ForeWord Reviews
Clarion Review

POETRY

The Radiance of your Soul: Love Poems and Passions
George Ergo Espinosa
AuthorHouse
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Four Stars (out of Five)

In *The Radiance of your Soul: Love Poems and Passions,* poet laureate of the International Society of Poets and critically-acclaimed verse writer George Ergo Espinosa continues the exploration of love he began in a previously-published volume of poetry. Skillfully, he delves into the exhilaration and pain adoration can cause.

Espinosa has received numerous Editor's Choice awards from the International Library of Poetry, and, in reading this collection, one can see his accolades are truly well-deserved. The title of this volume references the name of the first poem in the book. Espinosa touches on many facets of affection: love for one's spouse, new love, veneration of the deceased, and the pain of loving those who have died.

Espinosa's diction is often alluringly, deceptively simple, and the verses have a pleasing cadence. Only after readers have finished a poem do they realize the profundity and beauty of the verses. The words illuminate the universals of both pain and joy with poignant clarity. Adding to the richness of the author's work is the fact that he is skilled in poetic meter as well as many forms of traditional Japanese poetry. The Japanese poetry, in particular, showcases the author's strength of expressing philosophical aphorisms using few syllables. Indeed, Espinosa's poems in Japanese forms would be best appreciated by students of Japan's poetic tradition.

Sprinkled throughout the book are these pleasing nuggets of verse the poet calls *nonets.* Consisting of nine lines apiece and looking like inverted triangles, each line of each nonet becomes shorter and shorter, with the final line made up of one word, and thus forming the point of the inverted triangle. Truly, these nonets are pleasing in both form and function. Espinosa's use of figurative language is masterful, elevating his poetry beyond pedestrian platitudes of adoration into the realm of descriptive works of art. In one poem, he compares his fingers to Olympic athletes. The bright sun on the book's cover mirrors the verses inside—both beautiful and awe-inspiring.

It is a shame then, that the author misuses words just enough to be distracting. In one

poem, doctors “work out” on a patient, for example. The poet sometimes makes nouns plural that rarely are, such as “heartaches” and “lab works.” Minor diction quibbles aside, this book is sure to make every reader’s soul radiant.

Jill Allen