

THE DIAL

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2023 Annual Report



A Note From Madeleine Schwartz, Editor-in-Chief

A little over a year ago, our tiny team of journalists clicked “publish” on our first issue, with articles from Ghana, Argentina, Poland, and Turkey. We felt that our particular moment, with its rising far right and rising seas, needed a different kind of conversation: one that was inherently international, driven by a search for the truth, and unafraid to question platitudes and easy solutions.

The Dial is now a year old, and we’re very proud of what we’ve accomplished. “The World’s Little Magazine” is dedicated to publishing the best international journalism and writing. In our first year, we’ve published work from more than 50 countries, shined a light on undercover issues, and elevated the voices of international local journalists.

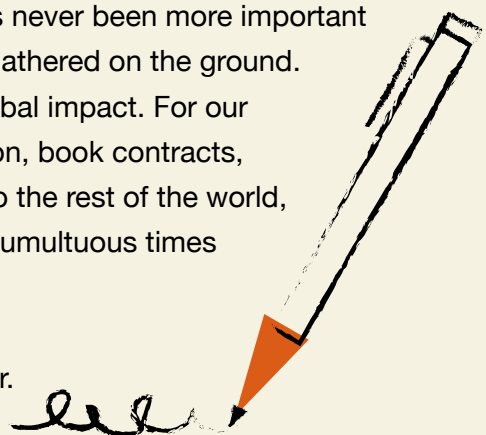
The Dial has already made an impact. Our original reporting has been circulated in publications around the world. We also feel lucky to collaborate with news organizations and magazines we admire in other countries. Many of the pieces we publish come from our partners, whose work we translate into English for the first time.

It only takes a quick look at the headlines to note that it has never been more important to promote international dialogue and the sharing of facts gathered on the ground.

At *The Dial*, we are proud to publish local reporting with global impact. For our writers, publication in *The Dial* can mean awards, recognition, book contracts, and more. For our readers, *The Dial* is a weekly glimpse into the rest of the world, one that has become indispensable for understanding our tumultuous times and for discovering new writing that delights.

Below, you’ll find a summary of our major activities this year.

Thank you for reading *The Dial*.





Summary

The Dial is a nonprofit online magazine of culture, politics, and ideas with a focus on locally sourced writing from around the world. Our reporting — on the perils of “clean” energy, global authoritarianism, and the fight for reparations — has reached an audience worldwide. Our work has been republished in *The Guardian*, *Foreign Policy* and *The New York Review of Books*, and translated into Italian, Dutch and French. Our magazine has been cited on the BBC, in *Politico*, the *New Statesman*, *Lawfare*, and *Open Democracy*. We’ve received widespread praise: *Jewish Currents* called us “an exciting new outlet” with “new ways of thinking,” *Lawfare* editors discussed our work as “fresh,” and the *Times Literary Supplement* said *The Dial* is “a necessary addition to existing news outlets.” We created a network of partner publications everywhere from Brazil to Ukraine, whose work we have brought to English for the first time.



“A very cool new publication launch!”

KYLE CHAYKA

Our Mission

The Dial is the world’s little magazine, a space where daring writers stage global conversations unconstrained by geography. Our aim is to create substantive dialogue among readers all over the world. We aspire to convey the contradictions, sorrows, and comedies of the contemporary moment, to write the present in order to create a future.

Local reporters and writers are the cornerstone of *The Dial*. We seek journalists who live in and have connections to the countries they’re reporting on. Our repertoire of fiction, poetry, and criticism — often published in English for the first time — is equally international. We hope that by publishing global stories from local writers we can diversify the range of voices in English-language media.

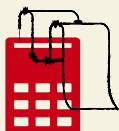
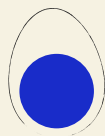
Our Work

In 2023, we published 103 pieces of writing in a variety of genres: reporting, essays, fiction, poetry, photo essays, roundtables, interviews, and oral histories; 30 translations in 15 languages; and six bilingual works. Our pieces cover 51 countries from 88 writers, of which over 50% are women.

Our first year of reporting was ambitious. From Tonlé Sap, Abby Seiff and Sokummono Khan uncovered how microloans are driving Cambodians deeper into debt while helping banks grow wealthier. Nowhere in the world has the negative impact of these programs been as stark as in Cambodia. The chasm between debt and income has gotten so big for some borrowers that it's forcing them to pull children from school, cut back on food, and sell off their land — their most valuable asset. At the same time, the industry has ballooned into a profitable banking tool with a market projected to top \$300 billion globally by 2026. The piece, which was co-published with the *New York Review of Books*, was cited by NGOs around the world and shared widely in Cambodian media.

In our Reparation issue, Caitlin L. Chandler confronted German colonial brutality in Africa by reporting on the movement from East African families to repatriate their ancestors. “While some museums release data and conduct provenance research, the overall process for returns lacks infrastructure or state funding: Without a systematic national policy, it has fallen to individuals and networks to help organize the cases,” Chandler writes. The reporting was widely circulated among restitution professionals and cited in a European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights report to the German state on racial discrimination.

Turkish writer Kaya Genç has written two impactful articles for *The Dial* in our first year. For the inaugural issue in January 2023, Genç detailed President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's affront on women's reproductive rights in Turkey, an undercovered angle. His reporting was cited by *The Nation*, *Open Democracy*, and shared on Turkish social networks. In our November 2023 issue, Genç wrote about the first-ever Kurdish translation of *Ulysses*. For a century, Turks have attempted to censor, belittle, and dismiss the Kurdish language, which is part of the reason why it took two decades for Kawa Nemir, a chain-smoking poet, to translate the epic. Genç's article was featured in *Literary Hub* and more.





Journalism Collaborations

Collaboration is key to our editorial strategy.

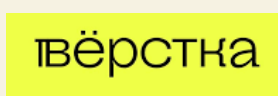
Many of the pieces we publish come from our partners like *Revista Piauí* in Brazil, *The Ukrainians* in Ukraine, and *Átlátszó* in Hungary. These news outlets are doing excellent work, but are rarely read outside their home countries. *The Dial* has created a network of publications whose work we amplify and share. By collaborating with local publications, we are bringing the best writing in other languages to *Dial* readers and presenting work by authors beyond the anglosphere in English for the first time.

We partnered with *Verstka Media*, a magazine run by Russian journalists in exile, to publish an investigation into how the wives and girlfriends of Russian soldiers are contributing to nationalist sentiment far from the front lines. The literary translator Sabrina Jaszi brought the original Russian-language reporting of Darya Kucherenko and Rita Loginova into English, allowing their reporting to be read by thousands of new readers around the world.

We also partnered with *Gatopardo*, a monthly magazine from Mexico, to publish John Gibler’s fearsome report on El Salvadorian President Nayib Bukele’s “regime of deception” in English. Through Jessica Sequeira’s exacting translation, Gibler describes how Bukele decided “to fill the nation’s prisons, and then build new prisons and fill them too, with gang members or anyone who could be reasonably believed to be a gang member, which, in El Salvador, like most other countries, means the poor.” The article was complemented by Miguel Tovar’s stunning photographs, which capture the impact of Bukele’s regime on families across El Salvador.



The Ukrainians



GATOPARDO

Reporters.

POLITIKEN



The New York Review of Books

“Working with you all at *The Dial* was an absolute joy!”

DIAL CONTRIBUTOR JOHN GIBLER



By publishing this work in translation, we not only enrich readers’ understanding of how current events are unfolding, but we also get a sense of how they are being discussed and understood by those who are experiencing them firsthand.

Other translated work from partner publications include:

- Reports from inside Ukraine’s occupied nuclear power plant (Reporters)
- The rise of Ozempic’s economic empire in Denmark (*Politiken*)
- An illustration of the ransacked Brazilian Senate building after Jair Bolsonaro’s failed insurrection (*Revista Piauí*)

Our translated works are regularly among our most-read articles. Both “The Woman Behind Borges,” Alejandro Chacoff’s inquiry into Maria Kodama’s hold on the Borges estate originally published in *Revista Piauí*, and “My Literary Breakup,” Elisabeth Åsbrink’s wry and witty essay on her friendship with Swedish playwright Lars Norén originally published in *Dagens Nyheter*, were featured in *Arts and Letters Daily* and widely shared.

In addition to translations, we have also co-published with publications around the world. In 2023, we co-published three articles with *Foreign Policy* (from Germany, Iraq, and Mexico), one article with *The Markaz Review* (from Turkey), and one article with *The New York Review of Books* (from Cambodia). These partnerships have allowed *The Dial*’s work to reach new audiences interested in foreign affairs and literature.





Bilingual Work

The Dial is proud to have published six pieces presented concurrently in English and the original language in our first year.

We believe that encouraging contributors to work in their native tongue begets better and more original reporting and writing. By publishing the non-English and English versions side-by-side, we retain the native turns of phrase and vernacular that is often lost in translation and ensure the piece can be widely read. This work includes:

- Award-winning Ukrainian journalist Kristina Berdinskykh’s reporting on the destruction of her hometown of Kherson and the country’s push to procure advanced weaponry, published in both English and Ukrainian
- Charlotte Van den Broek’s article on Belgium’s decaying nuclear zone, published in both English and Dutch
- Poetry published in Mandarin and English and Arabic and English

“I love the variety of writers and new voices so far!”

DIAL READER

Finding Dry Land in Kherson
Знайти сушу в Херсоні

The Cloud Factory
De Wolkenfabriek

Poems from “A Summer Day in the Company of Ghosts”

取自《和幽魂在一起的夏》

Poems from “Something Evergreen Called Life”

قصائد من “شيء طازج من الأزل يسمَّى الحياة”



“I’m just so impressed, and feel so fortunate to have access to this wonderful journal; you’re expanding my world, and enriching my life. Thank you.”

DIAL READER

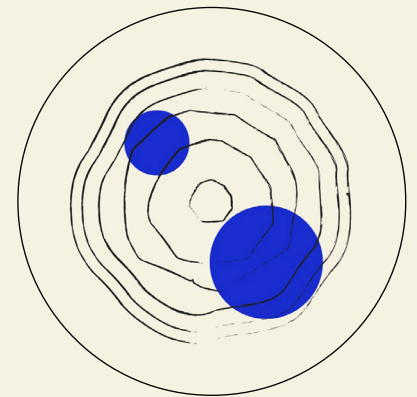
Impact of *The Dial*

From our very first issue, our work has served as a springboard for writers outside of the United States.

Two of the works we have published in translation will be published in book-form: Shin Hae-Uk’s fun and witty poems (translated by Spencer Lenfield) and Ariadna Castellarnau’s feminist short stories (translated by Adrian Nathan West). We also make sure that our articles gain global reach by working with publications worldwide — including *The Guardian*, *The New Indian Express*, and *Internazionale* — to republish them.

Our work has also been widely cited by politicians, researchers, and non-profit analysts:

- An analyst at the International Justice Mission cited Abby Seiff and Sokummono Khan’s report on Cambodian microloans.

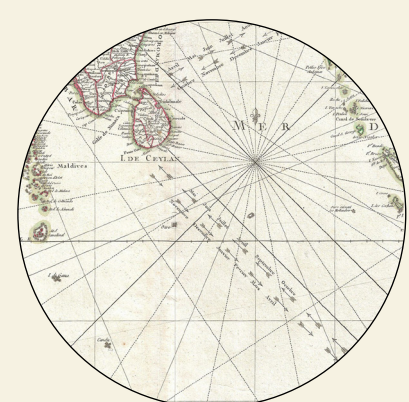




- The Brookings Institution’s Amy Nelson cited Inna Zolotukhina and Iryna Yaroshynska’s translated reporting from inside the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant.
- Former U.S. ambassador to Mexico tweeted Chantal Flores’s report on the Mexican government’s suit against American gun manufacturers.
- The European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights cited Caitlin Chandler’s article on the forgotten push to restitute colonial remains in their report to the German state on racial discrimination.
- Ben Mauk’s article on Germany’s repression of pro-Palestinian speech was cited by the International Freedom of Expression Exchange.

Several of *The Dial*’s essays have been taught on college campuses. At Harvard, Surabhi Ranganathan’s “The Law of the Sea” is featured in a class on extraterritoriality. “The Myth of Marijuana,” Alexander Aviña’s history of Mexico’s radical, forgotten experiment with drug legalization, is on the syllabus at Boston University. Snigdha Poonam’s “The AI Accomplice” was taught at Georgetown.

We’ve also been proud to see that topics first covered in English in *The Dial* have gone on to garner attention from legacy media outlets. Many of the topics we covered in *The Dial* — a campaign by elder women against the Swiss government, the drought in the Mesopotamian basin — were later featured in *The New York Times*, and in the case of Argentina’s political dependence on dollars included reporting by the same writer.





Writer Response



We believe in developing a relationship with our writers and providing a platform for collaboration, connection and writing that resonates with both author and audience.

We take care to find diverse voices, many of whom have never been published in English before or are writing for a magazine for the first time. It brings us joy to amplify new voices, which is why we interview one to two contributors a month about their reporting and writing process in our series “The Reporter’s Notebook.” As trust in the media collapses, we hope that these interviews show our readers what goes on behind the curtain — brave reporting, rigorous fact-checking, scrupulous copy editing — in the name of accurate and fair reporting and writing. Below are a few testimonials from our contributors about what it is like to publish with *The Dial*:

- **KRISTINA BERDYNKYKH (UKRAINE):** “Usually, when journalists write about the F-16, they describe the technical characteristics of the aircraft and assess its chances of changing the situation on the battlefield, but *The Dial*’s approach allows you to convey feelings as well.”
- **WILL BAXTER (MOLDOVA) :** “I really enjoyed my experience working with *The Dial*, from the initial call all the way through the editing process.”
- **KAYA GENÇ (TURKEY):** “*The Dial* feels like a legacy publication ... The magazine feels very ancient and modern at the same time. My impression, from the feedback to my two essays, is that people savor that combination of a sleek, stylish online-only publication with handcrafted illustrations and design, and that sphere of old fashioned intellectualism.”

“I really enjoyed my experience working with *The Dial*, from the initial call all the way through the editing process.”

WILL BAXTER



Awards and Recognition

The *Dial*'s staff is comprised of award-winning journalists, and we have already achieved recognition for our work:

- *Dial* Executive Editor Linda Kinstler won the 2023 Whiting Award for her book *Come to This Court & Cry: How the Holocaust Ends* (PublicAffairs).
- *Dial* Editor-in-Chief Madeleine Schwartz won the 2019 European Press Prize Opinion Award for her piece “The End of Atlanticism: has Trump killed the ideology that won the cold war?,” a 2022 Front Page Award for her piece “Criminalizing a Constitutional Right,” and is a Salzburg Global Leader.
- *Dial* contributor Eve Fairbanks’s article “The Dispossession of District Six” was shortlisted for a 2024 True Story Award (to be announced in May).
- Caitlin Chandler was selected for a Robert Silvers grant to research a future *Dial* story.



“I love everything you do. Keep up the good work.”

DIAL READER



“I’ve often dreamed of a magazine like *The Dial*, so I am so glad you are bringing it into existence.”

DIAL READER

Audience

The Dial seeks to become the go-to journal for curious people looking to understand the world, challenge their assumptions, and discover unexpected angles on global news.

In its first year, *The Dial* received over 570,000 pageviews, reached readers in more than 20 countries, converted more than 5,300 readers into newsletter subscribers, and garnered donations from over 200 individuals, 78 of whom give monthly or annually. *The Dial*’s average monthly pageviews in 2023 was around 37,500.

The Dial’s writing and reporting has been recognized by established publications including *Arts & Letters Daily*, *Politico*, *Rest of World*, *The New York Review of Books*, and others. *The Guardian* republished two of our works from 2023, likely reaching more than 500,000 readers: a report on the Russian migrants settling in Tbilisi, Georgia (which was also turned into a podcast) and an excerpt from North Korean writer Kim Ju-Song’s memoir *The Frog That Couldn’t Jump*.

In 2023 we had...

570,000

PAGEVIEWS

READERS IN OVER

20 countries

5,300

NEWSLETTER
SUBSCRIBERS

200+

DONORS

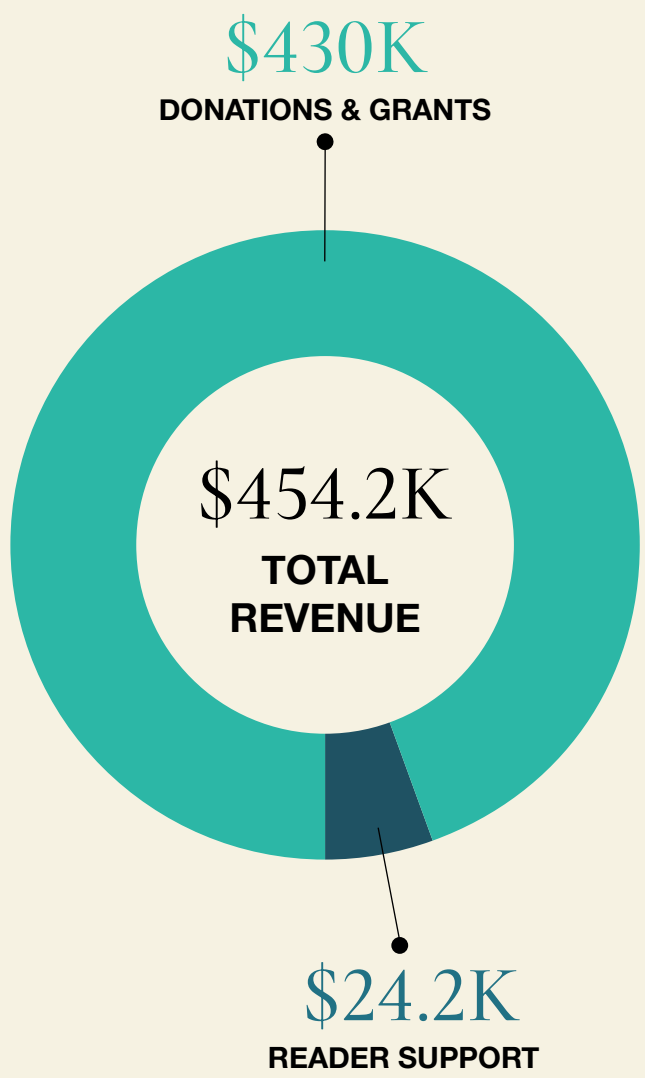
37,500

AVERAGE MONTHLY PAGEVIEWS



2023 Finances

This year, we were heartened by a strong response from our readers, who helped us exceed our Newsmatch expectations by nearly 40%. We also left our fiscal sponsorship under the Institute for Nonprofit News and became an independent 501c3.



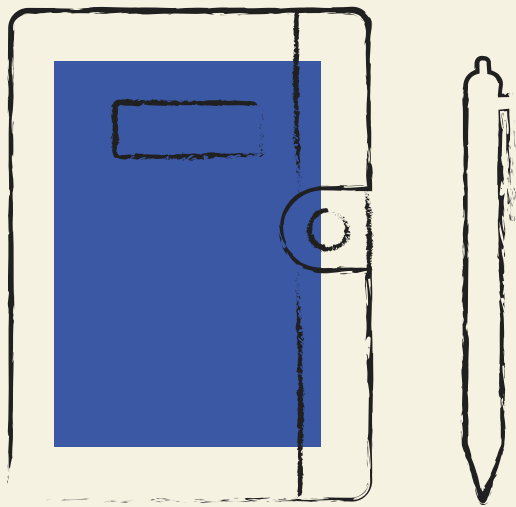


Meet Our Board and Donors

MARC DACOSTA is an anthropologist whose work is interested in data and archives and the way in which they influence our relationship with the world and with one another. His academic work has explored these themes through studies of placemaking practices in the Anthropocene, with particular focus on Antarctic research expeditions and critical cartography. His artistic research examines how data and technical infrastructures focus our attention on the world in particular ways and, in so doing, shape the structures of experience available to us.

JESSICA HENDERSON is the Managing Editor of *The New Yorker*. She graduated cum laude from Harvard. She previously worked at the Wylie Agency, where she worked as an agent for The Wylie Agency Español.

MADELEINE SCHWARTZ lives in Paris, where she writes about the rise of the far right, urban politics and art fraud. Her work appears in *The London Review of Books*, *The New Yorker* and *The New York Review of Books*, where she previously worked as an editor. In 2019, her article “The End of Atlanticism: Has Trump killed the ideology that won the cold war?” won the European Press Prize. She teaches journalism at Sciences Po.



FOUNDING DONOR
 BEVERLY ROGERS

SUPPORT
 OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS
 DIAL READERS



Thank you!

We are extremely proud of what we've accomplished in our first year as a publication. We could not have done it without the support of our fearless contributors, loyal readers and donors, dedicated board members, and brilliant advisors. In the spirit of transparency and collaboration, we welcome any questions and/or constructive feedback you have. Email your queries and thoughts to editors@thedial.world. As always, thank you for reading and for supporting *The Dial*!

THE * DIAL