

Sacred Love

Manuel Cisneros built a crèche of rocks
close to the lip of the sea.

Hundreds walked down to see
Mary, Joseph, and the three wise men,
the small stone Jesus
on his rock cradle.

Around them all, Manuel built
a low mission wall,
no mortar or glue, just rocks
coaxed and gentled together.

He called his sculpture Sacred Love,
speaking of the story he told,

and love is what I call
the work of his hands,
like that of the Tibetan monks
who spend long weeks
sifting colored sand,

and when their mandala is done,
the monks sweep it away.
Just as Manuel heads home
at the end of day,

leaving the holy family alone
to face the winds
and the hungry sea.

Kathryn Ridall