This year marks the tenth anniversary of the enterprise that began as *Precursors and Aftermaths: Literature in English, 1914-1945* and now exists as *The Space Between: Literature and Culture, 1914-1945*. Back in 2000, when the first issue of *Precursors and Aftermaths* appeared under the imprint of Fort Hays State University, the journal was limited to articles on literature in English, even as the sponsoring Space Between Society’s more broadly defined cultural interests were noted inside the journal’s back cover. The literary focus of the two existing issues of *Precursors and Aftermaths* (the second and last issue was published in 2004) can still be detected in the subtitle of the current journal, the number of papers presented by literature professors at the Space Between Society’s annual conferences, and in my and the book review editors’ affiliations with English Departments. However, in the years since the journal displayed its new title, mission, and ISSN number on the cover of the 2005 issue, scholars from diverse fields of art history, media and film studies, rhetoric, information technology, history, design, and architecture, and with expertise in national languages, cultures, and histories of the Soviet Union, France, Germany, the US, Canada, and England, have been represented in the *Space Between*’s articles and book reviews.

A quick glance at the table of contents of this 2010 general topics issue shows that it moves from Andrea Loselle’s path-breaking discussion of the hybrid genre of Holocaust camp songs and song plays to Lawrence Rainey’s analysis of a nearly-forgotten, not-quite-silent Louise Brooks film produced in France in 1930. As editor, I try to arrange articles in ways that draw out authors’ shared concerns and suggest some kind of pattern or plan to what is, in reality, a random collection of independently submitted, reviewed, and revised articles. For example, in this issue France provides the setting for the artists examined by both Loselle and Rainey. More obscurely, Brecht’s *Threepenny Opera* serves as a dim background context for both articles. On the other hand, the thirteen years marking the gap between Louise Brooks’s film, *Prix de beauté*, and Germaine Tillion’s song play, *Le Verfügbar aux enfers: une opérette à Ravensbrück*, make all the difference; we enter alien worlds when we read each article.

Loselle takes us into the world of occupied France as it was experienced and recorded in the art of two women: one, Germaine Tillion, a
French anthropologist who wrote her song play while imprisoned in the women’s concentration camp, Ravensbrück; the other, Charlotte Salomon, a German-Jewish refugee who wrote her monumental, multi-genre song play Leben? oder Theater?: Ein Singspiel [sic] after being released from Gurs, a concentration camp in the Pyrenees. An exploration into an unfamiliar genre as well as an analysis of women’s artistic production during and after internment in concentration camps, Loselle’s “Performing in the Holocaust” is a brave and original investigation into an unexamined, amateur, “clandestine” art form that is part of the “cultural heritage of the Holocaust.”

The Holocaust provides the context for the second article as well. Pursuing the history of the 1940 box office hit, MGM’s The Mortal Storm, Alexis Pogorelskin tells a fascinating tale about the production of a film that facilitated America’s movement from neutrality to involvement in World War II. She shows us the compliance of Hollywood moguls and government leaders with Goebbels’s efforts to squelch any media exposure of the Nazi atrocities against Jews in Europe. In combing the archives of Hollywood and Congress and bringing to light this shameful story, Pogorelskin identifies and celebrates an unsung heroine: MGM’s screen writer Claudine West, who managed to preserve a message about the Nazis’ persecution of the Jews foregrounded in Phyllis Bottome’s 1938 Mortal Storm novel. Together West and Bottome—both British women working in America—were able through the Mortal Storm film to get this message to vast numbers of Americans, despite forces of home-grown antisemitism, censorship, and even hostile Congressional hearings.

The key figures in Mark D. Larabee’s article are, like those in Pogorelskin’s piece, both English and American. Larabee traces what seems like the most unlikely of influences, wampum, on a classic novel of English modernism. His reading of Ford Madox Ford’s The Good Soldier takes us from the history of colonial-Native relations in Pennsylvania to the recital halls of early-twentieth century London where the Iroquois-Canadian poet and performance artist, E. Pauline Johnson, would have caught the attention of Ford. In Larabee’s account, wampum is “an unreadable document, describing a place that no longer exists, created by Native Americans for purposes (land transfer, money) historically alien to them.” How this material object, with all its ambiguous associations, then comes to serve as an ideal artifact of place for the English Ford is a curious puzzle Larabee solves by the end of his article.

Another kind of America emerges from the pages of Maggie Gordon Froehlich’s article on The Great Gatsby. Instead of the America of flamboyant excess for which F. Scott Fitzgerald is famous, she finds in the pages of his most famous novel an America of secret, “careful” homosexuals. Froehlich not only challenges our notions of what The Great Gatsby is about, but she
demonstrates that it *does* what it is about: it, too, “passes”—most often as a romance narrative about men. She contextualizes her argument within analysis of American traditions of racism, homophobia, and sexism and, by looking at *The Great Gatsby*’s “indistinguishable” and thus little-remarked upon female character, Jordan Baker, radically alters our understanding of what tricks this most classic of American novels is really up to.

The glamour of Gatsby, created by Fitzgerald and recreated by various Hollywood movie directors in four film adaptations, contrasts vividly with the rather eccentric English films that make up what Michael McCluskey identifies as the film genre of “the postman’s daily round.” Focusing on three documentary films produced in the 1930s by the General Post Office, McCluskey directs our gaze not at the fast cars and parties of metropolitan financiers, but the country folk of England whose agrarian patterns and pasts were being disrupted by increasingly complex technologies and networks of modernity. The films may comprise a minor genre, McCluskey admits, but their cultural import is major; they become a means of understanding artists’ representations of and influence upon “rural modernity” and its relation to the more widely studied urban modernity we associate with the period’s commercial films.

This brings me back to *Prix de beauté*. While in no way a commercial film—it was an unmitigated failure—the subject of Rainey’s article seduces contemporary eyes with the close-up attractions of silent film actress, Louise Brooks, and the familiar images of urban modernity that surround her: fast cars, big crowds, the cat walk, machines. This article, richly illustrated, comes under a new heading in the journal, “Rediscoveries.” I hope that publication of Rainey’s treatment of *Prix de beauté* establishes a precedent. My goal is to publish in each general topics issue an article that highlights some lost or forgotten text, object, media, or event that, through rediscovery, helps us envision more completely the space between the wars, 1914-1945. The next general topics issue of *The Space Between* will be published in 2012 and, if all goes well, it also will feature a “Rediscoveries” section. In the meantime, I have in the works for 2011 what promises to be a wonderful special topics issue on visual cultures of the 1930s. It will be composed almost entirely of work by art historians.

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