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CML News

Once in a while, one of our volunteers turns in a recording that is good. Even *very* good. In those cases, we consider the option of using their recording as a final piece in the issue—bypassing the studio in Denver—and doing any corrections in-house. In this issue, we gleefully share that **Jay Popham**, one of the editors at CML, has done just that. “Stream Come True” by **Paul Ford** is a short imagined dialogue between a son, wanting to become a “streamer,” and his tech-veteran father, who feels the need to bring some truth to bear on this “dream” job. The result is a tongue-in-cheek look at the future, and Jay’s recording is a delight. Don’t miss it.

Highlights

“Summertime, and the livin’ is easy!” says the George Gershwin song. Of course, we know that living is never easy, whatever the season, not in a world like ours that continues to face war, climate change, and the as yet unknown consequences of AI technology. Thank goodness for the wholesome things that help us keep going—good radio, baseball, CML... not to mention the Cathedral of Notre-Dame!

Indeed, though still under reconstruction after the fire of 2019, Notre-Dame has not been lost. Like most medieval cathedrals, Notre-Dame is a multi-sensory, even synesthetic, space that seeks to inspire transcendence through stimulation not only of sight but of sound and even smell. And so in addition to architectural and engineering specialists now hard at work to restore Notre-Dame’s original splendor, you can find a team of acoustical experts from the French National Centre for Scientific Research as well. In “A Cathedral of Sound” by **Madeleine Schwartz**, we learn of the remarkable ways in which this team seeks to recapture “the glorious resonances that gave the building its unique sound.” As a bonus, we offer supplemental audio of music recorded from different locations within the cathedral that exemplify the building’s complex acoustical dynamics.

Glorious resonances are also what poetry and fiction discover, even in the most dire and inglorious circumstances. In this issue, we offer extraordinary poems by **Will Brewbaker**, **Saddiq Dzukogi**, **Peter Gizzi**, **Ann Lauterbach**, and **Brianna Noll**, as well as fiction by **Yiru Zhang**, **Rivka Galchen**, and **Hernan Diaz**, winner of this year's Pulitzer Prize for the novel, *Trust* (available from the NLS's BARD program, listed as DB 107949).

Half memoir, half literary criticism, Iranian-American author **Azareen Van der Vliet Oloomi**'s powerful piece, "Whose Time Are We Speaking In?", gives a searing account of her family's experience as immigrants. The violent trauma left her dissatisfied with traditional literary modes of time and narrative structure. Reading other exilic writers and writers of color, Oloomi finds a common thread: liberation from linearity.

Marking time is a ritual that cements the great love between a daughter and her father in **Tarn Udall**'s "The Universe Clock". The author's father, Randy Udall, a scion of the distinguished Udall family of American politicians and environmental activists, implores his daughter to symbolically "wind" a large stone in Wyoming's Wind River Range by rocking it to and fro annually and thus "keep things in harmony." Even at the most troubled stages of their relationship, the ritual proves healing and provides her with a strong link to her father after his death.

And then there is the ritual of pelting people with oranges! In "Beaten to a Pulp," **Jon Mooallem** takes us to Ivrea, Italy, to experience a three-day festival in which citizens pelt each other with 900 tons of oranges. Despite painful hits to the face and other parts of the body, the Battle of the Oranges has survived centuries to gain recognition as the "the most ancient historical Carnival in Italy."

A more brutal and endless kind of fight is the one for technological and economic hegemony. **John Lanchester** reviews Chris Miller's new book, *Chip War: The Fight for the World's Most Critical Technology*, giving us, in the process, the astonishing history of the microchip—taking us from Bell Labs to California by way of Missouri, from Texas Instruments to Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Corporation via Thanh Hóa—a technological revolution that continues to shape geopolitics to this day.

TOP PICKS

Jorie Graham is no stranger to CML subscribers. She is one of our favorite contemporary poets. In recent years, Graham's poems have assumed an epic quality, exploring the far reaches of language and consciousness as well as the loss and mourning that permeate the anthropocene epoch. In this issue, we offer her new poem, "The VR," in which virtual technology threatens to estrange the world from reality, engagement, and accountability, offering palliative illusion in its stead: "...look, the place where the chemical factory was before the world disappeared/is full of wheat, and doors seem to open/as I approach."

Reality's greatest horrors confronted the young Adolfo Kaminsky, who lived in France during the Nazi Occupation. Rather than flee, he became one of the most proficient forgers for the French Resistance, creating false documents that saved the lives of countless civilians and special operatives. As **Adam Shatz** reveals in his gripping piece, "Beyond Borders," Kaminsky, always on the move and risking everything, "defended the idea that each individual[...] should enjoy the right to move freely, to cross borders, to choose the destination of his exile."

Russian writer **Lyudmila Ulitskaya** provides one of our finest short stories in this issue, "Alisa," translated by the renowned team of Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky. In the tradition of Anton Chekhov, Ulitskaya presents a vivid yet sensitive and understated portrait of a woman facing both the fears and the unexpected joys of incipient old age.

In her vivid memoir, "If You Weren't There," **Sandy Robertson** remembers her semester in Spain in 1967. At the time, Spain was still under the rule of fascist dictator Francisco Franco, and she is shocked by the arrest and disappearance of her politically active Spanish friends. She returns to America to continue her studies at Berkeley, considering herself privileged to live in a democracy, only to have her complacency shattered by the 1969 People's Park protests and subsequent occupation of the city by National Guard troops ordered by then-Governor Ronald Reagan. "Not one article," Robertson writes, "gave a true account of the violence and repression we had lived through."

The "D-B Beat"

In the "ordinary season" between production deadlines and crunchtime, our usual work as editors at CML consists mostly of reading and evaluating pieces of writing selected from our list of sources. From time to time, an article will come

to our attention as a potential good fit for the very start of an issue. When we found **Elisa Gabbert's** "As Wallace Stevens Once Put It: Hi!," on famous first lines in poetry, we knew we had a way to start this issue off on a sweet note. Subscribers interested in hearing the rest of a few of the poems mentioned can check out the following titles from the NLS BARD program:

- *Door in the Mountain: New and Collected Poems, 1965-2003* by Jean Valentine (DB 59592)
- *A New Path to the Waterfall* by Raymond Carver (DB 31126)
- and, of course, *Collected Poems* by Wallace Stevens (DB 09504)

And special thanks to...**the board members of The Lucerna Fund** who unanimously approved CML's budget at the annual meeting in April, and encouraged us to explore ways we might want to expand our mission, asking, "Is the mission being fulfilled in the best way possible, or is there something else you want to do? Whatever you decide, we're here to make it happen." We hope to gather together over the summer and discuss. Any suggestions from our subscribers are welcome!

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