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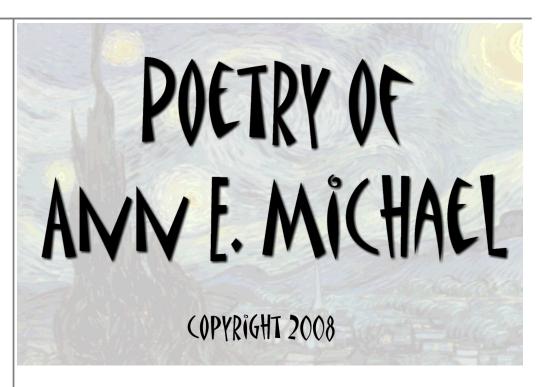
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Wishing Well

I want everything changed: suddenly I know this the way I know the scent of oranges:

I want a changed bed, different flowers, altered hours, new purpose--everything--

scattered: pieces to shuffle in a changed geography, life a cryptogram.

But here comes Heraclitus fording the mountain stream in wintertime, and barefooted.

Water tosses its chilly noose around his hairless ankles. He tells me, It's already happened.

Steinbrucke

We argued beside the Danube. Water low and sun in my eyes. Are those pylonsâ€" what is the term in a structure that ancient, ashlar legs of the bridge spanning river and centuries?

Perhaps the long car ride, featureless autobahn, affected our moods. Or too-bright days, and too-hot days, Europe begging for rain. Even the famous river sluggishly unimpressive.

I sat by the old well in the alt-rathaus-platz, wished for water. You brought Evian, in plastic bottles.

The argument left to explore some 14th-c. side street while we walked halfway across the medieval bridgeâ€" arches, keystones, capstones layers of reconstruction.

In Munich, after two days the argument either returned or reconstructed. So it goes, so it goes. Time again for pylons, I suppose, and bridges.

Nanoguitar

Researchers in microelectronics have constructed a guitar from a single silicon crystal. Theoretically, it could be played (it has strings), but would produce a sound beyond the range of human hearing.

I am small a small sound from the crystal bell in grandmother's china cabinet

& smaller still a microbe floating on a dustmote

I am a molecule still, frozen in minuteness tinier than

the tiniest thing you know

I play for you pluck a love song on my nano guitar & you must strain to listen

it is not meant to be easy

listen: not with your ears never with your ears only secretly in the subtle vibrations of atoms which

I strum constantly against your soul.

Shreds

for Judith

We ran, leaves before a bitter wind, & some ran headlong & some in circles, we did not know what to do with ourselves,

& watched, pressed to our windows & could do nothing: streets erupted with people like clustered beetles wakened from dormancy.

We walked, in all directions but mostly north, & we were silent and our mouths were dry. Things like shoes and hats made us human.

We wept and it was not sufficient, & swept, then, for months & recalled mostly paper, the ways we occupy ourselves, the mild wind carrying what lingered. Scraps.

(after "Exhibit 13" Blue Man Group, 2002)

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author of three chapbook collections of poetry; her website is www.annemichael.com. Her poems and essays have previously appeared on the web and in print journals beginning in 1982. Archives of SNReview include some of her poems.