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CML News

Time at CML takes on a curious quality. No less so in these long, news-drenched quarantine months—my own fourth anniversary as an editor here came and went unremarkably (and blissfully unremarked) in the midst of final corrections for this summer issue. As a quarterly publication, we engage in a kind of time-travel triple-jump: finishing one issue just as we lay the foundation of the next, all while keeping our minds on the deep future, the world of the archive, and posterity. At these times, we consider stories from months past while anticipating, searching, and hoping for ones that will speak some truth about the state of the world in the season to come.

As we struggle daily through overlapping, reinforcing crises of public health, racial injustice, and economic inequality, it becomes easier to push the deep future out of mind. We are creatures of flesh and blood, after all: hungry human minds in fragile, daily-need-ful bodies. Paradoxically, it is this thought that comforts most, that we have one another in this time far more meaningfully than we had the things whose absences we feel so sharply now.

Indeed, this issue would not have been possible without the extraordinary efforts and abilities of many within our burgeoning CML family, from old friends at Talking Book Publishers and the National Audio Company to a chorus of new voices in new, safely socially distanced spaces (more on that shortly). Truly, we are overfull—of pride and gratitude for their efforts, and of excitement to share the fruits of their labor. CML was established nearly six decades ago for the purpose of sharing stories that illuminate the depth and breadth of human experience, and we remain committed to that mission. As long as there are stories to tell, we'll keep telling them. As long as you're there, we'll be here.

Highlights

The whole world has gone through extreme pain and upheaval in the last four months, and it is not yet over. Meanwhile, we take less for granted, and the simple rituals of daily life become more sacred to us. And so we open with **W.S. Di**

Piero's poem "Aubade"—a song of dawn, of sunrise, and therefore of hope—which affirms and celebrates "the glory of the casual and destined" and "shouts morning blessings" on all people, from shopkeepers to megachurch choir singers, who comprise this "world of chronic pain and tenderness." In this issue, you will also find poems by **Jorie Graham, Louise Glück, and Eamon Grennan.**

The pandemic has affected all countries. **Wang Xiuying's** "#coronasomnia" gives us an inside look at life in Wuhan under quarantine, as people pass time, observe social distancing, and contemplate the crisis in the country's movement for liberal democratic reform. Meanwhile in the United States, **Helen Ouyang's** harrowing "State of Emergency" provides a first-hand account of her work as an emergency room doctor at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital during the peak of the Covid-19 outbreak.

And yet, for all the challenges facing us now and in the near future—it's summer! Two works of fiction capture the irrepressible joy (and mischief!) of youth during summer vacation: "Hellion" by **Julia Elliott** and "Gracie and Devere" by **Jack Driscoll.** Our recording of "Hellion" is in fact a special treat, recorded live at Symphony Space in New York City by Donna Lynne Champlin, a noted star of stage, screen, and television.

And let's not forget food! In "Good Bread," **Bill Buford** movingly recounts his long sojourn in France to learn the art of French cooking, during which he works at a simple boulangerie in Lyon. There, he becomes the apprentice and close friend of a wise but unceremonious master baker—his loveable, unforgettable neighbor, Bob—who reveals to him the secrets of the perfect baguette.

TOP PICKS

"The Voice Keepers," by **Laura Preston,** recovers the lost but fascinating history of the Voice-O-Graph, recording booths that were once ubiquitous in American towns and cities, allowing people to record messages onto inexpensive shellac-covered records that could be mailed to friends and family. We include a selection of some of these touching, funny, and sometimes even romantic recordings culled from surviving discs.

"Lady Lazarus, Cambridge, England, 1956" is a powerful short story by **Janet Burroway,** told from the point of view of a vain, clueless, and insecure male student who fails to comprehend his rejection by the intelligent and gifted young

scholar, Simone. The title alludes to a major poem by American poet Sylvia Plath, who herself studied at Newnham College, University of Cambridge, on a Fulbright Scholarship in 1956. This is also the debut recording for CML of Kathleen Fletcher, writer, actor, and educator, a wonderful new addition to our roster of readers.

“Portrait of a Production” by **Michael Murray** is a first-hand account of his collaboration with the legendary director José Quintero on a seminal 1956 production of Eugene O’Neill’s play, *The Iceman Cometh*. Murray presents a riveting portrait of Quintero at work, as well as of the actors, particularly Jason Robards, whose name has become synonymous with some of O’Neill’s most tormented male characters. Not only do we see geniuses at work in this piece, but we are taken back to a dynamic and highly creative moment in American culture.

The “D-B” Beat

The works of many of the poets featured in this issue are available via the National Library Service’s BARD program. Ask your local reader advisor how to borrow these titles using the number prefixed with “DB”:

- From “On Writing Poems Facing Into the Broken World”: **Jane Hirshfield’s** 2015 essay collection *Ten Windows: How Great Poems Transform the World* is listed as **DB81213**.
- From “Image”: former Poet Laureate of the United States **Louise Glück’s** anthologized *Poems, 1962-2012* is listed as **DB79850**.
- From “I Won’t Live Long”: a pairing of CML favorites, **Jorie Graham’s** collection *The Dream of the Unified Field* (read by Gabriella Cavallero) can be found under **DB45086**.

And Special Thanks To...

Marcella "Oracion" I., of Springfield, MA., who left a message telling us, "I appreciate your collection, and I *really* appreciate introducing me to some journals and giving me others I never thought I could read without a reader. Thanks again. You're an awesome past time."

Happy Summer from Annie, Mike, Jay, Alfredo and Raquel!