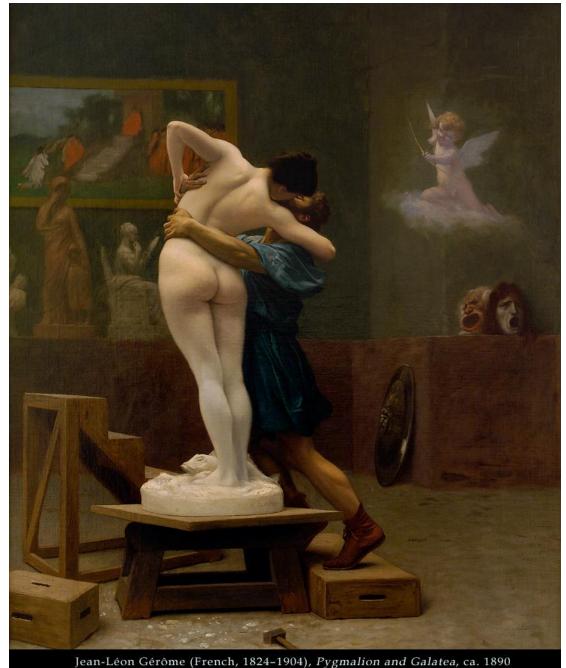
#### ALLUSION

an indirect reference to a historical or literary figure, event, or object—one that impacts meaning by the association or comparison established

#### PYGMALION, the facts

- a mythological sculptor who spurned the love of all women and instead created a statue of the ideal woman
- offended by his actions, Aphrodite, the goddess of love, punishes him by causing him to fall in love with his cold, lifeless creation
- after Pygmalion prays at her temple,
   Aphrodite feels pity and transforms the sculpture into a living woman, Galatea



Pygmalion and Galatea 1890

> Jean-Leon Gerome French painter

# PYGMALION, the implications of the allusion

- one who creates or remakes another person by teaching skills or accomplishments and then falls in love with his or her protégé
- a warning against single-minded pursuit of an ideal: obsession can lead to caring only for cold and lifeless perfection

### from "The New Pygmalion or the Statue's Choice" Andrew Lang (1911)

```
O maiden, in mine image made!
   O grace that shouldst endure!
While temples fall, and empires fade,
   Immaculately pure:
Exchange this endless life of art
   For beauty that must die,
And blossom with a beating heart
   Into mortality!
Change, golden tresses of her hair,
   To gold that turns to gray;
Change, silent lips, forever fair,
   To lips that have their day!
Oh, perfect arms, grow soft with life,
   Wax warm, ere cold ye wane;
Wake, woman's heart, from peace to strife,
   To love, to joy, to pain!
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## Galatea Before the Mirror Claribel Alegría (1993)

my perfection isn't mine you invented it

I am only the mirror in which you preen yourself and for that very reason I despise you.

### Galatea Again Genevieve Taggard (1929)

Let me be marble, marble once again:
Go from me slowly, like an ebbing pain,
Great mortal feuds of moving flesh and blood:
This mouth so bruised, serene again,--and set
In its old passive changelessness, the rude
Wild crying face, the frantic eyes--forget
The little human shuddering interlude.

And if you follow and confront me there,
O Sons of Men, though you cry out and groan
And plead with me to take you for my own
And clutch my dress as a child, I shall not care,

But only turn on you a marble stare

And stun you with the quiet gaze of stone.