

WHAT HAPPENED!? A Conversation With My Mother cally spooner

solo exhibition

22 january — 28 february 2026

Lake Geneva, glowing like a giant screensaver: mountains, glorious weather. A fluttering bird, a distant boat, a paraglider passing across the shot are indications that this is not a stock image. It's a straight take, 47 minutes and 32 seconds, filmed from the terrace of Hotel du Parc, Mont Pèlerin. A soundtrack accompanies the shot, subtitled across the lake. It's a telephone conversation, a bit awkward; a mother and daughter discussing benign neglect. Who forgot to match up the socks? Who never fed the cat? Who didn't pick the kids up from school? Who locked whom out? Who forgot to protect the social fabric from becoming a market during a meeting of elite liberals in Mont Pèlerin, Switzerland in 1947? *

* On April 1, 1947, Austrian-British economist Friedrich Hayek invited 39 liberals—none of whom were mothers—to convene at the Hotel du Parc in Mont Pèlerin, Switzerland, over ten days, to shape a new socio-political vision for the future. Their vision arrived as a response to the political catastrophes of the Second World War, but would neither buffer support for the human subject nor for the social fabric. Rejecting social planning and socialism of all kinds, they imagined instead a distributed, networked intelligence and technology of *the market*. At the heart of this conception was a belief: that markets, and markets alone, could coordinate resources and information in the best way possible according to value. National economies would thus evolve and adapt by enabling networked markets to run freely, beyond regulations, beyond government and indeed, eventually, beyond all limits. Under this vision, markets would flourish, and 'provide the conditions for life'. Several photographs document this meeting: men smoking cigars, cross-legged in deep armchairs, thought and discussion, a day trip on a funicular. One shot is especially striking: a serene, imposing Lake Geneva, captured from Hotel du Parc's terrace. Few, if any, signs of society are in the frame. Little interrupts their sublime sightline. This was the backdrop as those 39 attendees levitated above the social fabric to construct a vision of reason, in which many things never imagined nor intended for the market would become markets. Their vision would shock and shatter Anglo-American society, and then more societies too, over 79 subsequent years.



View from Hotel du Parc's terrace, Mont Pèlerin, Switzerland, 1947. From Bruce Caldwell (Ed.), *Mont Pelerin 1947, Transcripts of the Founding Meeting of the Mont Pelerin Society* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, Stanford University, 2022)

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WHAT HAPPENED!? A Conversation With My Mother, 2024

Single-channel digital projection, single-take 4K recording from Hotel du Parc, Mont Pèlerin, Switzerland, single-take sound recording, subtitles

Telephone conversation audio recording: Cally Spooner

Camera: Cally Spooner

Subtitling: AI with Ava Barrett

Duration: 47:32 minutes

Edition of 3 + 2 AP (#1/3)