EKPHRASIS AT THE NATIONAL ARTS PROGRAM, HARTFORD 2016

Members of the Free Poets Collective are providing original ekphrastic poetry for the prize-winning art pieces at the National Arts Program reception. Ekphrastic poems are inspired by visual images -- usually paintings, drawings, photographs, or sculpture -- variously intending to interpret, inhabit, confront, or speak with the works of art.

Capital Community College, Hartford, CT
And He arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still.
And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.
(Mark 4:39)

Deep inside the WOMB, CONCEPTION, BIRTH.
The journey beginnings, the soul, the mind, the heart, the organs.
Love, unity, perfection, image, the spirit.
Together as one in the perfect image of the Creator.
Prosperity, Growth, Development, Explosion, Betrayal.
Deception, Greed, Hate, Confusion, Death, Rebirth, Freedom.

My eyes are a mirror to my soul,
look deep, feel my pain. Capture MY JOY!
Upon my face, I am a nation, a nation of many people.
I am a struggle of injustice, a warrior of the defeated.
I am a Man from the Promise Land with an entitlement of FREEDOM!
I am ME, I am YOU, I am the SEED, PEACE BE STILL!
CONVOLUTION
POEM BY DEBBIE TOSUN KILDAY
COILED BY MINA ECHEVARRIA
PROFESSIONAL 1ST PRIZE

Memories try to form
Wrapped around my brain
Curving up
Waiting to spring forth

In a long thin thought
Sequential rings
Try to make a point

My mind, distorted...
Pipe dreams
Bend and loop

Tears form on the surface
Of my eyes

My electrical impulses
Are rusty and hollow
I’ve become empty

Yet like a snake
I coil
Ready to strike

My engine is dead
Twisted and entwined

A sequence of events
Has left me
Spiraling upward
In a cloud of smoke
My mind…
Once like clay

No longer flexible
Now stone
POEM BY JESSICA BROOKE

WINGS OF FURY BY GEONNA KLINE
INTERMEDIATE 1ST PRIZE

I arrive to disintegrate
All that is pure and true
Ready for imminent attack
Terror perceived by others
Wings larger than life
As I descend from the heavens
To swoop down and wreak havoc

I never doubt myself
For I am strong
All who witness me
Are frozen in fear
At my razor sharp talons

My wingspan soars up high
I descend at lightning speed
In a perceived ball of fire
Quickly and relentlessly
Destruction in my wake

As I grasp small animals with vengeance
Offerings to the gods
For I have wings of fury
Lovely to some
Yet a clever disguise
you revealed the coursing water
highlighted through snowy borders
incised over centuries
shrubs and grass, most shorn or covered
gone the bronze, once red or gold
land made simple beneath snow
evergreens stay faithfully
under varicolored sky
openly a story told
for some birds and us to see
were they made in blind design
or formed by a maker’s hand
a tableau so clearly shown
We are diamonds in the rough falling out of the sky
Stating our cases, chasing airplanes, afraid of the night
Fly me into the dark, under the moonlight
Let's go back to the start, can you find me

Under your wings will you follow all your senses
Hope for another day to come along and blow back these fences
Bring me back to the colorless
Give me peace and quiet
Bring me, but only under your wing

And as everything passes I hope you don’t fly away
Heaven is holding us now, little bird, my autoclave
My head is in the clouds, pulling me to the atmosphere
But the light is hissing out and the light has pushed me to here

Leave me to the abstract let me go astray
High up in this black screen white world
Ascending into your halos, but it's not perfect for me to stay
But only for the moment I am calm, I am okay
I remember
When I followed my moods
Fully into the night
And believed their phantom tales
Even, or especially, those that
Twisted me out of and away from myself.
Soft, heavy landscapes:
Syrupy, promised, leaden.
Spectres lock-step close with me
Until the first ribbon
Of orange sky extinguished them.
But in the yellow light of day, those demons
Doubled back on me
Brightly, no eye-shade able to soothe them.

Nowadays, a rooster crows
And I am already up, waiting.
I am up: gentle, open,
knowing these whispers may still shake me,
But waiting, nonetheless.
I make as much room as I can
For the haints, know their mysterious mists
Are no family heirloom but rollback
From a million lives set loose eons ago.
I make space in my eyes and my head:
Sunny, vibrant, blue-skied,
Verdant, not-fenced-in.

When the rooster caws,
My sky whitens and opens,
Green hills roll away,
One deep breath in,
One deep breath out,
At-a-time,
No body fear or Delta-doom,
Plaguing me
Just plain things like bees and birds
And flowers,
Providing solace
In this short experiment,
This passing fancy of time.
The National Arts Program will return for its 26th year in January of 2017. We look forward to your participation!

Poems are published exactly as submitted; they do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Community Renewal Team.