



2024 EKPHRASTIC POETRY WINNERS – BRISCOE MUSEUM OF WESTERN ART

Artwork: *Sunday Riding at Mission San Jose*, Gladys Roldan-de-Moras

Adult Winning Poems (in no particular order)

The Suárez Sisters Ride at Mission San José, 1948

Below swollen sun, the air steeped with sweet
—oak rot, cream roses, horse coats newly curried,
and split prickly pears trickling sap.
Riding crops snap and red skirts ripple like poppy
petals under wind. Sombreros with damp
underbrims slant back as the sisters loose
lard-thick laughter and Spanish bright as spools.
¡Arre! ¡Arre mi vida!
Velvet ears quiver in reply, sleek necks
lengthen, muscles purl, and hooves kick up rust
red earth, dust that gathers in the girls' dark locks
and whispers an ancient tongue. The sisters
wring reins and gasp at the ache in their blood.
Oh! That tongue—loved and lost in these white walls.

-Rachel Aguirre

Hermanas

When we sing, it is the warmth of the sun
When we laugh, it is the shelter of the trees
When we dance, it is the cool sweat on my brow
Bonded by blood, it is what's meant to be

A divine intertwining of circumstance
The certain beat of a butterfly's wings
Defied a world of wavering certainty
Bonded by blood, it is what's meant to be

My baby sister's freckles adorn my face
And my older sister's stature upholds me
But the blood in our veins can only carry us so far
It is our love that strengthens our journey

To discover what is meant to be

-Melody A. Mireles

Across the Chaparral: Under the Golden Sun

A soft whisper of wind rustles through cottonwoods, leaves flutter, a mockingbird calls out

In the hot heat of April's midday light

The crispness of dawn long past, the heavy weight of afternoon not yet arrived

A new generation of young women ride proudly across the courtyard

Under the round brims of sombreros, red and white folds of fabric telling of *tradición*

Atop saddles of leather and metal, horses step steadily forward

On the path across sacred ground, watched over by the solid limestone presence of San Jose

The mission carved by *antepasados*, faith and power

Reverence of *nuestra historia*, solemnity of time

One of three, three of three, going forward

To *la entrada*, *la entrada* where family and friends await, to join *la comunidad*

Ready in bright and festive dress

Doors in the distance

A prayer for celebration, among a land of mesquite and huisache

What will this day bring, under the golden sun of spring?

-Sara Ramey

Youth Winning Poems (in no particular order; age 13 and older)

Los Vestidos Españoles

How much the wind would enjoy

twisting and turning

in and out of the layered ruffles of your dresses,

the ruffles that instead sag around you

under the deploring heat of the

unforgiving Texas sun

that your wide-brimmed sombreros shield you from

Your bright Andalusian dresses

dipped in the crimson of the

tongue-withering chiles that grow by the river

are sprinkled with the white of the

hardened limestone built into the

church you ride towards,

chasing the clanging of the rusted iron bell
-Annia Gimeno Marko

Memories of the future

Mexico City, a vibrant town filled with colors and music
My grandmother loved traditions and anything worth celebrating
She left us with her horses, the huipiles we played dress up
Sunday came and went, but never did we.

Carrying on her legacy, of bright dresses and feeling free
Although we burn fuel, wear jeans, and watch MTV
We made time for my grandma's memory
Every Sunday at nine.

Our worlds vastly different,
Grandmother would be ashamed
But my Mexican roots live on, through the grandparents who raised it
We can't envision the past
But we picture in our minds, bright colors and rides
Our visions not forgotten, and the legacy swiftly moves on.
-Lisa Smith

Youth Winning Poems (in no particular order; age 12 and under)

Sunday Riding At Mission San José

Beautiful women riding on horses
The colors are immensely bright
Gracefully trotting across the grass
Mission San José is a pleasing sight
Mexican dresses long and pretty
Sombreros keeping the lengthy hair still
On the way to Mission San José
First sight is always a thrill

Three Mexican women following the path
Nearly at the end of the road
Horses helping them in every way
The essence of this painting has clearly showed
-Smaya Gedala