



2021 EKPHRASTIC POETRY WINNERS – MCNAY ART MUSEUM

Artwork: *Sarah # 9*, Heidi McFall

Adult Winning Poems (in no particular order)

Day Nine

by Diane Gonzales Bertrand

When she looks at me,
storm clouds appear
in her distance
way, way back
coming from the place
where she thinks
she knows the answer.
Lightning flickers
makes her pause
the question of rain
shadows the rim of her lips.

Face

by Ramiro Rodriguez

Woman's face in front of my face,
universe of luminous insects behind the eyes.
We are all born from her
in an unfolding of bodies.
Nobody say never.
We all arise from her womb
in a saturation of waves without foam
and every morning, as the eyes light up,
I understand that origin
is an inexplicable tunnel of stars
in the black and white of her face,
of my face,
nobody's face.

To Dust She Shall Return

by Janice Bethany

Leaving Plato's cave, her profile flashed on
the wall. She enters 2021,
Lenten Ash print on her head. The world is
closed, no one to notice her, just stone and
glass tombs, empty streets. She hoped to
apprentice, study nature and function,
to give to and liberate the prisoners
locked in the cave. But she is stoic, lips
tight as Sphinx's, no dialogue afloat
on democracy. Her enigmatic
stare is apt and deep, unaware of this
republic's chaos beneath. She turns back
to the cave, an empty knave, back to
the dark, to the dust whence she came.

Youth Winning Poems (in no particular order; ages range from 3-1/2 to 17)

Dazed

by Ruby Vallarelli

My expression frozen
My heart stopped
My face white
Truthfully I was scared
Truthfully no one cared
The hot tears ran down like acid on my cool face
In my ears I heard the echoes of broken promises and fake laughter
In my eyes I saw my own child
The one I'd loved for a lifetime
Her still body
Her innocent eyes
Beautiful, Terrible
The priest came in
Read the last parable

Her frail body was carried away
But I know in my heart her soul would stay.

Sarah

That's my name

Sarah #9

by Weathers Jessee

George Washington
has a chocolate coin
I love you
bring your surprise
later
after naptime
We're at the museum

Eyes for No One

by Heaven Raechi Navarro

She looked at me
Through eyes for no one
With features like-
Pillars of white marble
Existential moon woman

With pleiadian free flowing light
White waxing, black waning
Cheeks slender like cabaret legs
I saw eyes for no one

Her gaze washed over me
Like plentiful waves of salt
Through unknown surfaces
Crystal shades illuminate
Soft and decorated
Warm, sweet, breast milk.



2021 EKPHRASTIC POETRY WINNERS – SAN ANTONIO MUSEUM OF ART

Artwork: *Mama Oclo, First Coya* (Artist unknown)

Adult Winning Poems (in no particular order)

On Her Deathbed, Mama Oclo Speaks to the Acllas

by Pablo Miguel Martinez

light & water / mother & father / never said / I am divine / never said divine / said *first*
I was raised / from the lake / lifted by gilding rays / of sun / kept aloft / by praise
songs / raised by lake // when I look / into the vulture stone / I see / my sons / yet to be feel
the phantom cord / unspool / from this navel / a novel place / a marvel // say I have taught you /
my daughters / the weaving ways / moving thread / with reed / & spinning
'til cloth cloudlike / flutters / flies // soon I will leave / you / will forget / sound & feel
& smell / what you call me // but never forget / the miracles / cleansing baths & cooked meats &
woven fibers & the glories they gave // o daughters / wrap me / in the linen
you make / with skills I have / taught you // soon / they will burn / all this / in flames
hot & bright / envious of sun // soon I will live / in your spirit / in your art / on the linen
imagined / painted / cloth & oils & light / what I have / taught you / makes me / divine

The Heart that Fed

by Wilson R. M. Taylor

Mama Oclo, I see moonbeams springing
fountain-like from your palms, fertility
at the end of your fingers, a cloaked mistress
no wall could hold. Mama Oclo, goddess
born as queen, I shade you with strength of arms,
allow your echo to shimmer sweatless
across time. Mama Oclo, do you see
a human being smiling back at you?
Or will you claim my citadel
with feasts and floating treachery,
sweep me underneath infertile
earth, overgrow me
with vines in crevices of stone?
Mama, cold, are you listening at all?

Beautiful Chaos Just Landed Us on Mars

by Claudio San Miguel

What is behind that first shiver of light?
It was the motion of eye to hand to needle to thread to skin
by our First Mother, Mama Occlo—not an explosive big bang,
but a promise to sew the future to the past, colored thread by colored thread.
Quipu, or Talking Knots, unravel the emptiness.
While we sit silently waiting for the dark,
The hills lose definition, the valley becomes a black, flat sheet,
The adobe rooftop of the house across the field has transformed into
A lifeless rock, the family of trees outside our window
Is a purple, Rothko-painted bush.

But our Mother whispers to us in multicolored knots
Chanting resists resolution.

It is Time to fly to our New Cusco.
Wed 24 Feb 2021 17.44 EST
We hear the First recorded sounds from Mars.

Youth Winning Poem

The Woman
by Zoe Morris

There was a woman in elegant clothing
She holds up an imprint of a face on a stick.
Behind her stands a little man.
Short and squat he stands.
Standing as high as he can,
Holding it for her.



2021 EKPHRASTIC POETRY WINNERS –WITTE MUSEUM

Artwork: *Apache Pitch Lined Basket* (artist unknown)

Adult Winning Poems (in no particular order)

Skin Thirst (*spoken to Apache Pitch Lined Basket*)

by Mobi Warren

Your pine pitch has weathered to a fabric
of scattered ash and mottled mallow rose.
Pomegranate-womb, memory of water.

My hands reach across time to touch the hands
that made you. Palm to ghostly palm,
sweetgrass-scented hands coarsened
to the task of survival.

Asphalt roads have erased the maker's tracks
and sealed hidden springs. But here,
scent of water still pours from your mouth.

Apache Pitch Lined Basket

by Catherine Lee

we women made these pots, they take our shape,
not apparent, what we are made of:
tight-woven grass gathered during warmer months,
white pine tar oozed when woodpecker-damaged
flesh suit was heated delicately above fire, mixed
with rabbit dung, fur, charcoal, yielding antiseptic glue
of ancestral relatives. within our civil circle,
all must hunt, feed, gather, to reproduce this journey.
we carry need with weary grip, engage in mothering tasks:
cooking, suckling, a pitch-lined *olla* holding water,
bearing generational hips of faint mysterious design.
reduced to modern functionality, displayed,
observed behind clean glass, decorative, labeled

basket jar, said to be utilized by mobile,
fierce defenders, Apache denotes "enemy"

Bloodline

by Karen Summers-Murray

The People are silent and fast and fierce as they move
The women among them carry the baskets and sing
Each woman sings of her tears, the blood, the rain
Her soul, her babe, she changes, grows heavy, then light
She feints, or stalks, or darts through the piñons, she runs
The Ancestors knew, and sending the knowledge ahead
Whispered it through the trees. Their wandering Children
Heard, became silent, and fast, and fierce, and careful
Careful to carry the knowledge within the baskets
Where there it is mixed with tears, with blood, with rain
With songs of the newly born babe. She will grow, and listen
She builds her own basket and carries it close and yearns
She will carry the People, their needs, their future, her soul
The basket the basket the basket



2021 EKPHRASTIC POETRY WINNERS – BRISCOE WESTERN ART MUSEUM

Artwork: *Once Upon a Time*, Mark Maggiori

Adult Winning Poems (in no particular order)

Two Horsemen of Mesilla

by Milton Jordan

I imagined Ed Dorn dismounting late
afternoon on the square in Mesilla
staring at the small adobe church
standing in the last of that day's sunlight
expecting the parish priest to step out
the door just as the sun dropped below
ragged roof lines along the square's west side
where merchants still stood in doorways hoping
for late arriving customers and I
rode past the church to tell the poet
Spielberg had offered three million for film
rights to *Gunslinger* and Ed Dorn sitting
on the square in Mesilla said to me,
'Tell Spielberg he can stuff his three million.'

Exodusters

by Jeanie Sanders

Night after night the man dreamed

his sons were free!

Never would they be

maimed by

whips

or

chains.

But coated in self-determination

with gazes that stretched

to far horizons

like music on

the wind.

If You Are Headed West on Route 66

by Sarah Colby

Stop. Get out of your car.

Leave asphalt with its inferior mirage

for sun-smacked earth under high blue skies,

distant mountains of clouds massing

over ochre mesas, banded sandstone.

Listen for hoofbeats and the creak

of saddle leather. Breathe the tang of petrichor,

cattle-bruised sagebrush, and sweat.

Lose what you once were to the fabled West,

its unbounded amethyst horizons of promise

Youth Winning Poems (in no particular order)

Lone Rangers

by Marin Blankinship

Lone Rangers
Fighting For What's Right
Riding
Working Hard
Everyday
Never Stopping
Steering Horses
Day And Night
Always
And
Forever
Cowboys

Rebirth: Sky, desert, plants, and us

By Pia Nathani

I look at the clouds
They're speaking to me
the sky turns gray
I understand,
Rain! I say aloud with a smile
rebirth, happiness, calming.
My soul echo's

My friend smiles and looks down at all the plants tenderly
He smiles and gets off his horse,
He lands smoothly on the prickly ground
And bends down
He slowly whispers to all the dying plants
“Don't worry soon you will be reborn”