious details Waterhouse also managed to express the weather that was very gloomy, windy and rainy. The rain is hardly visible but its presence is hinted by a couple of swallows that are flying very low, which they usually do when raining. It is reflected on the water surface as well, which is churned up by the drizzle. The wind is suggested by the candles most concretely in their flames that are diverted right-wards. The part of the day can be recognized thanks to reddish twilight sky and a little lantern attached to the prow indicates that the upcoming evening. These are details that can be easily expressed by words but very hard in visual form, thus I dare say that Waterhouse did a masterly work in fulfilling the principle of sister arts or *ut pictura poesis* by his loyalty to the original but permitting it symbolic visual dimension. He brilliantly captured the woman's face expression that is described in the text as "Like some bold seer in a trance Seeing all his own mischance – with glassy countenance." Her face seems as if she wanted to make a deep long sorrowful sigh but being aware of her own mistake and fate, she remained still in a half way not letting groan out of her mouth. She looks as if frozen, petrified and absent in her mind. Another important symbol is the chain. The Lady of Shalott was chained to her duty, to her loom, to her tower. But she did not make it to resist looking at Lancelot; it turned out it was her who was holding the chain. Now she lets it go; leaving the Isle of Shalott forever, setting out towards her fate she sails towards death. Waterhouse visualized the

[99] Tennyson, "The Lady of Shalott," Lines 127-136.

two stanzas in a very faithful way so that when looking at the painting the viewer can read the original scene from the canvas.

"Waterhouse's 1888 version of The Lady of Shalott remains as one of the few scenes of the time period to depict a woman out of doors and alone, and this aspect serves to emphasize her vulnerability. Rather than safe within the confines of her tower, the Lady of Shalott now seems weak and helpless when placed at the mercy of the outside world. Instead of condemning the Lady, however, this seems to evoke a sense of pity in the viewer. This differs sharply from Hunt's blatant disapproval of the Lady's behavior. Waterhouse's scene does not openly support or denounce her actions, but merely takes a slightly more sympathetic position when compared to Hunt's. Whereas Hunt's depiction of the Lady of Shalott focuses on a narrative moment within Tennyson's poem, this version by Waterhouse places far more emphasis on mood."[100]

The Lady of Shalott by Waterhouse (1894)

In his version from 1894, Waterhouse presents the Lady of Shalott in her room at the moment when she left her loom to rush to the window so that she can see Lancelot, which is described in the last stanza of the third part:

> "She left the web, she left the loom,
> She made three paces through the room,
> She saw the water-lily bloom,
> She the helmet and the plume,
> She looked down to Camelot.
> Out flew the web and floated wide;
> The mirror cracked from side to side;
> 'The curse is come upon me,' cried
> The Lady of Shalott."[101]

This composition is very similar to Hunt's 1857 version. It is somehow much darker. This time Waterhouse painted a young delicate woman with dark

[100] Meg Mariotti, "The Lady of Shalott: Pre-Raphaelite Attitudes Toward Woman in Society," *The Victorian Web*. Last modified December 21, 2004. http://www.victorianweb.org/painting/prb/mariotti12.html (accessed July 24, 2013)
[101] Tennyson, "The Lady of Shalott (1842)," Lines 109-117.

hair and intensive eyes. He used the white dress similar to that in the former version, though this time not purely white but rather pale rosy tone. The woman has the strings from the web twisted around her knees and her posture looks as if she wanted to run quickly towards the window but she would fall on her knees because of the attachment. It is unusual and it hints the influence of Hunt's painting as Tennyson himself does not mention this detail in his poem. Behind the woman's standing figure in the background there is a large round mirror that is starting to crack from side to side. It reflects the head and the upper body of Lancelot in his armour holding a bugle or a long sort of lance, which is along with the mentioned plume a strong masculine symbol of sexuality. This time Waterhouse used dark hair that corresponds better with the turn point situation when the Lady of Shalott breaks the rule and realizes its fatal impact upon her. Certainly, very eye-catching is the look in the Lady's eyes. It mirrors eagerness, determination but as well vulnerability, fear and awareness of the negative destiny sealed by the phrase "The curse is come upon me."[102]

If Hunt's version and his visualization of the "looking at Lancelot" scene are compared to Waterhouse's, the latter mentioned turns out to be more loyal to the original text and more supportive of the *ut pictura poesis* idea.

"I Am Half-Sick of Shadows," Said the Lady of Shalott (1915)

To observe Waterhouse's selection of the scenes from Tennyson's poem is very exciting as he proceeded from the end towards the beginning. He started in 1888 with "the boat scene" from part four; then he chose the last stanza describing "the looking down at Lancelot scene" closing the third part and finally in his last version from 1915 he treats the "I am half-sick of shadows scene", which corresponds to the last stanza of the second part of the poem:

> "But in her web she still delights
> To weave the mirror's magic sights,
> For often through the nights
> A funeral, with plumes and lights

[102]Tennyson, "The Lady of Shalott (1842)," Line 135.

And music, went to Camelot:
Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed;
"I am half-sick of shadows," said
The Lady of Shalott."[103]

Waterhouse used for his third painting of The Lady of Shalott the same model as in the second version. Again the viewer is presented a beautiful young woman of fine face lines and with intensely dark hair. She is seated in front of her loom, observing the web and glimpsing towards the mirror in the background. She is wearing long but rather simple dress of scarlet colour. Taking into consideration previous versions by Waterhouse, the evolution of the dress colour is very symbolic. The vivid scarlet shade of the dress in the last painting seems as if was going pale in the previous pictures – through the rosy hue in the second painting to the purely white in the first canvas. It can be understood as analogy with the atmosphere of the poem that rapidly changes in tone when the Lady beholds Lancelot.

The posture of the young woman indicates that she is tired of her constant work and duty. She lifted her arms and put her hands behind her head as if she wanted to have a little rest or stretch her back and watches carefully the web. At that moment the mirror reflects a young couple in love and she realizes her separation from the outer world; from human contact; from love. In this picture she seems to prepare for a deep sad sigh accompanied by the direct speech from the poem "I am half-sick of shadows."[104] Hence the "shadows" can refer to the reflected figures in the mirror or more generally her isolated way of living. The posture is not mentioned in the text; anyway it permits the viewer to understand the emotion of the situation.[105]

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[103] Tennyson, "The Lady of Shalott (1842)," Lines 64-72.
[104] Tennyson, "The Lady of Shalott (1842)," Line 71.
[105] The Victorian Web, "*'I Am Half-Sick of Shadows,' Said the Lady of Shalott,*" The Victorian Web. Last modified May 21, 2007. http://www.victorianweb.org/painting/jww/paintings/22.html (accessed July 24, 2013)

The large round mirror provides enough space to reflect the scenery; so far, it is the most detailed view on the river and the castle of Camelot.

Waterhouse seized the visual representation of "The Lady of Shalott" very responsibly, respecting the original text and its atmosphere unlike Hunt who tried to integrate his own idiosyncratic interpretation. Waterhouse brought the story on canvas in harmony with *ut pictura poesis* theory.

2.1.3 Sidney Harold Meteyard and *"I Am Half-Sick of Shadows," Said the Lady of Shalott* (1913)

Sidney Harold Meteyard was born in 1868. He studied and spent most of his life in Birmingham. Besides painting he devoted his life also to design and illustration. Fairy-tales and mythology became his favourite themes for his works. He died in 1947.[106]

Meteyard two years earliear than Waterhouse painted the theme *"I am Half-Sick of Shadows," Said the Lady of Shalott* but he captured the scene quite differently. The blue colour and nocturnal atmosphere dominates the picture. The Lady is depicted sleeping seated in front of her loom; her head turned away towards the round mirror that reflects night sky and in the centre there is a flash showing two figures. Lady's left hand is still holding the loom as if she fell asleep just right in the moment the painter portrayed her. The motif on her web is quite clearly identifiable; it is a knight in golden armour, holding a long lance. The poem does not give details about the web's subject content; it just reveals that it is "A magic web with colours gay."[107] It could be interpreted as an image of Lancelot, so far an unknown man, who she dreams about in her solitude. Hence the reaction of being "half-sick of shadows" that are reflected at night in the mirror. In this case, it is a young couple of lately wed people.

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[106] Gothic Romantic, "Sidney Harold Meteyard," *gothicromantic.com*. https://sites.google.com/a/gothicromantic.com/gothicromantic9/gothic-inspired-art/sidney-harold-meteyard-1868-1947 (accessed July 25, 2013)

[107] Tennyson, "The Lady of Shalott (1842)," Line 38.

The space arrangements represent a fusion of style of Waterhouse's 1915 version and Rossetti's general composition. While Rossetti suppresses the real aspects of space by adding floral environs usually in the foreground, Waterhouse places his character in a more probable and credible rooms. Meteyard seems to combine these attitudes as the background of the room looks very natural, like a common room with a mirror and heavy curtains. However, his using of the flowers in the foreground and perfect blue colour harmony makes the space look more dream-like and creates the impression that the time did not exist.

Meteyard remained very loyal to the original text in his interpretation. By adding the nocturnal features supported by shades of blue colours, he even better fulfilled the principle of *ut pictura poesis*.

2.1.4 Sir John Everett Millais and *The Lady of Shalott*

John Everett Millais was born in 1829 in London. Since childhood he showed talent for visual arts and also thanks to support of his wealthy parents, he was accepted to the Royal Academy already at the age of eleven becoming thus the youngest student so far. Millais turned out to be a very skillful painter, though sometimes was reproached the lack of imagination. Millais was together with Rossetti and Hunt a co-founder of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. However, at the beginning of his career his artistic production did not do very well. This situation changed in 1851 when he finished a painting called *The Woodman's Daughter* his position was reinforced among the most respected artists and in 1853 he became a member of the Royal Academy. Millais kept a good friendship with Ruskin, though he fell in love with Ruskin's wife and caused their divorce, he had never lost Ruskin's favour and support in his work. Gradually, he split up with the Pre-Raphaelite ideology and devoted his work to satisfy the requirements of society. Thus he became the wealthiest painter in England but his painting lacked the Pre-Raphaelite quality of composition. Millais died shortly after his appointment the president of the Royal Academy in 1896.[108]

[108] Martina Glenn, "Sir John Everett Millais," *Artmuseum.cz*. October 09, 2007. http://www.artmuseum.cz/umelec.php?art_id=943 (accessed July 25, 2013)

In 1854 Millais made an ink drawing of "The Lady of Shalott." He depicted the scene when the Lady lies in her boat and floats with no aim peacefully on the river and slowly dies as told in the third stanza of the Part IV of the poem:

> "Lying, robed in snowy white
> That loosely flew to left and right –
> The leaves upon her falling light –
> Through the noises of the night
> She floated down to Camelot:
> And as the boat-head wound along
> The willowy hills and fields among,
> They heard her singing her last song,
> The Lady of Shalott."[109]

The central part and the focus point in Millais' version is the Lady's body lying in the boat and her face directing the sky. It expresses deep sorrow, fear and sadness of her evaporating life. Her hair and dress is loosely flying to the sides as described by Tennyson in the lines 136-137. The boat is surrounded by water birds and there is a big white swan on the right observing the cadaver. The swan is a symbol of integrity, perfection and death.[110] Even though Tennyson does not mention the swans in his text, Millais incorporated them to emphasize the young woman's pure and untouched character. He drew in detail the willow trees that complete the mournful atmosphere. In the background of the painting a group of buildings is visible, that is most probably the castle of Camelot, where the boat was directing. The roiling water and the gloomy sky indicate rainy bleak weather.

In this case as well, Millais was respecting the original text and created a complex visual representation of the scene when the Lady dies in her boat. By adding symbols of the mood and character suggested by the poem, he underlined the relationship of visual arts and poetry.

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[109] Tennyson, "The Lady of Shalott (1842)," Lines 136-144.
[110] Frotscher, 125, 234.

2.1.5 Elizabeth Eleanor Siddal – the only woman artist who pictured "The Lady of Shalott"

Elizabeth Siddal, born in 1834, represents a very important woman in the context of the Pre-Raphaelite art. She is well-known as a model for Millais' Ophelia and as a wife of Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Young Siddal worked as an assistant at a milliner in London. In 1849 she was Walter Howard Deverell to sit as a model for his painting with Shakespearean theme called *Twelfth Night*. This was a starting point of her modelling career that she was predestined to as with her tall and delicate figure, fair skin and ginger hair she represented a perfect embodiment of the Pre-Raphaelite ideal of feminine beauty. Shortly after she met Rossetti but at that time she was engaged to his brother. Dante and Elizabeth fell in love and got married. He encouraged her to produce her own art, which she successfully did. Nevertheless, the marriage was not happy and Siddal was suffering from jealousy of Rossetti's constant affairs with models and other women. Her health condition got worse and she started to medicate herself with laudanum. In 1861 she gave birth to a still-born baby and died a year later in 1862 at the young age of twenty-eight. Rossetti as a sign of regret and in a search of his conscience buried his poetry in Elizabeth's coffin but had them exhumed few years later. Despite the relationships that he was involved in after her death, Siddal remained a great love of his life.[111]

The Lady of Shalott at Her Loom by Elizabeth Siddal (1853)

Elizabeth Siddal made the drawing *The Lady of Shalott at Her Loom* in 1853. She portrayed her sitting on a chair in front of her loom, with a huge window behind her and a large round mirror in front of her. Siddal was very faithful to the original text; she did not add any disturbing details and presents the Lady and her room in simplicity. She just added a cross that is standing on a cupboard under the window; the cross gives the painting a more religious aspect but could stand for a symbol of Christian purity and chastity. "Although Siddal's drawing illustrates the moment at which the Lady turns from her loom to look at

[111] The Victorian Web, "Elizabeth Eleanor Siddal," *The Victorian Web*. September 16, 2006. http://www.victorianweb.org/painting/siddal/index.html (accessed July 26, 2013)

Lancelot directly, she shows no recognition of her fate. The Lady's expression is not horrified; she shows no signs of distress. Instead, the Lady appears entirely composed."[112] This is very different from the version by Hunt or Waterhouse. Siddal clearly drew the details described in the last stanza of the Part III where "out flew the web and floated wide"[113] and the mirror that "cracked from side to side"[114] is reflecting the figure of Lancelot on his horse. However, she diverted from the poem by keeping the Lady seated and not making "three paces through the room"[115] that gives the drawing still and calm atmosphere in counterpart to the previous ones where she shows her passion and terror.

Elizabeth Siddal contributed with her representation of "The Lady of Shalott" with her feminine point of view, keeping the drawing very simple and seemingly naïve. She represented the poem quite faithfully but made a little diversion from the textual composition, which partly interrupts the integrity of the *ut pictura poesis* ideology.

[112] Erin Frauenhofer, " Men vs. Women: Illustrating 'The Lady of Shalott'," *The Victorian Web*. Last modified December 17, 2006.
http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/tennyson/frauenhofer.html (accessed July 27, 2013)
[113] Tennyson, "The Lady of Shalott (1842)," Line 114.
[114] Tennyson, "The Lady of Shalott (1842)," Line 115.
[115] Tennyson, "The Lady of Shalott (1842)," Line 110.

2.2 Visual representations of John Keats' "La Belle Dame Sans Merci"

John Keats and his "La Belle Dame Sans Merci"

John Keats, an English poet born in 1795, experienced since childhood hard times. Firstly, it was death of his father and one of the brothers. Then the family was afflicted by consumption that caused the death of his mother when Keats was only fifteen. The children were entrusted to their grandmother. Keats began his apprenticeship to become a surgeon but left it after a dispute with his master. He continued his education in a hospital but in 1814 completely abandoned medicine in favour of literature. Keats' professional literary career did not start very successfully. He was also obliged to take care of his ill brother, who eventually died of consumption in 1818. Keats fell in love with a sixteen-year-old girl, which encouraged him to plunge into writing. However, the poetry and love made him emotionally very tired and decided to have a rest from literature while doing an ordinary work. In 1820 the symptoms of consumption appeared and he was recommended to move to better weather condition. He left for Italy, which helped him only temporarily and he died in Italy in February 1821 at the age of twenty-six.[116]

2.2.2 *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*

"La Belle Dame Sans Merci" is a ballad by Keats written in 1819. The title that can be freely translated from French as "a beautiful lady without mercy" and it comes from the French medieval poet Alain Chartier. The structure comprises twelve stanzas with four lines each and the rhyming follows the ABCB pattern. The poem is a dialogue between an unknown speaker and a knight. The speaker opens the text with a question about knight's "ailing" that is repeated in the first two stanzas and the season is described. The reader learns that it is autumn as "the

[116] John-Keats.com, "Biography," *John-Keats.com*. http://www.john-keats.com/biografie/biografie_index.htm (accessed July 29, 2013)

sedge is withered from the lake, and no birds sing"[117] and "the squirrel's granary is full, and the harvest's done."[118] The unknown speaker is preoccupied with the knight's health condition, which does not appear very well as the man seems to be dying. He comments on his growing paleness and other symptoms of distress. The fourth stanza changes the point of view. Here the "I" already represents the knight who starts to reveal his story. He claims that he had met a fairy-like woman, who joined him and took him to her "elfin grot"[119] She seduced him, they fell asleep and in his dream he had a vision where he saw other men – kings and princes – who were destroyed by the mystic lady. When the knight woke up he found himself "on the cold hill side"[120] and he was disoriented, weak and obviously slowly dying of an unknown cause. He closes his story with partial repeating of the first stanza:

> "And that is why I sojourn here,
> Alone and palely loitering,
> Though the sedge is withered from the lake,
> And no birds sing."[121]

"La Belle Dame Sans Merci" and its visual representations in the Pre-Raphaelite art

A beautiful woman with destructive powers that have fatal impact on a man's life such as found in "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" was a favourite theme for the Pre-Raphaelite painters. They explored the sensuality and mysterious character of the poem. The most important Pre-Raphaelite painters who depicted the text visually were Henry Meynell Rheam, Frank Cadogan Cowper, John William Waterhouse, Walter Crane and Arthur Hughes. Their visual works will be discussed on following pages.

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[117] John Keats, "La Belle Dame Sans Merci," *PoemHunter.com*. December 31, 2002. http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/la-belle-dame-sans-merci/ (accessed July 29, 2013) Lines 3-4.
[118] Keats, "La Belle Dame Sans Merci," Lines 7-8.
[119] Keats, "La Belle Dame Sans Merci," Line 29.
[120] Keats, "La Belle Dame Sans Merci," Line 44.
[121] Keats, "La Belle Dame Sans Merci," Lines 45-48.

2.2.1 Henry Meynell Rheam

Henry Meynell Rheam was born in 1859 and to gather experience as a painter he studied abroad: in Germany, France but also in his native England. Rheam specialized in watercolour. He settles in Newlyn, Cornwall and became a famous watercolourist. His *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* from 1895 was highly appreciated by reviewers. Rheam died in 1920 at the age of sixty-one.[122]

***La Belle Dame Sans Merci* by Rheam (1895)**

Rheam captured the scene described in stanzas nine, ten and eleven. When the knight is put to sleep by the fairy and he has a dream vision:

> "And there we slumbered on the moss,
> And there I dreamed, ah! woe betide,
> The latest dream I ever dreamed
> On the cold hill side.
>
> I saw pale kings, and princes too,
> Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
> Who cried---'La belle Dame sans merci
> Hath thee in thrall!'
>
> I saw their starved lips in the gloam,
> With horrid warning gaped wide,
> And I awoke and found me here,
> On the cold hill side."[123]

Rheam's artistic style can be defined as late Pre-Raphaelite. He uses vivid colours and pays attention to detail. His *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* is a tall pretty woman dressed in pale rosy robe with slits on her long white sleeves that create an effect of fairy wings. She is wearing a flower garland mentioned in the sixth

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[122] Cornwall Artists Index, "Henry Meynell Rheam," *Cornwall Artists Index*. http://cornwallartists.org/cornwall-artists/henry-meynell-rheam (accessed July 28, 2013)
[123] Keats, "La Belle Dame Sans Merci," Lines 33-44.

stanza, though Rheam omitted painting the bracelets. Her dress is tight at the waist zone emphasizing thus the lady's attractive sensual breast and hips. She is a focal point of the painting; standing above the sleeping knight and her gesture as if she was telling a magic spell or a curse catches the viewer's attention. From the general psychological point of view, her dominance over the man is symbolized also by placing her vertical figure in a higher place than the knight's horizontally laid body. She reminds of a conductor of a choir, as if she was directing everything and fully controlling the situation, in this case of men's souls that had been intrigued by her seductive manipulation into doom.

The noble man is sleeping on the ground in his armour but his helmet and his sword put aside, which can symbolize his vulnerability. He seems restless in his sleep. His nightmare-like vision is embodied by ghosts painted all around the scene. Their paleness mentioned in the text is enhanced by the bluish hue that creates an extremely cold effect; evoking the presence of death. The ghosts are king and princes portrayed in a logical sequence as they were coming (meeting the lady), becoming involved and seduced by her and then destroyed by her mystic power to encounter death in the end.

Rheam appears to respect all the text details; the weather corresponds to autumn, which he depicted in the cold foggy morning or early evening and it is reflected also in the trees that had partially lost their leaves. In the background he painted the lake and the fairy's grot. His work shows a close relationship between the poem and the painting, so Rheam can be considered another fulfiller and follower of the *ut pictura poesis*. This idea was proved by a reviewer's commentary during the Opening Exhibition of Newlyn Art Gallery in 1895, who claimed that his La Belle Dame Sans Merci "is as complete realization of the heroine of Keats' poem as any artist is ever like to give us."[124]

[124] Cornwall Artists Index

2.2.2 Frank Cadogan Cowper

Frank Cadogan Cowper was born in 1877 in Northamptonshire to a strongly religious family, whose tough upbringing profoundly influenced Cowper's future artistic career but his treating of religious subjects was mostly humorous almost blasphemous. He is sometimes called "the last Pre-Raphaelite." Cowper gained intensive art education, including studies in Italy. His works were accepted successfully and in 1911 he became a full member of the Royal Academy. Cowper mastered the technique of oil, watercolour and illustration. He dwelt on the historical details, which he pictured in his art but made his living prevailingly by producing portraits. At the end of his life he encountered the disapproval from the Catholic Church and his work became unappreciated. However, his popularity is rising again at present. Cowper died at the age of 81 in 1958.[125]

***La Belle Dame Sans Merci* represented by Frank Cadogan Cowper (1926)**

Cowper's *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* was completed in 1926. He portrays the Lady sitting above a lying body of the knight as described in ninth stanza:

> "And there she lulled me asleep,
> And there I dream'd—Ah! woe betide!
> The latest dream I ever dream'd
> On the cold hill's side."[126]

She is the focal point of the painting. Her position is very sensual, her both arms are lifted and she is arranging her hair and fixing the garland in it while long sleeves of her voluminous dress fall down and expose her slim limbs. Her scarlet heavy robe is decorated with golden embroidery of pomegranates some of them reminiscent breasts and thus underline the implied sexuality. She is surrounded

[125] Scott Thomas Buckle, "Frank Cadogan Cowper: Biography," *Artmagick.com*. August 07, 2005. http://www.artmagick.com/pictures/artist.aspx?artist=frank-cadogan-cowper (29.07.2013)
[126] Keats, "La Belle Dame Sans Merci," Lines 33-36.

with poppies, which represent a symbol of Greek god of sleep Morfeus.[127] It is known that poppies have opiate effects and can cause hallucinations and changes of consciousness. Cowper wanted to emphasize the dream vision that affected the knight in the poem and the mysterious or poisonous powers of the Lady. In the background there is a lake and a woody hill. The weather is not easily identifiable but the presence of poppies and overblown dandelions indicates late summer time, which does not exactly correspond with the information in the poem (see first two stanzas). In the foreground, by the Lady's feet there lies the knight's body and it is difficult to state whether he is asleep or dead. His subordinated position in the bottom part of the canvas signifies no importance to the viewer and thus it enables the Lady to attract all the attention.

Unlike Rheam Cowper did not picture the ghosts of kings and princes from the knight's dream-like vision. He concentrated more on the Lady and her sensual qualities that presented a doom of the man. Cowper's visual representation of *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* is highly idiosyncratic and exposes the sexual interpretation of the poem. The gesture of the Lady could possibly represent adjusting her hair after seducing the knight who consequently fell asleep. The lack of mercy is captured in the Lady's eyes; she seduced the man, played with his heart and left him dying. Even though Cowper approached the visual representation of the text in his own subjective manner, there is still a tight link between the poem and the painting.

2.2.3 John William Waterhouse

For John William Waterhouse biographical information see 2.1.2

John William Waterhouse an oil painting entitled *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* in 1853. He presents her as a seducer, a *femme fatale* who plays with men and uses his masculine vulnerability to abandon them consequently leaving no interest in them. His version reflects the fourth stanza of the ballad:

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[127] Whats-Your-Sign.com, "Poppy Symbolism, Deeper Meaning of Poppy," *Whats-Your-Sign.com*. http://www.whats-your-sign.com/poppy-symbolism.html (accessed July 29, 2013)

"I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful—a fairy's child,
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild."[128]

In the middle of the setting, which is created by a lake and a wood in the background, the couple is seated on the ground. The Lady taking the left part of the picture is dressed in purplish long dress hemmed with pearls and with a heart appliqué on her sleeve. The length of her hair is extraordinary to the extent that it evokes association with a fairy female creature. She is barefoot and her feet are of a tiny size and light character as described in the original text. The focal point of the painting is her face that is richly illuminated and contrasts with the rest of the picture, which is rather dark. The expression in her face is lustful, mirroring eagerness and desire. Waterhouse did a masterly piece of work in depicting her eyes that look "wild"[129] indeed. She ties a knot of her hair which is looped around the knight's neck. The binding represents the trap and the power of manipulation the lady has upon the man. His position is reminiscent of the one before a sexual intercourse, when a man in the middle of excitement is kneeling above the lady and is ready to succumb to her feminine enchantment. Waterhouse's version is unique in his composition of figure placement as he unlike the previous artists situates the man on higher vertical level than the lady. She is the one who brings him to the ground, metaphorically lowers him towards hell.

The man's face is hardly visible as if he should remain in anonymity, as if his identity was not relevant and he presented just one of many. This is conforming to the title of the poem that mentions only the woman but implies man's presence. The man in the poem does not have a name; the reader does not know his identity. He is just a means of conveying the message from the poet who creates a story about a *femme fatale*. This fact is brilliantly reflected in Waterhouse's version when the stereotypical gender roles are swapped: the woman is the dominant particle and the man is subordinated to her manipulation

[128] Keats, "La Belle Dame Sans Merci," Lines 13-16.
[129] Keats, "La Belle Dame Sans Merci," Line 16.

and sentenced to his final doom. The work reflects the social changes which had taken part during the nineteenth century, when women were fighting for their rights and equal conditions in society.[130]

Waterhouse represents *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* in its most human and natural way. He did not use any explicit depiction of the ghosts seen in Cowper's or Rheam's works. Even though he does not cover the entire complexity of the text, his visual representation gives a true picture of the atmosphere of the poem.

2.2.4 Walter Crane

Six years after his birth in 1845 in Liverpool Crane and his family moved to London. When his father died, Walter Crane started apprenticeship as an engraver. He was studying at William Linton's engraving studio. Crane produced successful quality work and Linton helped him to begin his career. Gradually he developed his socialist political views which influenced his future work. Crane was also well-known for his book illustrations and some of his paintings were accepted by the Royal Academy. Walter Crane died in 1914 only three months after the incidental death of his beloved wife.[131]

***La Belle Dame Sans Merci* by Walter Crane (1865)**

"I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long,
For side long would she bend, and sing
A faery's song."[132]

Walter Crane in his visual interpretation of *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* had selected the scene from the sixth stanza, where the knight seats the lady on his

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[130] The Norton Anthology of English Literature, "The Woman Question: Overview," *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. http://www.wwnorton.com/college/english/nael/victorian/topic_2/welcome.htm (accessed July 29, 2013)
[131] John Simkin, "Walter Crane," *Spartacus Educational*. September 2007. http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/Jcrane.htm (accessed July 30, 2013)
[132] Keats, "La Belle Dame Sans Merci," Lines 21-24.

stallion and where she attracted his attention by singing. Crane's canvas demonstrates other details from the entire poem as well. The weather is captured in fallen leaves which had turned into autumn shades. The atmosphere is easily recognizable: it is an early evening signalized by the shining moon and the couple looks as if they did not care about time at all. Crane set the scene in the middle of a forest, where on a small path a well-built white stallion carries the lady. She partially corresponds to the description in the poem as she certainly has long hair and ethereal aspect. The way she is dressed, however, recalls more earthly way of clothing of royal members not the one of fairy creatures. The robe is tightly copying the shape of the lady's body and thus puts emphasis on the sexual meaning of the encounter. Sexual lust is the main motif which leads the knight towards his damnation. The visualized scene impresses less sinister and mysterious in comparison with the original text.

Even though Crane followed the details given in the poem, he did not manage to express adequately the atmosphere and impact of the poetic text.

2.2.5 Arthur Hughes

For the following biography information I am indebted to Leonard Roberts who contributed to the website www.artmagick.com.

Arthur Hughes came into the world in January 1832. Shortly after he started the school attendance, his talent emerged and at the age of fifteen he entered the Royal Academy. In 1850 he came across with Pre-Raphaelitism, met his future wife and several important Pre-Raphaelite artists such as Rossetti, Brown or Munro. Among his best painting are *Eve of St. Agnes* and *April Love*, both exhibited in 1856 at the Royal Academy. Similarly to his contemporaries he also became a respected book illustrator. Arthur Hughes who produced during his lifetime about seven hundred paintings and drawings and approximately seven

hundred and fifty book illustrations, died in London in 1915 at the age of eighty-three.[133]

La Belle Dame Sans Merci by Arthur Hughes

Hughes portrays the same scene depicted in the sixth stanza as Crane did. Nevertheless, Hughes approaches the visual representation in a different way by adding details from the eighth, ninth and tenth stanza. The composition is quite similar to Crane's, though the scale is different. The main figures are much closer to the viewer, i.e. they are larger and their face expressions are more easily readable. Hughes' lady has long hair and absent look in her eye. She is seated on the horse; her body is almost completely hidden behind her voluminous floating dress of a light partially transparent material. The night is standing on the ground beside the horse that is carrying the lady. His face is again less illuminated than the lady's and his head is turned towards the lady as if they should meet in a kiss. Hughes unlike Crane made the horse in brown colour which contributes to a slightly darker ambience of the whole painting. The surrounding nature does not correspond faithfully with the description in the poem as it is difficult to recognize the season. The dream-like vision of the knight is supported by the dusk and the setting sun. The ghosts look as if they were coming out of the lady's figure because they are situated directly behind her back. Their "death-pale"[134] faces are clearly recognizable as well as their royal clothing.

Hughes mixes in his version several scenes described in various stanzas and compared to Crane, he captures the ambience of the work more faithfully. He did not manage, however, to seize the complex message of the text as Rheam or Waterhouse did. Nevertheless, the relation of the text and the image remains interconnected.

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[133] Leonard Roberts, "Arthur Hughes," *Artmagick.com*. http://www.artmagick.com/pictures/artist.aspx?artist=arthur-hughes (accessed August 02, 2013)
[134] Keats, "La Belle Dame Sans Merci," Line 38.

3. *Ekphrasis*: the Pre-Raphaelite or other poets inspired by the Pre-Raphaelite or other painters

The third part of this thesis provides additional examples of *ekphrasis* found in Pre-Raphaelite art.

3.1 Dante Gabriel Rossetti

Rossetti and his self-ekphrastic work were discussed in the first part. He did not only produce additional commentaries and poetry based on his own work but he focused on other Pre-Raphaelite artists as well as best-known renaissance masters such as Michelangelo or Da Vinci.

3.1.1 Pre-Raphaelite painting in Rossetti's poetry

Rossetti as a poet found inspiration in other Pre-Raphaelite painters. It was for example Edward Burne-Jones (1833-1898), who was Rossetti's student. Burne-Jones' art was influenced by renaissance painters Sandro Boticelli and Andrea Mantegna. Even though Burne-Jones was not originally a member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, his works reflect many of their principles such as rich colour and precision of details. Burne-Jones was a versatile artist, who did not produce only paintings but tile and jewellery design, Gobelin tapestry or book illustrations.[135]

"For *The Wine of Circe* by Edward Burne-Jones"

The Wine of Circe a watercolour by Edward Burne-Jones was completed during years 1863-1869.[136] Burne-Jones depicts a mythological character named Circe (Kirke in Greek), who was a sorceress living on the isle of Aiaia and she was known for her magical powers of metamorphosis, illusion and most often

[135] Martina Glenn, "Sir Edward Burne-Jones," *Artmuseum.cz*. November 22, 2007. http://www.artmuseum.cz/umelec.php?art_id=193 (accessed August 02, 2013)
[136] Rossetti Archive, "The Wine of Circe," *Rossetti Archive*. http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/op62.rap.html (accessed August 03, 2013)

transformation of people into animals. She is mentioned in Homer's Odyssey.[137] As Elizabeth Lee claims in her article "Circe and other sorceresses" published on www.victorianweb.org: "particularly Edward Burne-Jones, used the subject of the woman with supernatural powers -- powers beyond nature and the natural -- to embody late Victorian attitudes towards one specific aspect of the natural: female sexuality and its power over man."[138] Dante Gabriel Rossetti was fascinated by this topic frequently found in Keats' work (see part II). Thus when he beheld the picture by Burne-Jones in 1869 he considered it one of the best pieces of current artistic production. He produced the *ekphrastic* sonnet "For *The Wine of Circe* by Edward Burne-Jones" in 1870 and the same year it was published in his *Poems*.[139] The poem poetically describes in detail the painting themes. The viewer is presented with a bending figure of Circe, who is bending to drop poison into wine. She is surrounded by sunflowers and two black panthers referred to as "Those cowering beasts."[140] In the background there is a large window with a view on sea and the ships coming to the shore.

Rossetti, who fulfilled the theory of *ut pictura poesis* already with his own *self-ekphrastic* work, mastered to produce *ekphrastic* text in this particular case very successfully. Obviously he respects the painting to a large degree and he underlines this with logical reading direction that is given by the image composition; the viewer starts on the right going leftwards follows the bending figure, poison, sunflowers, black panthers to spot the background with sea and ships.

3.1.2 Other than Pre-Raphaelite painting in Rossetti's poetry

Rossetti did not limit his ekphrastic production on Pre-Raphaelites. He was a great admirer of renaissance artists such as Leonardo Da Vinci (1452-1519), Sandro

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[137] Theoi, "Kirke," *Theoi.com*. http://www.theoi.com/Titan/Kirke.html (accessed August 04, 2013)
[138] Elizabeth Lee, "Circe and other Sorceresses," *The Victorian Web*. http://www.victorianweb.org/gender/circe.html (accessed August 04, 2013)
[139] Rossetti Archive, "For *The Wine of Circe* by Edward Burne-Jones," *Rossetti Archive*. http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/24-1869.raw.html (accessed August 04, 2013)
[140] Dante Gabriel Rossetti, "For The Wine of Circe by Edward Burne-Jones," *PoemHunter.com*. April 12, 2010. http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/for-the-wine-of-circle-by-edward-burne-jones/ Line 10.

Botticelli (1445-1510) or Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475-1564), whose visual works inspired Rossetti to write sonnets, which will be shortly discussed in the following lines.

"For *Our Lady of the Rocks* by Leonardo Da Vinci"

Leonardo's *Our Lady of the Rocks* was produced during 1503-1506 and it depicts the Virgin Mary seated in a rocky area. With her right hand she is holding the baby Jesus who is blessing the other children on the right. Her face is painted in the minutest detail reflecting Leonardo's precision and Rossetti describes that it bends "its silent prayer upon the Son." [141] As the author of the scholarly commentary on www.rossettiarchive.org writes: "Behind this sonnet stands the famous Pauline text (1 Corinthians 13:12): 'For now we see through a glass, darkly, but then face to face.' DGR uses this text to construct a statement about art as a 'glass' through which one may attempt to represent, and view, the 'occult' order of things that are the ground of a religious experience. In DGR's reading, the picture is an occult construction, all of its representational forms 'dark' and 'difficult'."[142] In his sonnet "For *Our Lady of the Rocks*, by Leonardo Da Vinci" from 1848, which was published in his 1870 *Poems*, Rossetti captures rather the spiritual atmosphere than the physical aspects of the figures.[143] He conveys the visual message that implies darkness, occultism and religion by means of words that conform to the theory of *ut pictura poesis*.

"For *Spring* by Sandro Botticelli"

Spring or originally entitled in Italian *Primavera* is Botticelli's best-known work which allegorically represents the spring season of the year. It was completed in 1482 and it portrays nine figures from classic mythology. Rossetti's sonnet "For *Spring* by Sandro Botticelli" from 1880 was published in his 1881

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[141] Dante Gabriel Rossetti, "For *Our Lady of the Rocks* by Leonardo Da Vinci," *PoemHunter.com*. April 12, 2010. http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/for-our-lady-of-the-rocks-by-leonardo-da-vinci/ (accessed August 04, 2013) Lines 5-6.
[142] Rossetti Archive, " For *Our Lady of the Rocks* by Leonardo Da Vinci," *Rossetti Archive*. http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/5-1848.raw.html#op66 (accessed August 04, 2013)
[143] Rossetti Archive

Ballads and Sonnets and it presents the characters in the orange groove by following closely the composition of the painting. It begins with the figure of Flora in the central right part and continues rightwards with Aurora and Zephyrus. He returns back to the centre and follows leftwards where three Graces stand and next to them Hermes. The author proceeds to the focal point which is the central figure of Venus. In the top of the picture a small figure of Cupid is recognizable and Rossetti's refers to it as "love wings his shafts"[144] "As the first and last lines indicate, the poem is DGR's version of the theme so splendidly rendered in Swinburne's 'A Vision of Spring in Winter'. Viewing this picture from his wintry present, DGR redoubles the ambiguities in the painting's masque, as the word 'here' (line 13) indicates. The central 'Lady' (line 10), Venus, epitomizes these ambiguities, as all of DGR's works indicate."[145] Rossetti, who was fascinated by Botticelli's art work, produced this sonnet as if he repainted the image with words lending it more ambiguous aspect.

"For *The Holy Family* by Michelangelo"

The story behind the unfinished painting originally attributed to Michelangelo entitled *The Holy Family* and completed approximately in 1497 is highly interesting as it was proven to be executed by another author, whose name remains undiscovered and he is referred as Master of Manchester.[146] The painting demonstrates the Virgin and the Child surrounded by angels. She is withdrawing a book of the Child's hands trying to prevent him from learning about his cruel fate described in the prophecy. Rossetti's sonnet "For *The Holy Family* by Michelangelo" from 1880 helps to understand better the painting subject. The book depicted in the canvas is probably the book of Isaiah from the Old Testament that describes the end of Jesus' life. The first eight lines are told from the Virgin's point of view and they sketch the future life of Jesus. This point of view changes in the last sestet which is written from the human perspective and it

[144] Dante Gabriel Rossetti, "For *Spring* by Sandro Botticcelli," *PoemHunter.com*. April 12, 2010. http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/for-spring-by-sandro-botticelli/ (accessed August 06, 2013) Line 11.
[145] Rossetti Archive, " For 'Spring' by Sandro Botticelli (in the Accademia of Florence)," *Rossetti Archive*. http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/9-1880.raw.html (accessed August 05, 2013)
[146] Rossetti Archive, " For *The Holy Family* by Michelangelo (in the National Gallery)," *Rossetti Archive*. http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/10-1880.raw.html (accessed August 06, 2013)

recalls the Eden scene and the temptation of Eve. The author of www.rossettiarchive.org writes about this work: "This is one of DGR's most difficult sonnets, partly because of the strange scene depicted in the octave, partly because of the nuanced syntax of the sestet. It is a poem, clearly, about the withholding of a knowledge which we know – knowing the history of Jesus' life – appear to have. Essential to the poem's argument is that readers will (and should) be left in doubt and uncertainty about what we thought we knew about these well-known things, as well as about this poem and this painting where the matters are taken up again."[147]

Rossetti again proved that he had been a master in interconnecting the art and poetry. Producing such a difficult piece which enlarges the perspective of the original visual form represents a ultimate example of ut pictura poesis in Pre-Raphaelite art.

3.2 Emily Pfeiffer

For the following biographical information about Emily Pfeiffer (1841-1890) I am indebted to the text by Alfred H. Miles published on www.bartleby.com. Emily Pfeiffer experienced since her early childhood a very difficult family situation leading to her sensitiveness and depressive states. She found her way to escape the reality by reading books. A friend of hers took her on a journey around Europe, which meant a turn point in her life. After her marriage with a rich German gentleman, Mr. Pfeiffer, she devoted herself to writing, though she struggled at the beginning of her career with the lack of systematic education. She managed to overcome this handicap and her literary reputation was reinforced in 1873. Among her best collections there is for example a publication entitled Songs and Sonnets. Pfeiffer produced paintings as well, which helped her to balance the artistic outcome of energy she needed for writing. Pfeiffer who was

[147] Rossetti Archive

known for her "remarkable originality and sweetness"[148] died at the age of forty-nine in 1890.

"To E. Burne-Jones, On His Picture of the Annunciation"

Emily Pfeiffer wrote an *ekphrastic* sonnet entitled "To E. Burne-Jones, On His Picture of the Annunciation." The original painting *The Annunciation* from 1876-1879 presents young Virgin Mary standing dressed in a long white robe in the *pudicitia* pose in the right bottom corner of the tall painting. The composition is highly vertical. Diagonally opposed to the Virgin, there is the archangel Gabriel who descended from the heavens to announce the birth of the Saviour. In the octave Pfeiffer describes the selection of the "Mother", she emphasizes her untouched pure character by repetition of the words "virgin," "maiden" or "maid."[149] Through the deep face expression of the Virgin in the painting, she explores her internal world and thoughts. Her resigned look and the gesture of touching her heart signify the reconciliation with her destiny and love she is going to endow the Child with. Pfeiffer also entitles the Virgin as a "weary woman watching for a sign"[150] which corresponds with the composition of the painting, where she is standing in front of a house as if she was expecting somebody to arrive. The second part of the sonnet focuses on the act of annunciation and its consequences for the human kind. Pfeiffer writes that "The burthen of the world is on her heart"[151] underlining the gesture of her hand placed on her heart. She encloses the sonnet with Virgin's realization and perception of the growing life inside her body. Pfeiffer represents the only female poet included in this thesis and her *ekphrastic* sonnet is an example of tender female point of view and observation.

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[148] *Women Poets of the Nineteenth Century,* ed. by Alfred H. Miles. London: George Routledge & Sons; New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1907; *Bartleby.com*, 2011. http://www.bartleby.com/293/253.html (accessed August 07, 2013)
[149] Emily Pfeiffer, "To E. Burne-Jones, On His Picture of The Annuciation," *PoemHunter.com*. October 12, 2010. http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/to-e-burne-jones-on-his-picture-of-the-annunciation/ (accessed August 08, 2013) Lines 4,5,7.
[150] Pfeiffer, "To E. Burne-Jones, On His Picture of The Annuciation," Line 8.
[151] Pfeiffer, "To E. Burne-Jones, On His Picture of The Annuciation," Line 9.

Conclusion

The aim of this work was to present the phenomenon of *ut pictura poesis*, a statement which originated in the classical period and stands for "as is painting, so is poetry." It defines a relation between poetry (textual art) and painting / drawing (visual art). I decided to demonstrate this relation on three examples of practical realization of the *ut pictura poesis*. They are *self-ekprasis*, *reversed ekphrasis* and *ekphrasis proper*. The term *ekphrasis* means the case when an accompanying text is added to a visual piece of art. It can be a poem, prose or a commentary. To apply this thesis on particular cases I have chosen the art work from Pre-Raphaelite period which provides a rich source of examples of the above mentioned terms.

Pre-Raphaelites were influenced by an art critic and aesthetician John Ruskin, who is presented in the introductory part. Ruskin investigated the theory of *ut pictura poesis* and included its principles in his writings. The most productive artist following Ruskinian aesthetics and concepts was one of the co-founders of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Rossetti stands out both as a painter and at the same time as a poet.

The first part of my work dealt with the case of *self-ekphrasis* represented by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, who produced paintings of a high Pre-Raphaelite quality and accompanied them frequently by a poem. This procedure was common but for two cases when he proceeded in the other way: from poem to the painting. These exceptions are *The Blessed Damozel* (discussed in Part I) and *The House of Life* (not included in my work). To demonstrate the self-ekphrasis in Rossetti's work, I have selected eight examples: *A Sea Spell*, *Astarte Syriaca*, *La Bella Mano*, *Pandora*, *Proserpina*, *The Blessed Damozel*, *The Day-Dream* and *Venus Verticordia*. Seven of them are sonnets written in Petrarchian form, which were written after the completion of the paintings. They treat classical themes from Greek mythology, some of them are analogical with biographical facts from Rossetti's personal life and some of them even raise the social question, as in the case of *The Day-Dream*. *The Blessed Damozel* is unique in its manner of

production and as well in its thematic content that embodies the ideals of the Pre-Raphaelite art. In general, Rossetti was extremely successful in fulfilling the principles of *ut pictura poesis* and his poems correspond closely with the original paintings.

The second part focused on the principle of *reversed ekphrasis*. In this case the basis is a literary text and its visual representations are produced afterwards. Pre-Raphaelites were inspired to a large extent by nineteenth century English poets who drew their subjects from classical and medieval mythology. For my thesis I have chose "The Lady of Shalott" by Alfred Tennyson. The rhymed ballad treats the Arthurian theme and presents the mythic castle of Camelot and the knight Lancelot. Among artists who represented "The Lady of Shalott" visually are William Holman Hunt, who adapted the details for his idiosyncratic interpretation and did not respect to the fullest the concept of *ut pictura poesis*; John William Waterhouse who treated this subject three times and for each version he selected a different part of the text. Waterhouse was proceeding from the end towards the beginning and his representations are closely symbolically interwoven. With his paintings he raises the text to a higher level, making thus an excellent example of *ut pictura poesis.* Next of the enlisted artists was Sidney Harold Meteyard who played with colour and atmosphere. The following painter on the list is Sir John Everett Millais, a Pre-Raphaelite well-known for his painting of Shakespeare's *Ophelia*. Millais made an ink drawing depicting the boat scene when the Lady of Shalott dies. His drawing is simple and he just added the swans which emphasized the character of the Lady and as Waterhouse did, he captured the idea of *ut pictura poesis* in its complexity. Last of the representations of "The Lady of Shalott" was the one by Elizabeth Siddal, the only female visual artist included in my work, who with her characteristic simplicity portrays the scene of the Lady at her loom. Siddal, however, added several details which do not correspond with the original text.

The second half of the second part of the thesis presents the Pre-Raphaelite artists, who produced a visual representation of "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" by John Keats. Keats was another highly popular author in Victorian era. In his "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" he treated the theme of *femme fatale*, a powerful woman

that is dominant over the men. I introduced five Pre-Raphaelite authors who represented this theme visually. I opened with Henry Meynell Rheam, who seized the work in its complexity. Unlike Rheam the following Frank Cadogan Cowper did not manage to capture the integrity of the ballad and produced more idiosyncratic version, which did not conforms much to *ut pictura poesis*. The third representative is above mentioned John William Waterhouse provides a true picture of the poem. Walter Crane, who portrayed the scene described in the sixth stanza where the knight seats the lady on his horse, was not very successful in expressing the ambience of the poem, though he respected many details. Finally, the second part was closed with Arthur Hughes, an associate of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and a prospering artist. His composition was similar to Crane's, however, compared to Rheam or Waterhouse he failed to interconnect the text and image in a complex way.

Final third part shortly presents the case of *ekphrasis proper* applied in works of Pre-Raphaelite poets inspired by Pre-Raphaelite painters or other painters. The last part is opened with a sonnet by Dante Gabriel Rossetti entitled "For *The Wine of Circe* by Edward Burne-Jones", where Burne-Jones treats the theme of femme fatale originating in Greek mythology. Another section is devoted to Rossetti's poetry written as *ekphrasis* on the paintings by other artists. These were renaissance masters Leonardo Da Vinci, Sandro Boticelli and Michelangelo Buonarroti. Especially in the Michelangelo's case, Rossetti demonstrates the difficulty and intricacy of the interconnection of image and text. And finally the thesis closes with a nineteenth century female poet Emily Pfeiffer who wrote an *ekphrastic* sonnet entitled "To E. Burne-Jones, On His Picture Of The Annunciation", which brings a feminine point of view.

I personally consider Dante Gabriel Rossetti to be the master of *ut pictura poesis* phenomenon. I highly admire his versatility both as a poet and as a painter. I dare say he represents the embodiment of *ut pictura poesis* in Pre-Raphaelite art. I also truly appreciate the qualities of John William Waterhouse, whose paintings faithfully illustrate the poetic texts and contribute to the integrity of the theory of *ut pictura poesis*.

Resumé

Od pradávna se umění výtvarné prolíná s uměním literárním. Ať už výtvarná díla ovlivňují poezii či prózu anebo texty slouží jako předloha pro výtvarné zpracování. Básník a malíř tvoří podobně, jen každý z nich používá jiných prostředků, jak svou inspiraci vyjádřit či zachytit. Malíř, který si zformuloval myšlenku, se ji snaží zobrazit pomocí barev na plátno ve vizuální podobě, kdežto básník, jenž má ve své mysli jakýsi obraz nebo představu, se ji snaží vyjádřit za pomoci slov, ať už v ústní či písemné podobě. Diplomová práce se zabývá představením fenoménu *ut pictura poesis*, který vztah poezie a malby odráží, neboť jej lze volně přeložit z latiny jako "jaká je malba, taková je i poezie" a definuje tak sesterský vztah těchto dvou uměleckých žánrů. Termín *ut pictura poesis* pochází z období antiky, kdy ho ve svých dílech zmiňují autoři jako Horatius, Simonides nebo Aristoteles.

V devatenáctém století působil v Anglii estét a kritik umění John Ruskin, který si teorii *ut pictura poesis* osvojil a pojednává o ní ve svém díle *Modern Painters*. Právě Ruskin je považován za nejvýznamnějšího kritika umění své doby a jeho dílo mělo značný vliv na umění generace Prerafaelitů. Členové Prerafaelitského bratrstva se často věnovali jak výtvarnému umění, tak i poezii, a v některých případech dokonce bravurně zastávali obě role. Prerafaelité a jejich dílo představují tudíž názorný příklad propojení poezie a malby a naplňují tak podstatu argumentu *ut pictura poesis*.

Diplomová práce zkoumá tuto teorii ze tří hledisek konkrétní aplikace *ut pictura poesis* a má za cíl předložit přehled konkrétních případů, kdy byla tato aplikace realizována v prerafaelitském umění. Jedná se o tři druhy *ekphrasis*, což je latinský termín značící techniku postupu tvorby uměleckého díla, kdy se k vzniklému výtvarnému dílu připojí doprovodný text. Je to v prvním případě takzvaná *self-ekphrasis*, neboli případ, kdy si umělec sám doplňuje výtvarné dílo o text v podobě básně, krátké prózy či komentáře. Dále je to *reversed ekphrasis*, kdy byl prvotně vytvořen text, jenž je posléze vizuálně ztvárněn. A konečně třetí případ *ekphrasis proper* nebo jen *ekphrasis*, kdy je přidán k výtvarnému dílu text jiným autorem.

V první části představuji dílo jednoho z nejvýznamnějších a nejvšestrannějších prerafaelitských umělců, Dante Gabriela Rossettiho. Rossetti byl jak úspěšným malířem, tak i básníkem. Zpravidla své malby často doplňoval o vlastní sonety nebo komentující texty, je tedy představitelem *self-ekphrasis*. K demonstraci této teze slouží seznam osmi konkrétních Rossettiho děl. Jedná se o *A Sea Spell, Astarte Syriaca, La Bella Mano, Pandora, Proserpina, The Blessed Damozel, The Day-Dream* a *Venus Verticordia*. Všechna díla s výjimkou *The Blessed Damozel* byla nejdříve ztvárněna výtvarně jako malba a na jejich základě doplnil Rossetti vlastní sonety nesoucí stejný název. V *The Blessed Damozel* došlo k opačnému postupu, jelikož nejdříve vznikla balada, na jejímž základě namaloval autor obraz.

Druhou částí, která se zabývá *reversed ekphrasis* neboli vizuálním ztvárněním původního textu, otevírá skupina pěti prerafaelitských malířů, kteří zpracovali baladu od anglického viktoriánského básníka Alfreda Tennysona s názvem "The Lady of Shalott" ("Paní ze Shalott"). Jako první je uveden William Holman Hunt, jenž pojal zpracování textu do vizuální podoby velmi osobitě a nedodržel tak zcela koncepci *ut pictura poesis*. Zato John William Waterhouse, který ztvárnil "Paní ze Shalott" hned třikrát, svými verzemi přispěl k upevnění tradice *ut pictura poesis*. Všechny tři jeho verze se důmyslně prolínají, v každé z nich Waterhouse volí jinou scénu. Zajímavé je, že začíná od konce a postupuje směrem k začátku příběhu. Doplněním o vizuální detaily a symboly dává textu další rozměr. Jako třetí v pořadí je uveden Sidney Harold Meteyard, jenž vkládá do svého obrazu nádech nokturna a pohrává si s barevností dokreslující atmosféru dané scény. Následuje John Everett Millais a jeho inkoustová kresba zachycující paní ze Shalott v loďce, v níž za zpěvu umírá. Millais také přidal několik detailů, je to především labuť symbolizující čistotu a neposkvrněnost hrdinky. Seznam uzavírá jediná ženská zástupkyně malířek v této práci. Elizabeth Siddalová, modelka, múza, ale také umělkyně, jejíž jednoduchost provedení a určitá naivita propůjčují jejímu dílu osobitý ženský charakter. Při ztvárnění "Paní ze Shalott" se ovšem Siddalová nedržela striktně textové předlohy a doplnila svou kresbu o náboženské symboly, které autor v básni nezmiňuje.

Druhá polovina druhé části práce je věnována výtvarnému ztvárnění balady "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" (název, který pochází z francouzštiny, se do českého jazyka nepřekládá a znamená "kráska bez slitování"), jejímž autorem je neméně slavný anglický básník John Keats. Autoři, kteří vizuálně zpracovali toto téma a které uvádím ve své práci, jsou Henry Meynell Rheam, Frank Cadigan Cowper, John William Waterhouse, Walter Crane a Arthur Hughes. Rheamovi se podařilo ve svém výtvarném ztvárnění dokonale zachytit komplexnost a atmosféru básně a naplňuje tím teorii *ut pictura poesis*. Cowper už, na rozdíl od Rheama, klade důraz na vyjádření sexuality a smyslnosti a potlačuje tak temnou myšlenku díla. Waterhouse zachycuje scénu, kdy kráska připomínající vílu svádí rytíře, ve velmi přirozené lidské podobě. I když nezakomponoval do svého obrazu některé z detailů uvedených v textu, přesto se mu podařilo vyjádřit celkový dojem z básně, a to především znázorněním hlavní ženské postavy jako osudové *femme fatale* a potlačením identity muže – rytíře, kdy jeho tvář je zahalena stínem a zůstává tak v bezvýznamné anonymitě. Následuje Walter Crane se svou verzí scény, kdy rytíř vysadí dámu na svého koně. Druhou část uzavírá Arthur Hughes, slavný malíř spojovaný s prerafaelitským hnutím, který se svou kompozicí díla podobá Cranově verzi, ale na rozdíl od Rheama či Waterhouse se mu nepodařilo přesvědčivě zachytit atmosféru balady.

V třetí části jsou uvedeny případy tradice *ekphrasis* a konkrétní příklady, kdy prerafaelitský malíř inspiroval jiného prerafaelitského básníka, jako v případě Dante Gabriela Rossettiho, jenž napsal sonet inspirovaný obrazem *The Wine of Circe* od Edwarda Burne-Jonese. Dále jsou představeny příklady, kdy byl prerafaelitský básník inspirován k napsání básní jinými autory než z řad Prerafaelitů. Jedná se o Rossettiho sonety k obrazům *Our Lady of the Rocks* od Leonarda Da Vinciho, *Spring* (Primavera) od Sandra Boticelliho a *The Holy Family* od Michelangela Buonarrotiho. Celou práci uzavírá sonet básnířky mimo řady Prerafaelitů Emily Pfeifferové, kterou inspiroval Burne-Jonesův obraz s názvem *The Annuciation* (*Zvěstování*).

Osobně mě velmi oslovilo a upoutalo dílo Dante Gabriela Rossettiho, kterého si nesmírně cením pro jeho všestrannost a bravurní schopnosti jak malířské, tak básnické. Dále také značně obdivuji zpracování Paní ze Shalott od

Johna Williama Waterhouse, který patří mezi mé nejoblíbenější prerafaelitské umělce.

Závěrem bych chtěla podotknout, že by práce měla sloužit jako přehled poskytující konkrétní případy prolínání dvou uměleckých žánrů, poezie a výtvarného umění.

Annotation

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Supervisor: Mgr. David Livingstone, Ph.D.
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Key words: poem, painting, *ut pictura poesis*, *ekphrasis*, Pre-Raphaelite, text, image

This thesis deals with the mutual interaction of poetry and visual arts in Great Britain during the 19th century and more precisely focuses on the reflection of poetry in the Pre-Raphaelite painting and vice versa. The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood is very specific also for the fact that some of their members were poets and painters at the same time. The introduction provides brief historical background and on one hand the theory of visual poetics, i.e. creating images by means of using words; and on the other hand how words can inspire a painter to create a picture corresponding to the tradition of *ut pictura poesis*. The thesis is divided into three main parts where this relation is demonstrated on particular cases of various painters, e.g. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, William Holman Hunt, John William Waterhouse, etc. The first part deals with the case when a Pre-Raphaelite poet is at the same time a painter and the image reflects his own poem or vice versa. The second part comprises the Pre-Raphaelite painters who were inspired by 19th century British poets as Keats or Tennyson. And finally the third part shows how Pre-Raphaelite and other painting influence Pre-Raphaelite or other poets in the 19th century.

[152] Spaces included.

Anotace

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Klíčová slova: báseň, malba, ut pictura poesis, ekphrasis, Prerafaelité, text, obraz

Tato magisterská diplomová práce se zabývá vzájemným prolínáním poezie a výtvarného umění ve Velké Británii v období 19. století. Zaměřuje se na odrážení poezie v prerafaelitském umění a naopak. Prerafaelitské bratrstvo je specifické tím, že někteří z jeho členů působili zároveň jako malíři, ale i básníci. V úvodu práce je nastíněno historické pozadí dané doby a také je vysvětlen latinský termín *ut pictura poesis*, jenž klade poezii a malbu do příbuzenského sesterského vztahu. Diplomová práce je rozdělena do tří hlavních částí, které uvádějí možné praktické aplikace konceptu *ut pictura poesis* v prerafaelitském umění. První část je věnována Dante Gabrielu Rossettimu, jenž byl zároveň básníkem i malířem. V druhé části je uveden přehled prerafaelitských výtvarníků, kteří vizuálně zpracovali témata od anglických básníků A. Tennysona a J. Keatse. Poslední třetí část poskytuje konkrétní případy, kdy byl prerafaelitský básník inspirován prerafaelitským nebo jiným malířem a také příklad, kdy prerafaelitské výtvarné dílo ovlivnilo jiného anglického básníka v období 19. století.

[153] Včetně mezer.

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Appendices

Images and texts

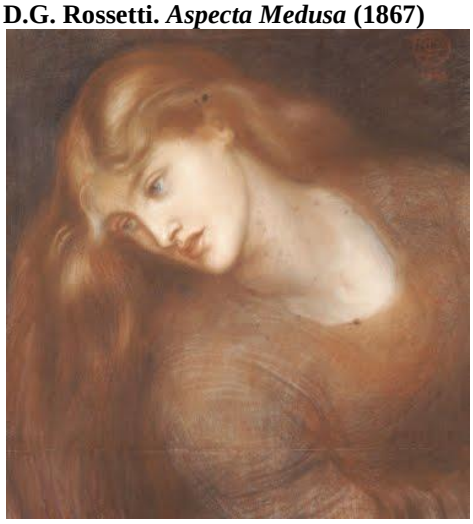
D.G. Rossetti. *A Sea Spell* (1877)

A SEA SPELL

Her lute hangs shadowed in the apple-tree,
Whole flashing fingers weave the sweet-strung spell
Between its chords; and as the wild notes swell
The sea-bird for those branches leaves the sea.
But to what sound her listening ear stoops she?
What netherworld gulf-whispers doth she hear?
In answering echoes from what planisphere,
Along the wind, along the estuary?

She sinks into the spell: and when full soon
Her lips move and she soars into her song,
What creatures of the midmost main shall throng
In furrowed surf-clouds to the summoning rune:
Till he, the fated mariner, hears her cry,
And up her rock, bare-breasted, comes to die?

D.G. Rossetti. *Aspecta Medusa* (1867)



ASPECTA MEDUSA

Andromeda, by Perseus sav'd and wed,
Hanker'd each day to see the Gorgon's head:
Till o'er a fount he held it, bade her lean,
And mirror'd in the wave was safely seen
That death she liv'd by.

Let not thine eyes know
Any forbidden thing itself, although
It once should save as well as kill: but be
Its shadow upon life enough for thee.

D.G.Rossetti. *Astarte Syriaca* (1877)

ASTARTE SYRIACA

MYSTERY: lo! betwixt the sun and moon
Astarte of the Syrians: Venus Queen
Ere Aphrodite was. In silver sheen
Her twofold girdle clasps the infinite boon
Of bliss whereof the heaven and earth commune:
And from her neck's inclining flower-stem lean
Love-freighted lips and absolute eyes that wean
The pulse of hearts to the spheres' dominant tune.

Torch-bearing, her sweet ministers compel
All thrones of light beyond the sky and sea
The witnesses of Beauty's face to be:
That face, of Love's all-penetrative spell
Amulet, talisman, and oracle,—
Betwixt the sun and moon a mystery.

D.G.Rossetti. *La Bella Mano* (1875)

LA BELLA MANO

O BELLA Mano, che ti lavi e piaci
In quel medesmo tuo puro elemento
Donde la Dea dell' amoroso avvento
Nacque, (e dall' onda s'infuocar le faci
Di mille inispegnibili fornaci):—
Come a Venere a te l'oro e l'argento
Offron gli Amori; e ognun riguarda attento

La bocca che sorride e te che taci.
In dolce modo dove onor t' invii
Vattene adorna, e porta insiem fra tante
Di Venere e di vergine sembiante;
Umilemente in luoghi onesti e pii
Bianca e soave ognora; infin che sii,
O Mano, mansueta in man d'amante.

O LOVELY hand, that thy sweet self dost lave
In that thy pure and proper element,
Whence erst the Lady of Love's high advènt
Was born, and endless fires sprang from the wave:—
Even as her Loves to her their offerings gave,
For thee the jewelled gifts they bear; while each
Looks to those lips, of music-measured speech
The fount, and of more bliss than man may crave.

In royal wise ring-girt and bracelet-spann'd,
A flower of Venus' own virginity,
Go shine among thy sisterly sweet band;
In maiden-minded converse delicately
Evermore white and soft; until thou be,
O hand! heart-handsel'd in a lover's hand.

D.G. Rossetti. *Pandora* (1878)

D.G. Rossetti. *Pandora* (1871)

PANDORA

WHAT of the end, Pandora? Was it thine,
The deed that set these fiery pinions free?
Ah! wherefore did the Olympian consistory
In its own likeness make thee half divine?
Was it that Juno's brow might stand a sign
For ever? and the mien of Pallas be
A deadly thing? and that all men might see
In Venus' eyes the gaze of Proserpine?

What of the end? These beat their wings at will,
The ill-born things, the good things turned to ill,—
Powers of the impassioned hours prohibited.
Aye, clench the casket now! Whither they go
Thou mayst not dare to think: nor canst thou know
If Hope still pent there be alive or dead.

D.G.Rossetti. *Proserpine* (1882)

PROSERPINE

LUNGI è la luce che in sù questo muro
Rifrange appena, un breve istante scorta
Del rio palazzo alla soprana porta.
Lungi quei fiori d'Enna, O lido oscuro,
Dal frutto tuo fatal che omai m'è duro.
Lungi quel cielo dal tartareo manto
Che quì mi cuopre: e lungì ahi lungi ahi quanto

Le notti che saran dai dì che furo.
Lungi da me mi sento; e ognor sognando
Cerco e ricerco, e resto ascoltatrice;
E qualche cuore a qualche anima dice,
(Di cui mi giunge il suon da quando in quando.
Continuamente insieme sospirando,)—
"Oimè per te, Proserpina infelice!"

AFAR away the light that brings cold cheer
Unto this wall,—one instant and no more
Admitted at my distant palace-door.
Afar the flowers of Enna from this drear
Dire fruit, which, tasted once, must thrall me here.
Afar those skies from this Tartarean grey
That chills me: and afar, how far away,
The nights that shall be from the days that were.

Afar from mine own self I seem, and wing
Strange ways in thought, and listen for a sign:
And still some heart unto some soul doth pine,
(Whose sounds mine inner sense is fain to bring,
Continually together murmuring,)—
"Woe's me for thee, unhappy Proserpine!"

THE BLESSED DAMOZEL

The blessed damozel lean'd out
From the gold bar of Heaven;
Her eyes were deeper than the depth
Of waters still'd at even;
She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No wrought flowers did adorn,
But a white rose of Mary's gift,
For service meetly worn;
Her hair that lay along her back
Was yellow like ripe corn.

Her seem'd she scarce had been a day
One of God's choristers;
The wonder was not yet quite gone
From that still look of hers;
Albeit, to them she left, her day
Had counted as ten years.

(To one, it is ten years of years.
. . . Yet now, and in this place,
Surely she lean'd o'er me--her hair
Fell all about my face ....
Nothing: the autumn-fall of leaves.
The whole year sets apace.)

It was the rampart of God's house
That she was standing on;
By God built over the sheer depth
The which is Space begun;
So high, that looking downward thence
She scarce could see the sun.

It lies in Heaven, across the flood
Of ether, as a bridge.
Beneath, the tides of day and night
With flame and darkness ridge
The void, as low as where this earth
Spins like a fretful midge.

Around her, lovers, newly met
'Mid deathless love's acclaims,
Spoke evermore among themselves
Their heart-remember'd names;
And the souls mounting up to God
Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bow'd herself and stoop'd
Out of the circling charm;
Until her bosom must have made
The bar she lean'd on warm,
And the lilies lay as if asleep
Along her bended arm.

From the fix'd place of Heaven she saw
Time like a pulse shake fierce
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still strove
Within the gulf to pierce
Its path; and now she spoke as when
The stars sang in their spheres.

The sun was gone now; the curl'd moon
Was like a little feather
Fluttering far down the gulf; and now
She spoke through the still weather.
Her voice was like the voice the stars
Had when they sang together.

(Ah sweet! Even now, in that bird's song,
Strove not her accents there,
Fain to be hearken'd? When those bells
Possess'd the mid-day air,
Strove not her steps to reach my side
Down all the echoing stair?)

"I wish that he were come to me,
For he will come," she said.
"Have I not pray'd in Heaven?--on earth,
Lord, Lord, has he not pray'd?
Are not two prayers a perfect strength?
And shall I feel afraid?

"When round his head the aureole clings,
And he is cloth'd in white,
I'll take his hand and go with him
To the deep wells of light;
As unto a stream we will step down,
And bathe there in God's sight.

"We two will stand beside that shrine,
Occult, withheld, untrod,
Whose lamps are stirr'd continually
With prayer sent up to God;
And see our old prayers, granted, melt
Each like a little cloud.

"We two will lie i' the shadow of
That living mystic tree
Within whose secret growth the Dove
Is sometimes felt to be,
While every leaf that His plumes touch
Saith His Name audibly.

"And I myself will teach to him,
I myself, lying so,
The songs I sing here; which his voice
Shall pause in, hush'd and slow,
And find some knowledge at each pause,
Or some new thing to know."

(Alas! We two, we two, thou say'st!
Yea, one wast thou with me
That once of old. But shall God lift
To endless unity
The soul whose likeness with thy soul
Was but its love for thee?)

"We two," she said, "will seek the groves
Where the lady Mary is,
With her five handmaidens, whose names
Are five sweet symphonies,
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
Margaret and Rosalys.

"Circlewise sit they, with bound locks
And foreheads garlanded;
Into the fine cloth white like flame
Weaving the golden thread,
To fashion the birth-robes for them
Who are just born, being dead.

"He shall fear, haply, and be dumb:
Then will I lay my cheek
To his, and tell about our love,
Not once abash'd or weak:
And the dear Mother will approve
My pride, and let me speak.

"Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,
To Him round whom all souls
Kneel, the clear-rang'd unnumber'd heads
Bow'd with their aureoles:
And angels meeting us shall sing
To their citherns and citoles.

"There will I ask of Christ the Lord
Thus much for him and me:--
Only to live as once on earth
With Love,--only to be,
As then awhile, for ever now
Together, I and he."

She gaz'd and listen'd and then said,
Less sad of speech than mild,--
"All this is when he comes." She ceas'd.
The light thrill'd towards her, fill'd
With angels in strong level flight.
Her eyes pray'd, and she smil'd.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their path
Was vague in distant spheres:
And then she cast her arms along
The golden barriers,
And laid her face between her hands,
And wept. (I heard her tears.)

D.G.Rossetti. *The Blessed Damozel* (1879)

D.G. Roseetti. *The Blessed Damozel* (1878)

D.G. Rossetti. *The Day-Dream* (1879)

THE DAY-DREAM

THE thronged boughs of the shadowy sycamore
Still bear young leaflets half the summer through;
From when the robin 'gainst the unhidden blue
Perched dark, till now, deep in the leafy core,
The embowered throstle's urgent wood-notes soar
Through summer silence. Still the leaves come new;
Yet never rosy-sheathed as those which drew
Their spiral tongues from spring-buds heretofore.

Within the branching shade of Reverie
Dreams even may spring till autumn; yet none be
Like woman's budding day-dream spirit-fann'd.
Lo! tow'rd deep skies, not deeper than her look,
She dreams; till now on her forgotten book
Drops the forgotten blossom from her hand.

D.G. Rossetti. *Venus Verticordia* (1863-1868)

VENUS VERTICORDIA

She hath the apple in her hand for thee,
Yet almost in her heart would hold it back;
She muses, with her eyes upon the track
Of that which in thy spirit they can see.
Haply, "Behold, he is at peace," saith she;
"Alas! the apple for his lips, - the dart
That follows its brief sweetness to his heart, -
The wandering of his feet perpetually!"

A little space her glance is still and coy,
But if she give the fruit that works her spell,
Those eyes shall flame as for her Phrygian boy.
Then shall her bird's strained throat the woe foretell,
And her far seas moan as a single shell,
And through her dark grove strike the light of Troy.

THE LADY OF SHALOTT
by Alfred Tennyson

Part I

On either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;
And through the field the road runs by
To many-towered Camelot;
And up and down the people go,
Gazing where the lilies blow
Round an island there below,
The island of Shalott.1

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
Little breezes dusk and shiver
Through the wave that runs for ever
By the island in the river
Flowing down to Camelot.
Four gray walls, and four gray towers,
Overlook a space of flowers,
And the silent isle imbowers
The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow veiled
Slide the heavy barges trailed
By slow horses; and unhailed
The shallop flitteth silken-sailed
Skimming down to Camelot:
But who hath seen her wave her hand?
Or at the casement seen her stand?
Or is she known in all the land,
The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early
In among the bearded barley,
Hear a song that echoes cheerly
From the river winding clearly,
Down to towered Camelot:
And by the moon the reaper weary,
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
Listening, whispers "'Tis the fairy
Lady of Shalott."

Part II

There she weaves by night and day
A magic web with colours gay.
She has heard a whisper say,
A curse is on her if she stay
To look down to Camelot.
She knows not what the curse may be,
And so she weaveth steadily,
And little other care hath she,
The Lady of Shalott.

And moving through a mirror clear
That hangs before her all the year,
Shadows of the world appear.
There she sees the highway near
Winding down to Camelot:
There the river eddy whirls,
And there the curly village-churls,
And the red cloaks of market girls,
Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
An abbot on an ambling pad,
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,
Or long-haired page in crimson clad,
Goes by to towered Camelot;
And sometimes through the mirror blue
The knights come riding two and two:
She hath no loyal knight and true,
The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
To weave the mirror's magic sights,
For often through the silent nights
A funeral, with plumes and lights
And music, went to Camelot:
Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed;
"I am half sick of shadows," said
The Lady of Shalott.

Part III

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,
He rode between the barley-sheaves,
The sun came dazzling through the leaves,
And flamed upon the brazen greaves
Of bold Sir Lancelot.
A red-cross knight for ever kneeled
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field,
Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glittered free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden Galaxy.
The bridle bells rang merrily
As he rode down to Camelot:
And from his blazoned baldric slung
A mighty silver bugle hung,
And as he rode his armour rung,
Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather
Thick-jewelled shone the saddle-leather,
The helmet and the helmet-feather
Burned like one burning flame together,
As he rode down to Camelot.
As often through the purple night,
Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd;
On burnished hooves his war-horse trode;
From underneath his helmet flowed
His coal-black curls as on he rode,
As he rode down to Camelot.
From the bank and from the river
He flashed into the crystal mirror,
"Tirra lira," by the river
Sang Sir Lancelot.
She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three paces through the room,
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
She looked down to Camelot.
Out flew the web and floated wide;
The mirror cracked from side to side;
"The curse is come upon me," cried
The Lady of Shalott.

Part IV

In the stormy east-wind straining,
The pale yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks complaining,
Heavily the low sky raining
Over towered Camelot;
Down she came and found a boat
Beneath a willow left afloat,
And round about the prow she wrote
The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse
Like some bold seer in a trance,
Seeing all his own mischance —
With a glassy countenance
Did she look to Camelot.
And at the closing of the day
She loosed the chain, and down she lay;
The broad stream bore her far away,
The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white
That loosely flew to left and right —
The leaves upon her falling light —
Through the noises of the night
She floated down to Camelot:
And as the boat-head wound along
The willowy hills and fields among,
They heard her singing her last song,
The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
Till her blood was frozen slowly,
And her eyes were darkened wholly,
Turned to towered Camelot.
For ere she reached upon the tide
The first house by the water-side,
Singing in her song she died,
The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
By garden-wall and gallery,
A gleaming shape she floated by,
Dead-pale between the houses high,
Silent into Camelot.
Out upon the wharfs they came,
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
And round the prow they read her name,
The Lady of Shalott.

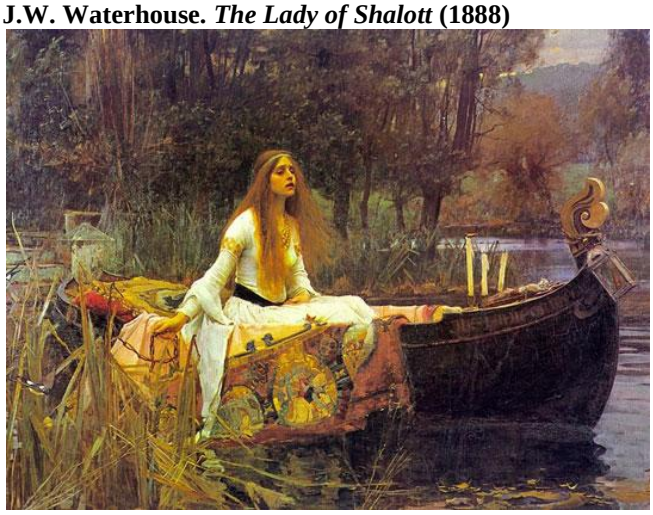
Who is this? and what is here?
And in the lighted palace near
Died the sound of royal cheer;
And they crossed themselves for fear,
All the knights at Camelot:
But Lancelot mused a little space;
He said, "She has a lovely face;
God in his mercy lend her grace,
The Lady of Shalott."

W. Holman Hunt. ***The Lady of Shalott*** **(1905)**

J. W. Waterhouse. ***The Lady of Shalott*** **(1894)**

J. W. Waterhouse. ***"I am Half-Sick of Shadows," Said The Lady of Shalott*** **(1915)**

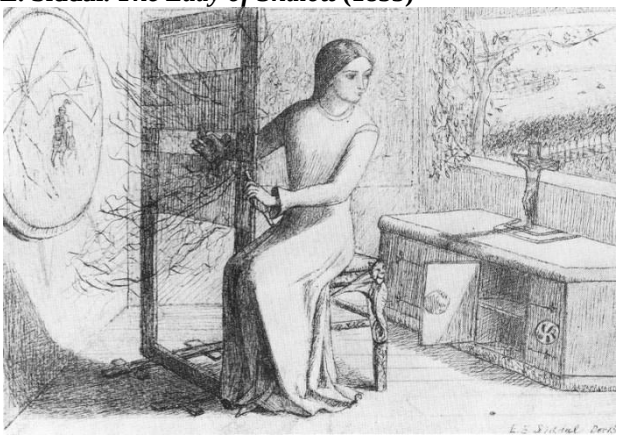
J.W. Waterhouse. ***The Lady of Shalott*** **(1888)**



S. H. Meteyard. ***"I am Half-Sick Of Shadows," Said The Lady of Shalott*** **(1913)**

J. E. Millais. ***The Lady of Shalott*** **(1854)**

E. Siddal. ***The Lady of Shalott*** **(1853)**



LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI
by John Keats

I.

Ah, what can ail thee, wretched wight,
Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge is withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

II.

Ah, what can ail thee, wretched wight,
So haggard and so woe-begone
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

III.

I see a lily on thy brow
With anguish moist and fever dew,
And on thy cheek a fading rose
Fast withereth too.

IV.

I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful, a faery's child:
Her hair was long, her foot was ligh,
And her eyes were wild.

V.

I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long;
For sideways would she lean, and sing
A faery's song.

VI.

I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She looked at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan.

VII.

She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild, and manna dew,
And sure in language strange she said,
"I love thee true!"

VIII.

She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she gazed and sighed deep,
And there I shut her wild, sad eyes---
So kissed to sleep.

IX.

And there we slumbered on the moss,
And there I dreamed, ah! woe betide,
The latest dream I ever dreamed
On the cold hill side.

X.

I saw pale kings, and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
Who cried---"La belle Dame sans merci
Hath thee in thrall!"

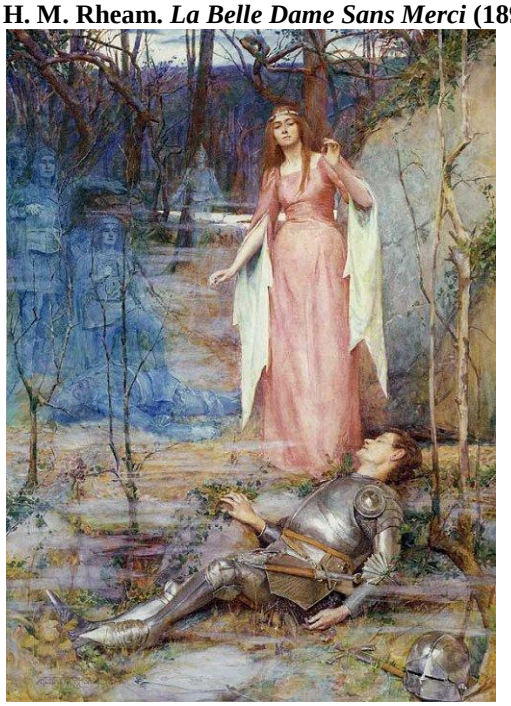
XI.

I saw their starved lips in the gloam,
With horrid warning gaped wide,
And I awoke and found me here,
On the cold hill side.

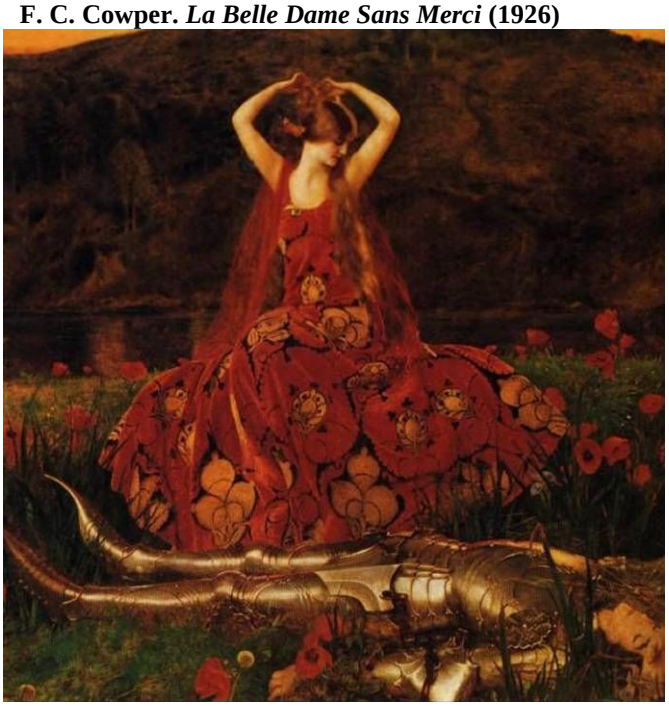
XII.

And that is why I sojourn here,
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

H. M. Rheam. ***La Belle Dame Sans Merci*** **(1895)**

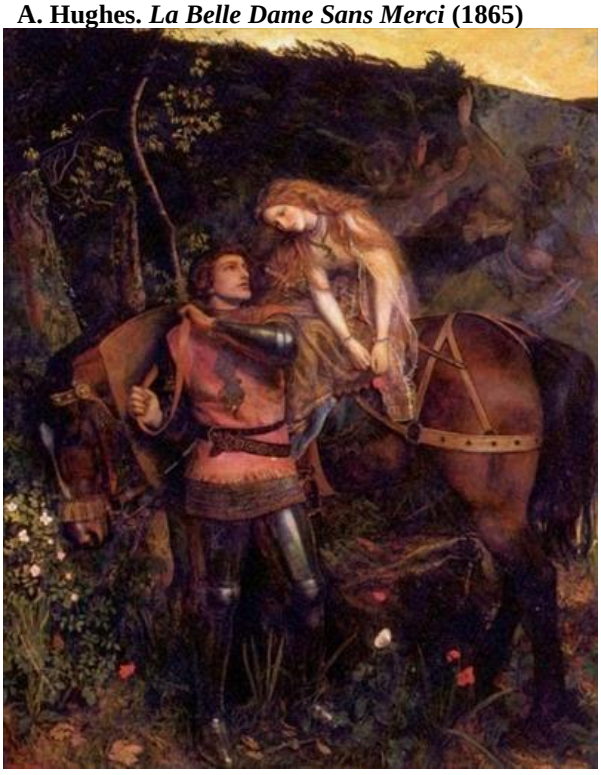


F. C. Cowper. ***La Belle Dame Sans Merci*** **(1926)**



J. W. Waterhouse. ***La Belle Dame Sans Merci*** **(1853)**

A. Hughes. ***La Belle Dame Sans Merci*** **(1865)**



W. Crane. ***La Belle Dame Sans Merci*** **(1861-1863)**

E. Burne-Jones. *The Wine of Circe* (1863-1869)

FOR *THE WINE OF CIRCE* BY E.BURNE-JONES
Dante Gabriel Rossetti

Dusk-haired and gold-robed o'er the golden wine
She stoops, wherein, distilled of death and shame,
Sink the black drops; while, lit with fragrant flame,
Round her spread board the golden sunflowers shine.
Doth Helios here with Hecate combine
(O Circe, thou their votaress?) to proclaim
For these thy guests all rapture in Love's name,
Till pitiless Night give Day the countersign?

Lords of their hour, they come. And by her knee
Those cowering beasts, their equal heretofore,
Wait; who with them in new equality
To-night shall echo back the unchanging roar
Which sounds forever from the tide-strown shore
Where the dishevelled seaweed hates the sea.

L. Da Vinci. *Our Lady Of The Rocks* (1503-1506)

FOR *OUR LADY OF THE ROCKS* BY LEONARDO DA VINCI
Dante Gabriel Rossetti

Mother, is this the darkness of the end,
The Shadow of Death? and is that outer sea
Infinite imminent Eternity?
And does the death-pang by man's seed sustained
In Time's each instant cause thy face to bend
Its silent prayer upon the Son, while He
Blesses the dead with His hand silently
To His long day which hours no more offend?

Mother of grace, the pass is difficult,
Keen as these rocks, and the bewildered souls
Throng it like echoes, blindly shuddering through.
Thy name, O Lord, each spirit's voice extols,
Whose peace abides in the dark avenue
Amid the bitterness of things occult.

S. Botticelli. *Primavera* (1482)

FOR *SPRING* BY SANDRO BOTTICELLI
Dante Gabriel Rossetti

WHAT masque of what old wind-withered New-Year
Honours this Lady? Flora, wanton-eyed
For birth, and with all flowrets prankt and pied:
Aurora, Zephyrus, with mutual cheer
Of clasp and kiss: the Graces circling near,
'Neath bower-linked arch of white arms glorified:
And with those feathered feet which hovering glide
O'er Spring's brief bloom, Hermes the harbinger.

Birth-bare, not death-bare yet, the young stems stand
This Lady's temple-columns: o'er her head
Love wings his shaft. What mystery here is read
Of homage or of hope? But how command
Dead Springs to answer? And how question here
These mummers of that wind-withered New-Year?

Michelangelo/ Master of Manchester. *The Holy Family* (cca 1497)

FOR *THE HOLY FAMILY* BY MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI
Dante Gabriel Rossetti

TURN not the prophet's page, O Son! He knew
All that Thou hast to suffer, and hath writ.
Not yet Thine hour of knowledge. Infinite
The sorrows that Thy manhood's lot must rue
And dire acquaintance of Thy grief. That clue
The spirits of Thy mournful ministerings
Seek through yon scroll in silence. For these things
The angels have desired to look into.

Still before Eden waves the fiery sword,—
Her Tree of Life unransomed: whose sad Tree
Of Knowledge yet to growth of Calvary
Must yield its Tempter,—Hell the earliest dead
Of Earth resign,—and yet, O Son and Lord,
The seed o' the woman bruise the serpent's head.

E. Burne-Jone. *The Annunciation* (1876-1879)

TO E. BURNE-JONES, ON HIS PICTURE OF THE ANNUNCIATION
Emily Pfeiffer

THOU so to deepest heart the hope divine
Hast taken, that it blossoms forth anew;
And lo! a vision opens on our view—
A Virgin other than of Judah's line.
No maiden waking to the golden shine,
The spring-tide sun of joy undreamt, undue;
This maid hath known to wait and learnt to sue—
A weary woman watching for a sign.

The burthen of the world is on her heart,
Her eyes have seen its sorrow, wept its sin;
She heedeth not the angel for her part,
Feeling the witness of the life within:
The hope grown quick, the miracle of birth,
The living love that shall redeem the earth.