



2024 EKPHRASTIC POETRY WINNERS – RUBY CITY

Artwork: *Ultimate Joy, 2001*

Adult Winning Poems (in no particular order)

Feels like Home

I like the city at Christmas.
It feels like home.
Through stations of light
I return like a bus
stopping between the blocks
where I fell in love.
More than anywhere
my memories stay here.

-Janice Bethany

Uncle Dancing on his 80th Birthday

His white bow tie with rows of tiny glass beads sparkle
like rubies and sapphires under the spinning silver ball.
He grins, white dentures holding firm, as he chooses
the hand of one niece and the next, that ultimate joy
at the abundance of family dance partners tonight.

When his teenage granddaughter steps up for her turn,
she weaves curling ribbons through the bow tie knot,
a perpetual dancing, swaying movement with
each nod of his head—continues as he softly snores
during the car ride home. A flash of a smile appears
like the spotlight waltz at his senior prom.

-Diane Gonzales Bertrand

Worlds Collide

Our corners meet...
Your color and your light
Mix with mine
Light brights in a darkened night
I fight to keep you
Two squares in a round world
A world I crave
And when our lights touch
Emotions become heightened
Bulbs of blue and red
Become orange passionate fire
Dare I say
You were the spark...
I never knew I needed.
-Abraham Moreno

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

A Dimly Lit Center

The sound of footsteps
People are coming.
Lights flicker on, one by one
Being placed in the center didn't help much.
I've always been the center of attention
I never wanted to be though.
Why can't I be off to the side?
Or down at the bottom?
Where no one can see me
Gleaming eyes wander from the center towards me
Why can't they just keep their eyes in one place?
I don't want to be seen.
-Chenxi (Tracy) Liao

The Final Waltz

Blending, gliding, lines smoothing together
the silhouettes of dancers melding as one

Your hand extending out, grasping
Connecting with mine
and finding the way onto the floor

A swish, a swirl,
A blend of movement

Blinking, flashing, our lights mix
the distinct colors of blue, yellow, green now fused

The bright beam of your presence
dimming to a slow blink

Your hand extending out, not grasping
disconnecting with mine
and into the crowd.

-Kate Neiman