

Michael Squire

*Abstract*

Imperial Greek rhetoricians defined ekphrasis in terms of a phenomenological anomaly: ekphrasis is an art of rhetorical displacement – a description that (almost) brings about seeing through hearing. This paper examines cultural ideas about ekphrasis from a reverse perspective, investigating three scenarios where material images were physically juxtaposed alongside Greek epigrams that «ekphrastically» evoke them: a second-century BC funerary monument from Sardis (the «Menophila relief»), the eponymous exedra of the Casa degli Epigrammi at Pompeii, and the «picture-poems» (so-called *technopaegnia*) preserved in the fifteenth book of the *Palatine Anthology* (15.21-22, 24-27). In each case, I argue, the ekphrastic movement from images to words is counterbalanced by a reverse movement from words to images: with the physical images made present alongside each verbal response, audiences were confronted with larger questions about the respective parameters of viewing and reading.

Michael Squire is Lecturer in Classics at King's College London, and currently on sabbatical at the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin. His books include *Image and Text in Graeco-Roman Antiquity* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), *The Art of the Body: Antiquity and its Legacy* (Oxford University Press, 2011) and *The Iliad in a Nutshell: Visualizing Epic on the Tabulae Iliacae* (Oxford University Press, 2011).