

The changed landscape

by [Sarah Carey](#) in the [May 9, 2018](#) issue

I wipe dust from your frame. Soon, colleagues stop by my office,  
talk over your head. When they leave, I turn back

to you, notice the magnolia tree behind you is flowering

in this chilled building, in this old shot, in that moment  
never again to be anticipated, with you smiling at me

in your felt fedora, knotted necktie, tan trench coat.

After you died, I covered you in glass, backed and shaped  
your prints to protect you from the elements.

When I learn the magnolia's Chinese ancestors  
programmed it to bloom in the cold, the scene unfolds

with a fresh perspective: snow by blossom, sunshine, stomata,  
Asia by way of Decatur, now by then,

breathing in the past to breathe again.