

The art of Michael Wishart (1928-96) has inspired poetry and there are poets within his family. The poet Annie Freud included the poem 'Moths on a Blue Path' in her collection 'The Remains'. It is subtitled 'After *Moths on a Blue Path* by Michael Wishart and for Graham'. Here is the picture:



Annie's mother, Kitty Epstein, was Michael's cousin – Kitty's mother Kathleen and Michael's mother Lorna Wishart were two of the Garman sisters. Since Annie's father, Lucien Freud, is said by Wikipedia to have had 14 children, some of them artists and writers, this extends the concept of the Wishart artistic family to an almost impossible size; more important to Binsted is the hushed, green Sussex feeling of this poem, its context of a Bohemian life that is close to nature's detritus, and the image of a train 'crossing the Marsh' in the last lines of the poem, possibly inspired by the view from Marsh Farm, Binsted. Here is the poem:

#### **Moths on a Blue Path**

Having drunk the half-bottle of crème de menthe  
that you found in the drinks cupboard after breakfast,  
you drag along this path, your eyes fixed on the floor,  
scouring for a gift among the gaudy snail shells,  
empty acorn cups and coiled trails left by the worms.  
It's the hush of a Sussex summer's day.

You're down for the week and may stay longer.  
The studio rent's overdue and the curtains have gone  
to the cleaners. Bobby's in the South of France  
and the club is closed till September the first.  
Mother wrote full of enthusiasm about the new roses  
and has promised a trip to Rottingdean.

What has made the moths come out in such numbers,  
streaking the grass with their silvery eye shadow,  
beating their wings in hapless frenzy,  
ungainly in the hour of death? You hope  
for something nice for lunch. A train crosses the Marsh.  
The uniform greenness oppresses you.