

Artistic Spectrum

change one letter and set yourself free
your apparent withdrawal from the world
an indicator, not of overloaded senses
but absorption of what is on offer
to tease your imagination—bright sparks
dally with your eyes, spring blossoms' perfume
tastes like fine wine, grit chafes skin
as you push aside debris to renew growth

what need have you to utter useless words
when you can show your feelings in paint,
cause shivers by strumming a perfect chord,
salivate over tasty morsels, laugh
at yourself and others' inanities? your talent
is natural, your taste elegant, you are endowed
with genius, you flaunt it with panache

others may not perceive the truth of you
the range that lurks beneath your surface
but I have seen you dance

—Adrienne Stevenson

Painters of Light

The artist, with closed eyes, intimate
with seeing.

First light. The light before light,
reaching. Hands hold being light,
its dream, only.

Second light. Harmonies
ribboning, tender twigs,
cirrus ripples.

Third light. A drunk sky reels.
No one notices, driving.

Fourth light. Amber lenses
slide light into the slow movement
of a smile.

Fifth light. The fracturing
sun tries to climb back
up on splintered cloud ladders
in bloody rebellion.

Sixth light. Without verb or article,
peace.
The luminous after.

Seventh light. White essence,
as if the moon opens its own pearl fire,
passion nun star.

Eighth light. Hearth's flickering stream.
Muted shadows the smoke of thought.
The wistfulness of insomniacs.

Ninth light. The sea tremble we perceive,
if we search, in the eyes of others.

—Mary Elizabeth Birnbaum