

VIA

VOICES IN ITALIAN AMERICANA

VIA: Voices in Italian Americana is a semiannual literary and scholarly review of and about the cultures of Italy and its diasporas.



BORDIGHERA PRESS

Feast of the Epiphany

by Leigh Esposito

I'VE BEEN DIDACTIC ABOUT IT, BUT LET'S BE fair—my methods work. Consider the early Christians. Didn't they show us that holidays are the short cut to conversion? *You like Samhain, man? I've got All Saints Day for you.* The old missionaries were like drug dealers.

I'm guilty of the same offense. Except I don't feel guilty. She needs to know who she is, what with that shock of copper hair and Dutch surname from her father. She will have to announce herself to the world. No one will guess at what simmers inside her.

So, when she's making her list of presents and winding the Nutcracker snowglobe, I sneak in Italian phrases and namedrop Babbo Natale. The Italian Father Christmas is stately and attenuated, more sagacious grandpa than jolly elf—but he wears red, travels by reindeer, and, of course, there's a beard. I try not to hit the distinctions too hard. I want her to believe Santa is real, and real people don't come in country-specific versions.

We talk about Christmas Eve dinner in Napoli: the Feast of the Seven Fishes. Virgie imagines a parade of white-coated servers with silver platters aloft, each holding a single gleaming fish like the illustration for a lost lyric of "Twelve Days of Christmas." She won't eat the actual "fishes." She construes them as objects of ritual, after which everyone gets to eat the *real* Christmas dinner: spaghetti. Christmas is supposed to be joyful, she says, and seven rounds of seafood does not comport. Secretly, I feel the same way.

She loves the *presepio*, which she plays with when I'm not looking. Her fascination skyrocketed three years ago, when my brother Bobby gave her a small ceramic figure rendered in her image, down to the ridiculous cowlick that makes her hair look like a 1960s screen star in the morning and Dennis the Menace in the afternoon. When she unwrapped the figure, it took her a long moment to process its positioning: the angle of the crouch. Then she was rolling on the tiles. Hysterical.

"What? It's *Italian*," Bobby had said, as if that exonerated him. "I thought you eat this stuff up." He assumed a formal tone. "The Neapolitans call it a *cacone*."

"What a great choice for a four-year-old."

"What's a *cacone*?" Virgie had asked from the floor.

"It means *the pooper*," said Bobby. He was being delicate; it actually means *the crapper*. I was glad he had the restraint to withhold the real translation, which Virgie would be sure to disseminate. *Pooper* isn't on most parents' radar, but *crapper* gets attention.

"The proper name is *pastore che caca*. The shepherd that poops." I tried to sound dignified, as one does when imparting scatological traditions to children.

According to Bobby, one could now purchase crappers that looked like the Queen of England, the Pope, or even you. Bobby had special-ordered the Virgie-crapper to torture me; although I would have loved a *cacone* as a child, I was now duty-bound to denounce it. He does not understand the hypocrisy endemic to parenting.

"Why is there a pooping shepherd in the nativity?" Virgie had asked.

They stared at me.

"Because everyone has to poop, even when the son of God is born."

With the crapper's introduction to our household, the world was now her toilet. She made her *cacone*

poop on all my Christmas decorations, and although I did not mind when it pooped on Rudolph and the light-up carousel, I put my foot down with the Baby Jesus.

That April, I got a call from the teacher. Virgie had snuck the figure into school for show-and-tell, catching her teacher unaware. I got a lot of dirty looks on the birthday-party circuit that year.

Our house is the Christmas equivalent of a crazy cat lady. This year, I added light-up reindeer pulling Santa's sleigh across the roof, and I almost died putting it up there. One of the reindeer had Toulouse-Lautrec and kept toppling the whole team over.

I attribute my recent excesses to Mom. By now, we're grateful when she crooks a finger at us and says, "I know you." Sometimes she sees us coming and bolts. Doctor Haskins say not to worry about it, but he says that about everything. He could normalize a stabbing.

Even on good days, Mom eyes us like a skittish horse, like we're trying to trick her—which is what we did to get her here. She still had *capacity* then, but I knew she was confused, which was kind of the point.

Now we bring her sweets or take her to lunch and listen to her talk. We never correct her when she says she was a decorated veteran who did two tours of duty as a combat surgeon in '51. Her memories come directly from *MASH*, the film version, which she'd watched over and over in the summer of '70 during her stint as a movie usher. It's amazing how vividly she recalls the details and subplots.

Mom's stories enrapture Virgie, who has endless questions about South Korea that Mom never tires of answering. Her observations on the conflict are strikingly apt. I have no idea where they come from. Other than

MASH, I don't remember her having any interest in the Korean War. She wasn't even born until 1952.

I think Virgie senses something is off with Mom's stories, but she devours them unquestioningly. This is why Mom prefers talking to Virgie over me. It's obvious I'm pandering. Pandering incenses Mom, who blows up at me often. Virgie isn't scared when this happens. She looks awed, like she turned a corner and found a flash mob.

"You stuck me here, you piece of shit," Mom shouted last week when we came to decorate her room for the season. We brought some of her best pieces from the old house, like the one-armed nutcracker and the wooden sleigh. Virgie gawped when Mom threw the sleigh at me.

"Everything alright in here, Regina?" Ophie, our favorite nurse, had appeared in the doorway. "You being nice to your daughter?"

"You mean this piece of shit?"

"What's a piece of shit?" Virgie asked later. She is contemplative after seeing my mother, whom she called No-No, both because it was short for Nonna and because she'd observed that *no* was her grandma's favorite answer.

"Let's not repeat that word, Virgie."

"Sorry, Mommy." She was silent, then said, optimistically, "At least she's using her words."

It is the first day of December, the start of Advent. Virgie pulls me out of bed, leaving her father asleep. She is a miniature Ann Margaret with her pink nightgown and morning bouffant. "Mommy," she whispers. "The Advent Fairy came."

This is one of our jokes. Virgie knows I put the treats in the Advent calendar. It's nice to have one sliver of Christmas magic for which I openly take credit.

I follow her downstairs, her feet light on the creaky steps. The ornate wooden Advent calendar—carved to look like a winter village—stands on a buffet table in the foyer next to the stairs where Virgie sits, waiting while I grind coffee beans and make my pour-over. I join her with mug in hand.

“Mom?” Her hand hovers over the drawer labeled *One*.

I throw back my head. “Let the season of Advent commence!”

She laughs and applauds. She loves my little rituals. She would be devastated if I stopped.

Devastated is how I felt at sixteen when Mom announced the end of the Santa “hassle,” as she suddenly put it. “It’s so draining,” she had drawled, cocktail aloft, loose but not drunk, in vodka *veritas*. She was soaring as I lost both engines. From that point on, she made us open our gifts on Christmas Eve. She was glib. “Why should we wait? It’s not like someone’s coming down the chimney.”

I will never do this to Virgie.

“Here I go!” Virgie screeches, sliding open the drawer and retrieving a small white card containing the curly Advent Fairy script. She reads eagerly.

“You will find me in a dark room when your fingers flip the switch;

I’m the crankiest of nutcrackers, Befana the Christmas Witch!”

“Witch? Cranky?” Virgie plants a hand on her hip. Christmas and witches are incompatibilities she can’t reconcile. But then she’s gone—running back up the stairs to the guest bedroom, which we still call No-No’s room because it’s where Mom used to stay when she slept over.

“Look!” Virgie shouts when I enter.

On the dresser is a miniature nutcracker in peasant costume with a black kerchief and a hook nose, broom in hand.

Virgie plucks up the doll. Her fingers trace the aquiline beak.

“Do you want to hear the story?” I say.

Virgie always wants the story.

I assume my storyteller voice. “It was a dark night in Bethlehem, and the sky was lit only by the North Star. The three kings were wandering the desert, following the Star, looking for the Baby Jesus, when they came upon a small cottage all by itself, so incongruous that it seemed enchanted.”

“What’s incongruous?”

“Incongruous means it doesn’t belong.”

There are no further questions, so I continue.

“The wise men knocked on the door of the cottage and an old woman answered, holding a broom.”

“Befana,” she guesses.

“*Befana*. She had been sweeping her house and she was irritated because they’d interrupted her. Befana lived alone, and she filled her days with obsessive cleaning, leaving her little time to think of other things, like that she was lonely and didn’t have a family.”

“Did she ever have a family?”

I pause. “I don’t know. Maybe she did and she lost them.”

Virgie looks troubled. I stroke her hair and she strokes Befana’s.

“The wise men said they had come in search of a child who would save humanity. They invited her to join them, but Befana refused. She chased them away with her broom. She said she had too much work to do. The wise men left Befana to her cleaning.”

Virgie sighs. “She lost the chance.”

“She lost the chance.”

“Did she change her mind? Did she go find them?”

Virgie hugs the doll tightly.

“She did, but it was too late. The wise men were gone. Befana was distraught.”

“What’s distraught?”

“It means she was very sad. She decided to go find this savior-child herself because she knew she’d made a bad choice. She’d been an angry old grumpkin who thought cleaning was more important than miracles.”

Virgie giggles. I would regret this explanation in the coming months when the threat of miracles prevented Virgie’s participation in household chores.

“Befana prepared for her journey, filling a sack with toys for the child. The wise men had brought him spices, oils, and precious metals, but Befana thought these gifts were rubbish.”

“Befana was right, Mommy. If someone brought me a bunch of rosemary for Christmas, I would say *keep it*.”

“And so it is,” I conclude, “that every year, on the night before the Feast of the Epiphany, Befana flies on her broom, searching for the Baby Jesus in every Italian child’s bedroom and leaving treats in their socks. At this point, it is the best Befana can do.”

Virgie shakes her head at the doll. She moves to slide off the bed.

“Now wait a minute, Virginia.” She gets her theatrics from me. “Along with toys and candy, Befana leaves a piece of candy coal, because every Italian child is just a little bit naughty, too.”

“Coal!” She exclaims, horrified, then quickly regroups. “Actually, I respect that.”

“Befana knows she herself is imperfect. She wishes she had gone with those wise men years ago. It haunts her.”

“It was a mistake,” says Virgie. “It happens to all of us.”

I smile. She breaks me, this girl. “Yes, but she tries to make it right, which counts for a lot. Sometimes it counts for everything.”

We contemplate the doll in the crook of Virgie’s arm.

“Mommy? Is it okay if I sleep with Befana? She’s really sad about losing the chance.”

“Of course. She’s yours now.”

Virgie runs off, leaving me to remember the last time Mom stayed in this room. It was the visit when we realized it was time.

We had talked about it for a while, after she started doing that first rash of odd little things: covering her air vents with blue painter’s tape and drinking only bottled water because, as she said casually, her tap had been poisoned. There was also the night she wore a bathrobe to a steakhouse, but this is LA, so no one even blinked. A woman at the next table was wearing silk pajamas.

The morning that changed things, I found Mom standing on the thin metal railing of the guest room balcony, reaching for a cobweb in the eaves with a hand broom.

When I saw her, I froze. It seemed that if I took one more step she might slip and be gone. Yet she moved with the ease of a funambulist. Perhaps the part of her brain that processed fear had already shut off.

I edged toward her, feigning calm, offering my hand. “Come on, Mom,” I cooed, like she was the child now. “It’s time to get down.”

“I know you,” she said, crooking her finger at me as she stepped down from the high wire.

*

I fought against the Home. It didn't feel like something they would do in Italy, though there are many old-age homes in Italy; the population is statistically geriatric. But "something they would do in Italy" is how I measure the Old Ways against a broken modernity. I'm pitting twenty-first century America against nineteenth-century Europe. I only admit this to myself.

Bobby accuses me of sentimentalism. He says I wouldn't like our ancestral ways if I were given horse meat for my endometriosis. I balked when he said it, but it turns out horse meat is a superfood. I'm too American to adopt this tradition. Horses have such big, sensitive eyes. Then again, so do cows.

I was trying to trick Mom into living with us. That's why I had her sleep over so often, even though her condo was just fifteen minutes away. I hoped it would seem natural when the day came that she stayed with us forever. Virgie was elated at the prospect. She couldn't wait for No-No to join our household. But, even in illness, Mom managed to evade us. The Italian proclivity for independence overcame the one for closeness.

The railing was her one-way ticket out.

Virgie brings the Befana doll everywhere—to the grocery store, her piano lessons, even to school, where the staff are relieved to see her with a Christmas figure that isn't defecating. Her teacher messages me to say that Virgie gave a moving presentation on Befana during show and tell. She said she knew real people who'd made bad choices and missed out on miracles, and Befana teaches us not to follow that sad path.

Virgie brings Befana to the Home when we visit Mom the Friday before Christmas Eve. We will be cooking

all weekend, so we want to see her before the chaos of brining and peeling begins. Mom will come over for Christmas itself, though Doctor Haskins warns she may think she's being kidnapped.

It's clear Mom is having a good day. Her eyes glow when she sees us, and she hugs me tight, calls me "My little Face." This is what she called me when I was a baby and never again, so she's way back in time today. She doesn't seem to recognize Virgie, but she seems charmed by this child who is her granddaughter.

"Can I leave Virgie with you for a minute, Mom?" I ask. I want to go talk to the doctor and see how Mom's doing.

"You can leave this peanut with me anytime. What's your name, honey?" She asks Virgie as I leave the room. I linger outside the door to eavesdrop.

"Virginia Regina Gantry," Virgie replies. "My middle name is for my favorite grandma."

Mom is quiet, but I hear effort in her silence, like a processor revving into overdrive. In a wistful voice, she says, "That's nice."

"Do you mind if I call you No-No?" asks Virgie.

Mom laughs and then falls silent again. "I'd like that," she says.

The hallway is a blur as I seek out the doctor. I cry often lately. The Christmas commercial where the adult kids come home for the holidays and everyone smiles knowingly over their morning coffee really gets me.

Doctor Haskins is staring at his computer when I enter his office. I can tell by the way he rushes to click a browser window closed that he is online shopping.

"Your mom is good," he says without prelude. "She likes the Christmas decorations you brought. She's been talking about Jennar a lot. She says the sleigh was Jennar's." He fixes me with a wooden gaze. "Is Jennar a name you recognize?"

I nod. “*Gennar*’ was her brother. He died very young. It was his sleigh.”

Doctor Haskins nods. “She seems far away today— but good,” he adds. “Not angry, not confused. Just . . . in another time.”

“Any other news?”

He shifts in his chair, and I can tell it’s something bad. “There’ve been some issues with swallowing.”

I learn that Mom is complaining of lumps in her throat.

“What kind of symptoms are you seeing?”

He counts on his fingers. “She prefers soup and ice cream.” He hesitates. “She’s been expectorating.”

I blink. “Spitting?”

“Yes. She’s having trouble with deglutition generally. It’s not full-blown dysphagia, but we’ll monitor.”

Doctor Haskins gets more technical as he grows less comfortable.

Now I’m having trouble swallowing, too. “Will she need a feeding tube?”

He shifts in his chair again. “Let’s not get ahead of ourselves.”

“I like to get ahead of myself, Doctor. Come on.” I am whining. “I can take it.”

He pushes his glasses up on his nose and frowns. “Alright, then, yes. I think it’s likely she’ll need a feeding tube within the year based on her current rate of decompensation.”

I lied. I can’t take it. For a few minutes, I experience a montage of me-and-mom memories set to the tune of my parents’ wedding song. Doctor Haskins hands me a tissue.

“This is why we shouldn’t get ahead of ourselves. It could be two years. She could pass from other causes before that happens.”

Doctor Haskins has terrible bedside manner, but I like him because he's not full of shit. Mom would like him, too, if she weren't so rapidly decompensating.

After a few minutes, I feel better. Doctor Haskins tells me about the Christmas events planned at the Home. Normal-Mom would not be caught dead making a stained-glass window out of cellophane or ornaments from popsicle sticks. The upside of this disease is that, along with the good things, she also forgets her belligerence.

Returning to Mom's room, I stop at a poster for the Christmas concert: a jazz quartet of residents whose last remaining memories are musical. The poster says they will be doing a Rosemary Clooney tribute hour. Mom loved Rosemary Clooney. Mom thought Rosemary Clooney represented all that was good in the world. Although Rosemary wasn't technically Italian, she'd had some Italian-language hits and *seemed* Italian. This goes a long way with our people. "I thought she was Italian" is our highest form of compliment.

Virgie and Mom are in a deep discussion when I return, murmuring and gesturing to each other like conspirators.

"Hi kids," I say. It is time to leave. This is the best I've seen Mom in a while.

Mom beams at me. "Virginia just told me about a Christmas witch." Mom does not sound like Regina Maria Catania. More like the mom in the coffee commercials.

Back home, in the driveway, Virgie doesn't move to unfasten her seatbelt.

"What is it, Virginia?" I am worried these visits upset her.

She stares at me. "I'm like No-No."

Like No-No before, snarky but loving? Like No-No now, confused and unpredictable? Mom has so many

sides. I start to ask her what she means, but she is out of the car before I can respond.

On Christmas Eve, Virgie and I drive to get Mom in the afternoon. We've been cooking all day. I use the term 'we' very loosely.

Doctor Haskins meets us in the hallway, his shoulders squared off so we cannot see what's behind him. He is blocking us.

"I know this is hard," he says. "But I think you should try again tomorrow."

Virgie rebounds first. "Can I just say hi to her?" she asks in a voice that hurts my chest.

Doctor Haskins shakes his head. "Tomorrow."

Later, he tells me what happened. Mom had grabbed a broom from the utility closet and started sweeping the hallway. At first, they didn't stop her. Many of the residents become fixated on tasks from their old lives; the Home encourages it. But when they tried to take the broom from her, she put it between her legs and ran down the hall. She was screaming, over and over, words they didn't quite understand.

"What was she saying?"

I don't want to know.

"Something about she didn't want to lose the chance."

I wait for him to leave before I cry.

"Mommy." My little sixties bombshell whispers the next morning, her lips pressed to my ear. "Santa came. He went big."

She hugs me, and I smell lavender from her bath soap and almond from the lotion she steals from my

bathroom counter. Something hard presses into my arm during the hug. It's the Befana doll. "I'm coming," I whisper back.

We pad down the stairs and I feel a rush of anticipation, as if I have no idea what's under the tree. It doesn't matter in that moment that Mom is in the Home or that Matt has been distant lately and furtive with his phone. All that matters now is that Santa is real.

We won't open the gifts until Matt is up, but we admire them, along with Santa's incredible handiwork. All the Santa gifts bear identical wrapping paper: vintage, rosy-cheeked Santa faces. Virgie pets them like pups. I take photos of her giving two thumbs up in front of her swag.

She finds Santa's note and reads aloud.

Dear Virgie,

Thank you for the note and the cookies. Most American kids don't leave me baci di damma, so your house was very special. I hope you enjoy your toys. You've been such a good girl this year. The clothes are all from Mrs. Claus; women are better with those things. So merry Christmas and Buon Natale, then, young Virginia Regina, and don't forget to keep Christmas in your heart all year through.

Yours,

S. Claus

Virgie lowers the paper. "Mom. You're crying at Santa's note?"

When Matt bounds downstairs an hour later, Virgie hands him his coffee cup, jumping up and down. We smile at each other as she fills the room with torn paper and delighted squeals, feeling sad and happy as when the present already feels like a memory.

The three of us drive to pick up Mom in the afternoon. I'm surprised Matt came with us, but he has been in synch and attentive all day, his phone nowhere in sight. I get the sense that other people drift in and out of his life, drawing him for a time before he pushes them away. It is like he keeps asking himself a question and finding the same answer, which is us.

We arrive at the Home to find everyone in the living room gathered around the Christmas tree. Ophie greets us and points out Mom, whose eyes are glued to an old woman with a raspy voice who is singing to the group.

It takes a moment for me to realize that the old woman is a resident—one-fourth of the jazz quartet, an octogenarian with a soft face always in pink. She is performing a song Rosemary Clooney sang with Bing Crosby in *White Christmas*, about counting your blessings when you can't sleep. The residents who understand are on the verge of tears. Mom, who didn't cry when her own mother died, rubs at her eyes with a knuckle.

Virgie moves to stand between me and Matt, sliding her arms around our waists, pulling us toward each other.

When the song ends, Ophie sidles over and whispers to Mom, who looks beautiful in a black sweater and matching pants, her makeup impeccable. She is like her old self. She comes to embrace us like we are long-lost pilgrims returning from a crusade. "I'm so happy," she says. She doesn't call us by our names, and she doesn't seem prickly at all, so I know she's not all there. But the part of her that joins us is lovely. I allow myself to feel hopeful.

Ophie winks at me. She must have done Mom's makeup.

At home, Virgie has a special gift for Mom. She has written out the story of Befana the Christmas Witch in a book made from folded printer paper bound with red

yarn. The book is illustrated with intricate drawings, and the Befana looks suspiciously like Mom.

“Wow,” Mom keeps saying, turning the pages. “I can’t believe this gift.”

She reads aloud to us, and at the last line, my heart catches.

“Befana wishes she did not lose the chance to meet the baby, but at least every year she tries her best to make it right, which is all that matters.” Mom shakes her head admiringly and hugs Virgie. “Wow. I can’t believe this gift,” she says again, a phrase she repeats throughout the day. She won’t put the book down, carrying it everywhere, and reading it to us one final time after the lasagna and cookies are all cleared away, just before we take her back.

I wonder if the line about losing the chance will trigger her, but she seems content and not at all like someone who had just straddled a broom and galloped about a rest home screaming.

My Christmas gift to Mom is a delicate rose-gold *Amore* bracelet from a luxury Italian jeweler. I’d seen the look on her face when Matt bought me one two years ago, and though it would have been weird to take a gift from my husband and hand it to my mother, that is exactly what I had wanted to do.

The bracelet must be locked onto the recipient’s wrist with a tiny golden key tucked into the box next to it. The holder of the key is supposed to be the person the wearer loves best.

“You don’t have to give it to anyone, Mom,” I say, suddenly chagrined. I realize too late that it might make her think of Dad.

But Mom doesn’t hesitate. She strides right up to Virgie and holds out her hand. My daughter takes the small, shining key from Mom’s palm and hugs her.

They all laugh as I dissolve in tears.

*

On the Feast of the Epiphany, Virgie wakes to find small toys and foil-wrapped candies in the socks she left next to her bed. She is jaded from a month that included her birthday, Christmas, and New Year's, so she peels off quickly to play with the Befana doll.

Ophie calls me later in the morning, chuckling. "That's cute, what your mom did last night. It was from that story she read to us, right?"

What your mom did last night. I am flummoxed.

"Where did you get it?" Ophie asks. "I've never seen that kind of candy before."

I sit down at the kitchen table, rubbing my forehead. "Where did I get what, Ophie?"

Ophie hesitates. "You didn't give your mom a bag of candy coal to put in our slippers?"

I hadn't been able to find candy coal here in LA. By the time I realized they only sell it in Italy, it was too late to order. Virgie's own coal was just a black rock I found at a new-age store on Abbot Kinney. All I can say is, "No. I didn't."

We hang up and I peer over at my daughter, who is playing with her doll behind the tree and singing a little tune. I home in on her little voice and tease out a phrase from the tangle of lyrics.

She is singing in Italian.

"*Viene, viene la Befana,*" she trills, stroking the doll's nose. *Here comes, here comes the Befana.* It is the end of an old poem taught to children in Italy. I didn't teach it to her.

It would be pointless to ask Mom if she left the coal last night. She can barely recall the last ten minutes, let alone hours. And how could she have gotten it, anyway? I feel a sharp pang of wishing I could ask her the more important question: whether she finally understands that chances lost can be won back. That

trying to make it right counts for a lot. It might just count for everything.

I look again into the shadow of the Christmas tree, from which my daughter's happy voice twinkles like wind chimes. I wonder if she gave the coal to Mom, but much as I want to ask her, I know I can't. Asking would be admitting to something I could never believe—that candy coal is nothing more than a store-bought sweet, and not a token left by an old woman who flies through the night, wracked with regrets, seeking redemption.

LEIGH ESPOSITO is a double-Ivy League graduate, author, and coach. She has advised everyone from film producers and renowned psychologists to attorneys and fellow authors. A recovering attorney, her writing has been featured in *The Intellectual Devotional*, *VIA: Voices in Italian Americana*, *Outsmarting the SAT*, and on Law360.com. Her debut novel, *The Godmother*—a subtle, feminist spin on *The Godfather*—is currently being shopped for publication. She lives in Miami, Florida with her 9-year-old son and one sleepy golden retriever.

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Dear reader,

Reflecting on 30 years of *VIA*, we see a trend is afoot, steeped in content, across so many media, platforms, apps, et cetera. In this sea of stuff, the average reader and writer have been disconnected from the history of literature and the rich tapestry that has come before. Too many stories submitted have been unaware of their place in this long tradition. New voices are retreading memories told hundreds of times before and connect to no one but themselves.

Dear reader and writers, find yourselves in our cultural histories—read wider, read deeper, and through your readings write the future. Ezra Pound once advised, “Make it new,” something that can only be done if you know the old.

—The Editors

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