Introducing the Oxford American’s Summer/Fall 2020 Issue
Special place-themed issue is longest in the magazine’s history

August 4, 2020—LITTLE ROCK, AR—The Oxford American presents its place-themed Summer/Fall 2020 Issue. At 224 pages, and featuring more than 65 writers and visual artists, this is the thickest issue the OA has published since the magazine’s founding in 1992.

This issue includes a special section on place centered around the “elements” of soil, wood, water, and stone. A few highlights: Frederick McKindra mines the fiber of cotton as troubled symbol and ubiquitous product—framed through the lens of his family’s history and Timothy Hursley’s architectural photography series capturing storehouses of cotton seed. Martin Padgett traces the sweet gum tree from its namesake community in the Florida panhandle to the Sweet Gum Head in Atlanta, a landmark drag club, and records an important chapter in the South’s LGBTQ history. Kerry Rose Graning visits a barrier island on the Louisiana coastline and tells a story of tropical storms, hurricanes, erosion, and an unlikely surfing culture. David Searcy reflects on a drag-racing strip near Dallas, a tale bolstered by history, philosophy, and geology.

Among the many other notable contributors are Minnijean Brown Trickey (international activist and a member of the Little Rock Nine), Bryan Washington (a National Book Foundation 5 Under 35 winner), and Jayne Anne Phillips (winner of an Academy Award in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters).

First-time OA contributors include journalist Rosalind Bentley on Black land ownership in the South, including a reflection on her family’s homepage Florida; Carly Berlin on a traveling rabbi dispatched to support Jewish communities in small Southern towns; and Halle Hill, whose short story “Bitch Baby” was selected out of more than 500 submissions to the OA’s 2020 debut fiction call for submissions. The issue also features many writers familiar to OA readers, like Baynard Woods on Jasper Johns’s time on Edisto Island; John Lingan on efforts to restore Buddy Bolden’s house in New Orleans; Karen Good Marable on taking joyrides in Atlanta during a summer of protest and the pandemic; and contributing editor Jamie Quatro on the Ave Maria Grotto in North Alabama. Rachel Mabe, whose reporting was supported by the Economic Hardship Reporting Project, writes on the crisis of immigrant teacher recruitment.
More than 35 visual artists are published in the issue, such as Deborah Roberts, whose collage “When you see me” appears on the cover; Camilo Ramirez; Delita Martin; Devan Shimoyama; Lorna Simpson; Jasper Johns; and Maury Gortemiller.

The issue was underwritten by the Fay Jones School of Architecture & Design at the University of Arkansas.

To order a copy of the Summer/Fall 2020 Issue, visit your local bookstore or newsstand, or purchase a copy at OxfordAmericanGoods.org.

The issue is available now in the OA’s online store and will be on select newsstands on August 25, 2020. Or, subscribe to the Oxford American by visiting OxfordAmerican.org/subscribe.

For bulk orders, contact info@oxfordamerican.org or 501-374-0000.

Oxford American editors and contributors are available for interviews. Please contact them directly by emailing editors@oxfordamerican.org.

ABOUT THE OXFORD AMERICAN

Founded in 1992, the Oxford American (OA) is a nonprofit arts organization whose mission is to explore the complexity and vitality of the American South through exceptional writing, music, and visual art.