

It's time to **DOWNLOAD** our Spring Issue!

Browse the **Table of Contents!**

Share your **THOUGHTS!**

CML News

Last fall was a momentous season for all of us here at Choice Magazine Listening. Along with the promotions of Editor-in-Chief Annie Kyrkostas and our Publisher, Michael Tedeschi, we gained a new Associate Editor—and (near and dear to my own heart) fellow super-commuter—**Alfredo Franco**. Alfredo is a published author, a professor of creative writing, and a connoisseur of poetry, music, and the performing and visual arts. Already, we have been enriched by his contributions to our work and we hope you will continue to appreciate all he has to offer, starting with his fine writing in this issue's "Highlights" and "Top Picks," below. Welcome, Alfredo!

Highlights

By most estimates, the Cold War began in 1947, ending in 1991 with the collapse of the Soviet Union. For those who lived the era, there are indelible collective memories, such as the constant fear of nuclear war, the air raid drills at school, and, in popular fiction and movies, the glamorous adventures of international espionage. In this issue, several of our pieces revisit the period, including "Songs for the Cold War," a poem by **Tom Sleigh** that recaptures typical American childhood experiences of that era, and **Thomas Powers'** "The Nuclear Worrier," a review of an important memoir by Daniel Ellsberg (the man who leaked The Pentagon Papers), that reveals how close the world came to nuclear annihilation. Among our most lively selections is "Spies Like Us," an interview with one of the most seminal (and prescient) authors of the Cold War, **John le Carré**, whose grimly realistic books belied the heroic stylishness of the James Bond novels and films. The interview also features **Ben Macintyre**, a journalist who has

written extensively on espionage. Both writers discuss spycraft and offer keen insights into contemporary political issues.

We always love to take you to other countries, and in this issue we strike out for Afghanistan, India, and Ireland (among others!). **Will Mackin**'s powerful short story, "The Lost Troop," portrays American soldiers enduring not only the brutality of war in Afghanistan but also its long stretches of boredom and isolation. Another work of fiction, "Swimming Coach," by **Anosh Irani**, gives a startling Indian twist to a classic John Cheever story. **Dan Barry**'s heartbreaking "The Lost Children of Tuam" delves into a notorious home for unwed mothers that operated for decades in County Galway, Ireland, and the brave, tenacious quest of one woman, Catherine Corless, to expose its dark secrets.

Of course, we don't neglect the United States! Some of our American pieces include "Waiting for Spider-Man," by the Pulitzer Prize-winning **Junot Díaz**, which expresses the pain of a child immigrant to New Jersey, and the short story, "Cutting Horse," by **LaToya Watkins**, portraying Ridley Johnson, a former drug dealer and horse breeder from West Texas who is alienated at multiple levels—from his aspirational wife, from the middle-class white community in which he now lives, and from a police force that targets African Americans. "Real People Radio Stories" by **Jeffrey A. Keith** is a fascinating report on WMMT 88.7 FM, a radio station in West Virginia that strives to preserve Appalachian culture but that also reaches out to the region's large prison community in remarkable ways.

There is so much more in this issue—poetry by **Linda Pastan** and **Robert Wrigley**; essays on topics as diverse as lichen, insomnia, Antarctic exploration, Abraham Lincoln, and football concussions. We even include a giddy paean to America's favorite edible—the hot dog! Whatever you do, don't call it a "sandwich."

TOP PICKS:

Sometimes, there are pieces that all three of our editors fall in love with. In this issue, one such piece is **Amanda Rea**'s short story, "The Year of the Frog," in

which the two lonely children of a hardened (and hard-working) single mother “adopt” a funny but hapless middle-aged man in rural Colorado. We also admired **Terrance Hayes’** contemporary reinvigoration of the classical sonnet form, and **David Wolman’s** “Red Dawn in Lapland,” which describes the rigorous training of Finland’s elite snow troops. Distinguished for having repulsed a massive Soviet attack in 1939 during the Russo-Finnish War, will these soldiers be up to the demands of contemporary warfare and its increased use of technology?

And Special Thanks To...

Bruce N., a subscriber and Facebook friend whose rave review of our Summer 2017 issue left us honored, humbled, and energized. Along with his five-star rating, he acclaimed, “The editors select [...] with as much good judgment as the panels that read for the Pushcart Prize and Pulitzer Prize,” and described each issue as a “a work of anthological beauty containing truly choice items, each of which is the work of a master of its genre.” Thanks for the boost, Bruce! If you’d like to connect with us on social media, we’d love to hear your thoughts, too: just go to www.facebook.com/ChoiceMagazineListening.

Happy Spring from Annie, Raquel, Mike, Jay, and Alfredo