



VERMONT WRITING

BY MARGARET EDWARDS

This column, usually called A VERMONT WRITER, is an offering of the Danforth Library in Barnard. Its original purpose has been to introduce Vermont writers deserving wider renown by profiling them. However, this month's essay examines more poems by Louise Glück, whose profile appeared in the February issue this year. To describe her as a Vermont poet is to rely solely on her having lived in Plainfield, Vermont, for almost two decades. Even after she moved on and lived elsewhere, she claimed Vermont as a spiritual home and voiced the hope she could return here to live.

Louise Glück

1943 – 2023



Louise Glück in 2020

A poet's fame is assured if the poet wins a Nobel Prize in literature. There will always be readers for the work of Louise Glück, who won the Nobel in 2020. She grew up in New York, mostly on Long Island, and she spent her last years in Cambridge, Massachusetts; yet even so, she has a clear association with Vermont. She lived for almost two decades in Plainfield, spending part of that time teaching at Goddard College.

The Nobel Prize is not just a grand honor bestowed with pomp and ceremony in Sweden; it comes with some serious cash. And Glück made clear to friends and associates that her aim was to use the money to purchase a place in Vermont and return. But the Covid pandemic and her failing health wouldn't permit it. She died of cancer three years later, still in Massachusetts.

Louise Glück lived in Vermont in the 1970s and early 1980s, during the crucial time in her life when she dedicated herself in earnest to her writing and began to publish her work. A reader feels tempted to look through her large and definitive collection of poems hoping to discern how much of Vermont's imagery and rural character she captured in her work. The result is underwhelming, for the answer is: *not much*. Vermont may

have been congenial to her as a place to live, and aesthetically very pleasing, but it does not seem to have been her wellspring of inspiration.

"Messengers" is an early poem by Glück, one that seems to be using Vermont as its setting:

Messengers

*You have only to wait, they will find you.
The geese flying low over the marsh,
Glittering in black water.
They find you.*

*And the deer—
how beautiful they are,
as though their bodies did not impede them.
Slowly they drift into the open
Through bronze panels of sunlight.*

*Why would they stand so still
if they were not waiting?
Almost motionless, until their cages rust,
the shrubs shiver in the wind,
squat and leafless.*

*You have only to let it happen:
that cry—release, release—like the moon
wrenched out of earth and rising
full in its circle of arrows*

*until they come before you
like dead things, saddled with flesh,
and you above them, wounded and dominant.*

The geese flying, the deer standing still, and the leafless shrubs shivering in the wind—we are arrested by this New England winter scene so well-observed. But what do all these images portend? The important line is "You have only to let it happen"—and "it" is not well-defined. Or rather, how we choose to define "it" will deliver the poem's meaning. The deer, the geese, and the shrubbery, as well as the rising moon, only provide scenery—not meaning.

Glück's poem "12.6.71" has a title that suggests a specific date: December 6, 1971. We feel tempted to assume this date means something very specific to the poet and to her lover, whom she addresses as "you."

*You having turned from me
I dreamed we were
beside a pond between two mountains
It was night
The moon throbbed in its socket
Where the spruces thinned
three deer wakened & broke cover
and I heard my name
not spoken but cried out*

Gluck - Cont. from previous page

*so that I reached for you
except the sheet was ice
as they had come for me
who, one by one, were likewise
introduced to darkness
And the snow
which has not ceased since
began*

Again, Vermont imagery sets the imagined scene of the poet's dream. There is "a pond between two mountains" and a moonlit expanse where "spruces thinned" and three deer "broke cover" and ran. The moon that "throbbed in its socket" suggests pain. Yet this line—"As they had come for me"—is hard to follow. Who are "they"?

In the poem's final lines, it begins to snow. The lines read more clearly if they are reconfigured as prose: "And the snow (which has not ceased since) began." The poem keeps us readers well outside the secret of what the title's date implies. We can guess, but only guess.

A return to this poem's first line—"You having turned from me"—suggests the poem is describing a final break in a passionate relationship, a break in which there are unanswered cries followed by a cruel, unceasing absence.

Another poem which hints at a Vermont scene is "Northwood Path." It describes a walk through woods on a late afternoon in October. Two people, surely a romantic couple, are walking together:

Northwood Path

*For my part
we are as we were
on the path
that afternoon:
it is
October, I can see
the sun sink
drawing out
our parallel
shadows. And you,
for example what
were you thinking, so
attentive to your
shoes? I recall
we spoke of
your car
the whole length
of the woods:*

*in so much withering
the pokeweed had
branched into its
purplish berry—so
desire called
love into being.
But always the choice
was on both sides
characteristic,
as you said,
in the dark you came
to need,
you would do it again*

"In the dark you came/ to need / you would do it again." The poem's full meaning, once again, rests on how we readers define "it." Glück lets that pronoun do a lot of heavy lifting. But the scenery of the poem is vivid, with its lengthening shadows and "purplish" pokeweed berries and the "withering" that characterizes October in Vermont. We readers observe the scene in fine detail, even if we're not quite sure we get the gist of the important conversation this couple is having.

It's a flawed poem that gives no clue about its true subject beyond a vague "it." A setting may be a hint, of course, but the details shouldn't be generic—not if the poet wants a reader to feel something more than bafflement or confusion. Glück dares to frustrate her readers in her earliest work; most often she gets away with doing so. Her precision keeps suggesting that—eventually—all will be revealed.

Here is another difficult poem containing a description of deer. "They" are visible in an orchard and in a "cleared field" at that poignant time in Vermont's autumn just before the first significant snowfall.

Thanksgiving

*They have come again to graze the orchard,
knowing they will be denied.
The leaves have fallen: on the dry ground
the wind makes piles of them, sorting
all it destroys.
What doesn't move, the snow will cover.
It will give them away; their hooves
make patterns which the snow remembers.
In the cleared field, they linger
as the summoned prey whose part
is not to forgive. They can afford to die.
They have their place in the dying order.*

The scene is carefully accurate. "Their hooves / make patterns which the snow remembers" is an observation that only someone very familiar with the most subtle

Gluck- Cont. from previous page

details of Vermont's change of seasons would record. But the last three lines are purely abstract and can easily confuse or be misinterpreted. "They can afford to die"—why?

These four poems quoted above are among Glück's early poems. It's imperative to read further in her major collection to observe how her poems matured. They become much more easily understood. Glück's gift for describing complex human feelings is a strength that finally emerges and overshadows her facility with scene-setting and landscape. Here's a "Vermont poem" that clearly marvels at how a very young child learns:

Illuminations

1.

*My son squats in the snow in his blue snowsuit.
All around him stubble, the brown
degraded bushes. In the morning air
they seem to stiffen into words.
And, between, the white steady silence.
A wren hops on the airstrip
under the sill, drills
for sustenance, then spreads
its short wings, shadows
dropping from them.*

2.

*Last winter he could barely speak.
I moved his crib to face the window:
in the dark mornings
he would stand and grip the bars
until the walls appeared,
calling light, light,
that one syllable, in
demand or recognition.*

3.

*He sits at the kitchen window
with his cup of apple juice.
Each tree forms where he left it,
leafless, trapped in his breath.
How clear their edges are,
no limb obscured by motion,
as the sun rises
cold and single over the map of language.*

In later poems, her most powerful work, Glück does away with obfuscation. No more "it" as a provocative, crucial feature of her poems. All well-defined, evocative "scenery" drops away, and human beings, brilliantly observed, are put at center stage:

Terminal Resemblance

*When I saw my father for the last time, we both did
the same thing.*

*He was standing in the doorway to the living room,
waiting for me to get off the telephone.*

*That he wasn't also pointing to his watch
was a signal he wanted to talk.*

Talk for us always meant the same thing.

He'd say a few words, I'd say a few back.

That was about it.

It was the end of August, very hot, very humid.

*Next door, workmen dumped new gravel on the
driveway.*

*My father and I avoided being alone;
we didn't know how to connect, to make small talk—
there didn't seem to be
any other possibilities.*

*So this was special: when a man's dying,
he has a subject.*

*It must have been early morning. Up and down the
street*

*sprinklers started coming on. The gardener's truck
appeared at the end of the block,
then stopped, parking.*

*My father wanted to tell me what it was like to be
dying.*

He told me he wasn't suffering.

*He said he kept expecting pain, waiting for it, but it
never came.*

All he felt was a kind of weakness.

*I said I was glad for him, that I thought he was
lucky.*

*Some of the husbands were getting in their cars,
going to work.*

*Not people we knew anymore. New families,
families with young children.*

The wives stood on the steps, gesturing or calling.

*We said goodbye in the usual way,
no embrace, nothing dramatic.*

*When the taxi came, my parents watched from the
front door,*

*arm in arm, my mother blowing kisses as she always
does,*

*because it frightens her when a hand isn't being
used.*

But for a change, my father didn't just stand there.

This time, he waved.

Glück - Cont. from previous page

That's what I did, at the door to the taxi.

Like him, waved to disguise my hand's trembling.

In another late poem, Glück talks lucidly about what her feelings are as a poet when she acts as a creator. She combines her careful observation of a bird building its nest with an evaluation of her own process, relating her method in her work to the bird's method. Using an analogy of bird as poet (and of poetry as birdsong) was very common in literature of the Renaissance. Glück draws on this traditional comparison to good effect:

Nest

A bird was making its nest.

In the dream, I watched it closely:

In my life, I was trying to be

A witness not a theorist.

*The place you begin doesn't determine
the place you end: the bird*

*took what it found in the yard,
its base materials, nervously
scanning the bare yard in early spring;
in debris by the south wall pushing
a few twigs with its beak.*

Image

*of loneliness: the small creature
coming up with nothing. Then
dry twigs. Carrying, one by one,
the twigs to the hideout.
Which is all it was then.*

*It took what there was:
the available material. Spirit
wasn't enough.*

*And then it wove like the first Penelope
but toward a different end.
How did it weave? It weaved,
carefully but hopelessly, the few twigs
with any suppleness, any flexibility,
choosing these over the brittle, the recalcitrant.*

*Early spring, late desolation.
The bird circled the bare yard making
efforts to survive
on what remained to it.*

*It had its task
to imagine the future. Steadily flying around,
patiently bearing small twigs to the solitude*

*of the exposed tree in the steady coldness
of the outside world.*

I had nothing to build with.

*It was winter: I couldn't imagine
anything but the past. I couldn't even
imagine the past, if it came to that.*

And I didn't know how I came here.

Everyone else much farther along.

*I was back at the beginning
at a time in life we can't remember beginnings.*

The bird

*collected twigs in the apple tree, relating
each addition to existing mass.*

But when was there suddenly mass?

*It took what it found after the others
were finished.*

*The same materials—why should it matter
to be finished last? The same materials, the same
limited good. Brown twigs,
broken and fallen. And in one,
a length of yellow wool.*

Then it was spring and I was inexplicably happy.

*I knew where I was: on Broadway with my bag of
groceries.*

*Spring fruit in the stores: first
cherries at Formaggio. Forsythia
beginning.*

First I was at peace.

Then I was contented, satisfied.

And then flashes of joy.

*And the season changed—for all of us,
of course.*

And as I peered out my mind grew sharper.

*And I remember accurately
the sequence of my responses,
my eyes fixing on each thing
from the shelter of the hidden self:*

first, I love it.

Then, I can use it.

Barnard's Danforth Library now possesses a hard cover edition of *Louise Glück: Poems 1962-2012*. Published by Farrar Straus & Giroux of New York in 2012, this book is currently available for circulation and is on display in the Book Room along with other titles newly acquired for the Danforth's collection.

BarnArts 2024

William Shakespeare

Macbeth

directed by **Killian White**

Performances:
 June 21-22 & 28-29—6:30pm
 June 26—6:30pm
 June 23 & 30—4pm

Location:
 Outdoors at Fable Farm
 1525 Royalton Tpk
 Barnard, VT

Starring:
 Patti Arrison · Erin Bennett
 Nate Beyer · Julianne Berger
 Kaetlyn Collins · Kevin Donohue
 Molly Elsasser · Aaron Michael Hodge
 Kyle Huck · Pearl Huston MacLeod
 Rose Huston MacLeod · Shannon McGonis
 Caleb Paige · Jesse Paige · Leah Paige
 Dory Pomas · Elyse Robichaud · Fergus Ryan
 Aamani Thulluru · Tapley Trudell · Liam Wheeler

Tickets: \$20 adults
 \$15 students

More info:
 barnarts.org
 info@barnarts.org
 802-234-1645

BarnArts
 BarnArts Center for the Arts
 Building Community Through Art

picnicking welcome
no outside alcohol

Mascoma Bank

Starring: Aamani Thulluru, Aaron Michael Hodge, Caleb Paige, Dory Pomas, Elyse Robichaud, Erin Bennett, Fergus Ryan, Jesse Paige, Julianne Berger, Kaetlyn Collins, Kevin Donohue, Kyle Huck, Leah Paige, Liam Wheeler, Molly Elsasser, Nate Beyer, Patti Arrison, Pearl Huston MacLeod, Rose Huston MacLeod, Shannon McGonis, Tapley Trudell

Fridays & Saturdays: June 21-22, 28-29 at 6:30pm
 Sundays: June 23 & 30 at 4pm
 Wednesday: June 26 at 6:30pm

At Fable Farm, 1525 Royalton Turnpike, Barnard, VT

Adults - \$20, Students - \$15. Reserve your [tickets](#).

MACBETH chronicles a series of tragic events inspired by the prophecy of witches interpreted through greed and power. Prepare to be wowed by our talented local cast as they dive into psychological drama amidst war and magic in the orchard of Fable Farm.

See website for more info and details about our unique outdoor location: <https://barnarts.org/macbeth/>

BarnArts Center for the Arts
 PO Box 41, Barnard, VT 05031
 Web: www.barnarts.org, Email: info@barnarts.org
 802-234-1645 (BarnArts voicemail)

BARNARTS 2024 FEAST & FIELD MUSIC SERIES

2024 FEAST & FIELD MUSIC SERIES

- June 20 Annie & the Fur Trappers, traditional jazz/delta blues
- June 27 Ida Mae Specker, children's/folk/singer-songwriter
- July 4 Route 5 Jive, roots bop
- July 11 Bow Thayer's Choirs of Aether, improvisational rock
- July 18 Patti Casey & Tom Mackenzie, folk
- July 25 Espiral 7, Afro-Latin/jazz
- Aug 1 Bomba de Aqui Puerto Rican bomba
- Aug 8 Timbermash old-timey folk
- Aug 15 Afro-Semitic Experience funk/jazz/world beat
- Aug 22 Zikina Music Afro-folk
- Aug 29 Pointe Noire Cajun Band Cajun
- Sept 5 Mames Babegenush Balkan jazz/Nordic folk
- Sept 12 Pluto Rising new wave/retro soul
- Sept 19 Funky Flats funk/soul
- Sept 26 Dance Party DJ

Doors open & food is available at 5:30pm
 Music Starts at 6pm music with another set at 7:30p

Feast & Field features locally sourced food and drink from the Feast and Field Farmers and our hosts: Fable Farm, Eastman Farm & Kiss the Cow.

Tickets at: <https://barnarts.org/macbeth/>

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AT ARTISTREE

MUSIC ON THE HILL SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

We are excited to announce that this year's Music on the Hill Summer Concert Series is FREE! Join us Wednesdays at 6:30pm beginning Wednesday, June 19th with Jim Yeager! Pack a picnic, bring a blanket, enjoy live music & scenic views from the hillside at Artistree!

See the full line up [here](#).

Thank you to Haystack Digital for sponsoring this year's concert series!

All dates are weather dependent. No pets allowed. Service dogs welcome.

Reservations are not required.

Artistree Community Arts Center & Gallery
 2095 Pomfret Road/PO Box 158
 South Pomfret, VT 05067
 802.457.3500 ext. 129

Support Artistree at <https://artistreecommunityartscenter-bloom.kindful.com/> and www.artistreevt.org

CHARLES B. DANFORTH LIBRARY

Open Hours

3 - 5 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays

4 – 6 p.m. Thursdays

10 a.m. – Noon – Saturdays

More new books are coming soon!

Charles B. Danforth Library, P.O. Box 204, Barnard, VT 05031

6208 VT Route 12 Phone: 802-234-9408

Email: charlesdanforthlibrary@gmail.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/charlesdanforthlibrary/>

Trustees: Berna Donlon, Margaret Edwards, Judy Maynes, Susan McNulty, and Susan Salter Reynolds

TWIN RIVER BASEBALL SIGNUP

Thank you so much to the businesses and individuals who have contributed to Twin River Baseball for this 2024 season! We have four teams with players representing 15 Towns and because of sponsors and donors in the past two years, we’ve been able to outfit all four of our teams with helmets, bats, catcher’s gear, and other training equipment. We’ve also been able to help families by ensuring money is not a barrier for anyone to play in our program.

We're getting close, but we still need to raise about \$2,000 to help cover Umpires, Baseballs, field usage, and tournament fees.

We're also looking for additional sponsors as we host the Vermont State 14U Babe Ruth Championship at Woodstock's Vail Field, July 5th-7th!

To donate or become a sponsor, visit: Twin River Baseball

Questions? Check out the site to learn more, or email twinriverbaseball@outlook.com.

Thank you, all, for your help!

Bryce Sammel
Twin River Baseball
Barnard, VT

REVISED SCHOOL BUDGETS - ONLINE

In case you missed it earlier in the month, options to the original high school & middle school rebuilding proposal were presented by the school district. A short summary of the options and the costs are available here (the 3rd link down); <https://cnuz.tv/barnardvt>

The article links to the meeting video if you’re interested in the details. Additionally, the June 6th edition of the Vermont Standard covered the story. They also have an update on that story today.

Regards,
Randal Vaughn

DONATIONS FOR JULY 6TH EVENT

This is a reminder that the Barnard Firemen are picking up donations for the July 6th flea market and chicken barbecue. Any Barnard resident wishing to donate their gently used household items and furniture (please no clothing, bedding, or linens) can schedule pick-up by calling Scott Mills at 802-234-9073.

FALL GLAD RAGS SALE & DONATIONS

Our Fall 2024 Sale dates will be Friday Sept. 20 - 2 PM - 6 PM, Saturday Sept. 21 - 9 AM - 2 PM, Sunday Sept. 22 - 10 AM - 1 PM (when everything is half price)

We recommend bringing your own shopping bags.

Our summer Saturday collection dates will be 7/13, 7/27, 8/3 & 8/17. The hours will be from 10-1. We are looking for fall and winter clothes please.

For more information about making donations please visit our website at <https://www.gladrags.org/donateinfo>

For the latest information join our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/145529065206>

HELP WANTED

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR & ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

The Town of Barnard is looking to fill the positions of Zoning Administrator and Administrative assistant, Due to the resignation of Rob Ramrath who had held these positions until the end of may.

If you are interested in working for the Town of Barnard in either or both of these positions, please contact the Selectmen at Selectboard@BarnardVT.us

The Selectboard wishes to thank Mr, Ramrath for his years of dedicated service.

LOCAL CRYPTOGRAM

A cryptogram is a code in which one letter is substituted for another. For example, the word “Church” could be written BWMSBW. The letter B would be the letter C and would be so throughout the entire message. In this message E = O. The solution is found by trial and error. The CRYPTOGRAM answer is on the last page.

“MY PMNP FEXQB KNHY MTJ EFA
QTDYVPS JYZXVY, KXJP CXNVB
YRYA MTJ YAYKS WVEK
EII EJTPTEA; WEV TW MY
RTEQNPYJ PMTJ BXPS MY
YJPN DQTJMYJ N IVYZYBYAP
PMNP FTQQ VYNZM MTKJYQW.”

-PMEKNJ INTAY

THE PLANNING COMMISSION meets on the Monday prior to the first Wednesday of every month at 7 PM in the Town Office.

BARNARD CONSERVATION COMMISSION meets the first Monday of the month, 7:00pm, Town Hall.

BEES MEETINGS are held at 6:30pm on the 2nd Thursday of each month in the library at the school.

DANFORTH LIBRARY HOURS: Monday & Wednesdays 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.; Thursdays 4:00 - 6:00 p.m., & Saturdays 10:00 a.m. to Noon. Phone: 802-234-9408. Email: charlesdanforthlibrary@gmail.com. ECF Wi-Fi.

SELECTBOARD meets the first and third Wednesday of the month at the Town offices at 7:00pm.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR,
selectboard@barnardvt.us, 234-2911 x 2, Cell 603-762-5280. By phone at any time, in person by appointment.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR,
zoning@barnardvt.us, 234-2911 x 2, Cell 603-762-5280. By phone at any time, in person by appointment.

TOWN CLERK office hours are Monday and Tuesday, 8:00am—3:30pm. Public access is restricted. Call 234-9211 for an appointment.

THE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD meets the third Thursday of the month at 7:00pm at the Barnard Town Hall as necessary.

THE BARNARD ENERGY COMMITTEE meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month, 7:00pm at the Town Hall

BARNARD GENERAL STORE, Monday-Saturday: 7am-7pm, Sundays: 8am-6pm.
<https://www.facebook.com/barnardgeneralstore>

BARNARD LISTSERV: to subscribe please send an email to: barnard-subscribe@lists.vitalcommunities.org

RECYCLING Click [here](#) for Hours and Regulations

THE BARNARD INN is running a "Feeding Neighbors & Sustaining Community" campaign. Purchase an e-Gift Card and in turn the chefs will feed neighbors. Whole chicken dinners (serves 4-6) and individual sized meals to help feed Vermonters in need. Thank you and please stay safe. E-Gift Cards are available at www.barnardinn.com.

ECFIBER Governing Board meets the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7pm via. Zoom. Contact the clerk of the District. secretary@ecfiber.net, for meeting information or visit <https://www.ecfiber.net/virtual-meetings/>

HISTORICAL SOCIETY Programs to be announced. Questions? Email: historicalbarnard1761@gmail.com

DELECTABLE MOUNTAIN QUILTERS (DMQ) meet the 1st Tuesday of every month at the Bethel Library from 1-3pm. Contact: Mary Croft 802-763-7074

MT. TOM FARMERS MARKET AT SASKADENA SIX

Mt. Tom Farmers Market will be open every Saturday from 10 am to 1 pm in the Saskadena Six parking lot. Woodstock Resorts has generously donated this great location.

Mt. Tom Farmers Market is an old-fashioned market where vendors sell right out of their trucks and cars. We have been operating since 1982, which makes Mt. Tom Farmers Market the oldest operating open-air market in the area.

Farmers markets are great places to get the freshest local products and support local businesses. Truly local business at its best!

Contact Neil Lamson tel (802) 763-2070 or email foxxfarm22@gmail.com for more information.

Hope to see you at Mt. Tom Farmers Market!

Neil Lamson
Manager, Mt. Tom Farmers Market
foxxfarm22@gmail.com
(802) 763-2070

“A VERMONT QUILT SAMPLER”

The Exhibition will be opening June 29 – Sept 2. This exhibition highlights a variety of quilting techniques, styles, and stories celebrating the talent, creativity, and storytelling of quilters in Vermont. Open daily, 10:00AM-5:00PM starting June 29 and is included with admission. <https://billingsfarm.org/quilt-exhibition/>

Billings Farm and Museum, Woodstock, VT,
info@billingsfarm.org

SILVER LAKE SYRUPS IS OPEN

Silver Lake Syrups at 5613 Stage Road is open for the season, and will be serving Maple Creemees!

Also available is fresh Maple Syrup, along with Maple Pecan Pies, Raw Honey, Fresh Eggs, and so much more.

July and August hours are - Friday 3pm-8pm, Saturday, Sunday, 12pm - 8pm.

To celebrate the week of the Fourth of July, we will be open July 1-7, 12pm-8pm!

Cash - Check - Credit Card - Apple Pay.

Sonja & Eric Withington

802-234-1647

CRYPTOGRAM ANSWER

He that would make his own liberty secure, must guard even his enemy from opposition; for if he violates this duty he establishes a precedent that will reach himself.

- Thomas Paine