

CML News

Every once in a while we run across a journal that we haven't seen before. This occurred back in June when a former CML Associate Editor let us know about an international publication of current writing called *The Riveter*, that looked promising. (FYI—former editors never lose their CML-reading superpowers.) Collections from Germany, Italy, Spain, and Russia, were quickly evaluated. When those produced several possible pieces for consideration in CML's fall issue, the rest of *The Riveter* archive was tackled. Austrian, Polish, Nordic, Dutch, the Baltics, and Swiss editions were read—until we finally decided to publish the short story, “Whispers,” by Alexandru Colțan, from the Romanian edition. We are grateful to our editor/friend for bringing this rich multi-national journal to our attention, and we hope you enjoy Colțan's atmospheric ‘tale of the hunt.’

Highlights

Here we are again, another fall season, but this time on the brink of an American election that could have untold consequences for the world at large. With so much at stake, it's understandable that we experience anxiety and stress. Fortunately, we have CML to accompany us during this challenging time, keeping us informed with well-researched articles while also entertaining and soothing us with beautifully written essays, fiction, and poetry.

In this issue, we offer you powerful fiction by some of the world's best writers, including **Rachel Kushner**, whose story, “The True Depth of a Cave,” explores a mysterious underground world that retains the echoes of geological as well as human history. **Thomas McGuane's** “Thataway,” by turns comical and bittersweet, offers us a portrait of a family in pieces: a successful man who'd rather forget his humble origins, as well as his estranged family members, brought together again by an untimely passing. And, be ready to be deeply moved by **Michael Deagler's** “The Pleasure of a Working Life,” in which we follow the main character's superficially unremarkable life, a life nevertheless full of reading, of inner thoughts, desires, vulnerability, and plain old decency. As a bonus to our fiction offerings, **Walker Mimms** explores the writing principles of the late **Cormac McCarthy**, one of the most renowned American novelists of recent times. McCarthy almost never discussed his thoughts on craft but revealed them in his feedback to his friend, the great marine biologist Roger Payne, who'd shared his manuscript with him. As always, we also bring you outstanding poetry culled from

America's finest journals, including work by **Ange Mlinko**, **Trey Moody**, **Susan Leslie Moore**, **Kiyoko Reidy**, **Philip Schultz**, **Alan Shapiro**, and **Saadi Youssef**.

At CML, we love to feature fascinating but forgotten figures from the past. In "A Forgotten Turner Classic" by **Joshua Prager**, you will meet George Eyser, the one-legged gymnast who won a record six medals in a single day at the 1904 Olympics in St. Louis, Missouri. "Every Watermark and Stain," by **Gill Partington**, reaccesses the dubious career of Thomas James Wise, an English bibliophile who forged books—by Elizabeth Barrett Browning; Percy Bysshe Shelley; Alfred, Lord Tennyson and others—editions worth thousands of dollars on the antique market until the 1930s, when book sleuths revealed them to be fakes. Was Wise a mere forger, or an imaginative genius who created editions that their authors *should* have published but never did?

Unusual people—and unusual jobs! How about "worm grunting"? It was new to us too, yet fully enchanting. In "The Worm Charmers," **Michael Adno** visits the Revell family in Florida's Apalachicola Forest. The Revells have been harvesting worms for five generations, becoming masters of the art of teasing worms out of the earth through directed vibrations. Though isolated from much of modern life, the Revells are content. As Gary Revell put it: "It ain't been no easy deal, but there's really nothing on earth I'd trade for it."

TOP PICKS

Though hostilities were suspended in 1953, the Korean War has never officially ended. Since then, two starkly different societies have emerged—the economic powerhouse of the ostensibly democratic Republic of Korea in the south, and, in the north, the isolated, nuclear-armed, totalitarian, Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Between them runs the DMZ, or "Demilitarized Zone," which President Bill Clinton called "the scariest place on earth." In "Korean Hearts," **William T. Vollmann** travels along the DMZ, collecting gut-wrenching stories of survivors of North Korean concentration camps and others who, in turn, survived the brutal persecution of communists as well as their relatives and descendants under the "guilt-by-association" system in capitalist South Korea. Hunger, torture, forced labor, and divided families longing for reunion abound in **Vollmann's** epic and painful journey.

In "Playing the Numbers," **Victor Lodato** lovingly remembers his Italian-American mother, whose gambling addiction nearly bankrupted her

already struggling family. The piece is a sensitive and telling portrait of bygone values, when poverty and even dysfunctional behavior could not sunder a family's essential bond.

189 million Americans suffer from obesity, with many struggling to find weight-loss solutions that not only work but that are free of damaging side-effects. In "Ozempic or Bust," **Daniel Engber** charts the history of weight-loss medications, from fen-phen in the 1990s to the present-day wonder drug, Ozempic. After decades of failed medications, procedures, and increased public awareness (including bariatric surgery and the Obama administration's health initiatives), will Ozempic finally prove the safe solution to America's obesity crisis?

We also highly recommend "Sanrevelle," an unforgettable short story by **Dave Eggers**, in which a disenchanting man in his thirties seeks adventure and rebirth. But does he have the courage and persistence, not to mention the rowing skills, to prove his love and worthiness to his brilliant, unflappable sailing teacher, Captain Sanrevelle? Enjoy!

The "D-B Beat"

At CML, we work to cultivate an appreciation of both new and emerging writers as well as more established voices. In this issue, we offer a bounty of the latter category: five of the authors whose work is featured or discussed in this issue have five or more titles available for download on the NLS BARD program. You can explore more from these prolific authors by consulting with your local reader advisor:

- Rachel Kushner: 5 titles
- William T. Vollmann: 8 titles
- Thomas McGuane: 11 titles
- Cormac McCarthy: 13 titles
- Dave Eggers: 14 titles

And special thanks to...James F. from Georgia who said, "Many thanks for all the years of your great service!"

Happy Fall reading from Annie, Jay, Alfredo, Raquel, & Mike!