

# RUST & MOTH

AUTUMN 2009



Sean Osbourn Gibbons

A LETTER

Michael Young

VISITING HOURS

J.A. Batty

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John Egan

IN THE BUS  
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HOME

Credits



Sean Osbourn Gibbons

A LETTER

A  
ought TO BE  
language infinite  
Idea  
rest,  
read this letter  
think I  
A M  
sign  
NAME  
spelling words  
knowledge  
communicate





Michael Young

VISITING HOURS

sick

cold

(more blanket)

world spinning

bones ache

sleep

sweat

throat hurts

go back to sleep again

i wake up in the middle of the night

and the moon is looking through my window

## J.A. Batty

START WITH BLUE

Start with blue.

Then think and think and think and think until it's beaten purpleblack.

Seal in envelope and set on fire in kitchen sink.

Scrape ashes from sink into clear bottle.

Leave corked ashes on beach for tide to take.

When horizon sends it back, chew until glass and ash are gone.

Begin again.



## John Egan

IN THE BUS

A simple question and you just  
looked out the window  
as if you hadn't heard a word  
and I wasn't there.

You left my heart  
pumping into space, the hanged man  
twisting in all the cold wind  
of your silence...

Should I ignore you –  
read a book, watch the road –  
or just ignore your bad manners  
and keep talking  
as if nothing happened –  
talking to the back of your head...

Later you said you didn't know  
how to answer – Fair enough,  
but couldn't you have looked at me  
as I'd so many times  
tried to read some truth  
in the enigma  
of your cold blue eyes.

In the bus  
I didn't know the answer  
to the question of the silence  
and the ice,  
your cruel and golden head.  
For a moment,  
I'm sorry, Lena, but  
I wished you were dead.





## John Egan

### THE CITY AND THE STARS

Beyond the window the night.  
Beyond the night the city  
in panicles of light.  
Beyond the city a universe  
of galaxies and stars, the black hole  
of extinction, the stellar furnaces  
of creation, heat and life –  
electrons that dance a thin corolla  
around the scrum of the nucleus  
and the flicker of photons  
fired from stars that plunge  
towards crescendos of nothing,  
the vertigo of infinity  
and the limits of the mind.  
From the darkened cabin  
of a jumbo, look down  
through forty thousand feet  
of brittle air,  
the cities of the Persian Gulf,  
orange flowers of light  
as if in bending down from space  
you gently snap  
the petals and hold them  
in the palm of your hand.  
Beyond the window is the night.  
Beyond the night is the city.  
Only the city. Only the night.

## Gilberto Espinoza

### I WENT BENEATH THE GROUND

I went beneath the ground because of you.  
I dragged my dignity across two worlds.  
I was fed up, lit up.  
I withdrew my shadow due to fear.  
I did not know who God was - Now.  
I committed myself to tie you to my past.  
I opened tall doors to welcome Him.  
To allow him to purify what is not pure within me, around me.  
To dissolve your remains.  
To allow him to nullify what can't be cured in me.  
I found him  
– and He found me.





## Gilberto Espinoza

### I REMEMBER THAT ONE DAY

I remember that one day.  
That day impossible to consign to oblivion.  
You drew pictures of our past on my mind.  
You left your dust in my eyes.  
First, I waited for the package of faith and patience to ship in.  
Next, for the sun to rise to heat your heart and what lies within.  
A gift was delivered, but still I shivered.  
And I remember perfectly because everyday,  
Was that one day,  
That never came.



## John Swain

### DEDICATION

Quicklime covers flower bodies of asphodel  
beside the dry meander of the riverbed trail.  
As the cobalt light dedicates its reflection  
two collectors chiseled to open stone globes  
for the quartz revealed like a temple door.  
Minerals compress like an expression of mind.  
Pillared down from the outcropping enthroned  
the drip of a waterfall begins in constant thirst.  
I left my tobacco at the base of a dead tree,  
a hawk overhead is the cross of this valley.

## Jean Liew

STUDYING FOR AN IMMUNOLOGY FINAL  
IN THE COFFEE HOUSE AT MIDNIGHT

All's quiet on the Western front,  
Or rather, the southern edge of the Drag  
Where I sit, crooked-backed and hunched  
Over books and notes and pens and coffee,  
Staring past my latte on its neat white saucer,  
Steam rising and foam falling  
To the few people who still walk past  
In the dead hours of a dead day,  
A semi-cold night of a Texas winter.  
Behind the trees the Tower's still on,  
But I feel like I'm the only one  
Of a few still left to stress in this city.



## Lauren Langsjoen

FIRE FOR ICE

We are different,  
yet share in this pain –  
that we may ask again  
and again  
from the same hand  
its cursed caress.  
What we crave is  
what we hate is  
how I've come to feel you,  
come to need you,  
fire for ice on the burn

## Eric Blanchard

WILD EMPATHY

It must be illegal  
to feed pit bulls;  
they are always so skinny  
and unloved.

I hear the howls.  
Arrest me, if you dare.

It seems sometimes  
that you cannot take me anywhere.

I cry in public  
at the drop of any heartbeat.

I feel the hunger  
in every passing scene –  
in the flash cards  
and ink blots –

and I feel the glory  
after the bomb.

I have wild empathy.

I know it's just another movie,  
sappy and droll,  
but I cry.





## Crepe Myrtle

HOME

fresh paint.  
new dishes.  
hand-me-down furniture.  
blank walls.  
clean sheets.  
new noises, new smells, new people.

new home.

something isn't right.  
something is wrong.  
something  
is missing.

where are you?



## Trina Hendrixson

### TEN STEP RECOVERY

One.

Post a note upon the door  
That tells the children what to do.  
“Please call your Dad to come right home,  
And don’t come in the room.”  
Now, lock the door.

Two.

Try to find the memories  
Of laughing in the summer nights,  
The times he whispered soft romance,  
The times he held your hand.  
Now, go to your bathroom.

Three.

Feel the tile upon your feet  
As cold as ice that chills your heart,  
As gray as clouds that blur your mind,  
In waves you can’t explain.  
Now, fill the tub.

Four.

Make the water nice and hot,  
To wash away your secret pain.  
Add some soap to sting the wounds,  
That hide beneath your smile.  
Now, remove your clothes.

Five.

Peel away the day of grief.  
The layers, tailored neat and clean.  
Unbutton all the angry words  
And toss them to the floor.  
Step into the water.

Six.

Submerge yourself in vapors pure.  
Renew your sense of sanity.  
Close your eyes and hold your breath  
And slowly fade away.  
Now, sink lower under the water.

Seven.

Listen to the muffled shouts.  
A far off rumble, not so loud.  
Hear the footfalls, not so sharp,  
Growing closer yet.  
Slowly rise. Open your eyes.

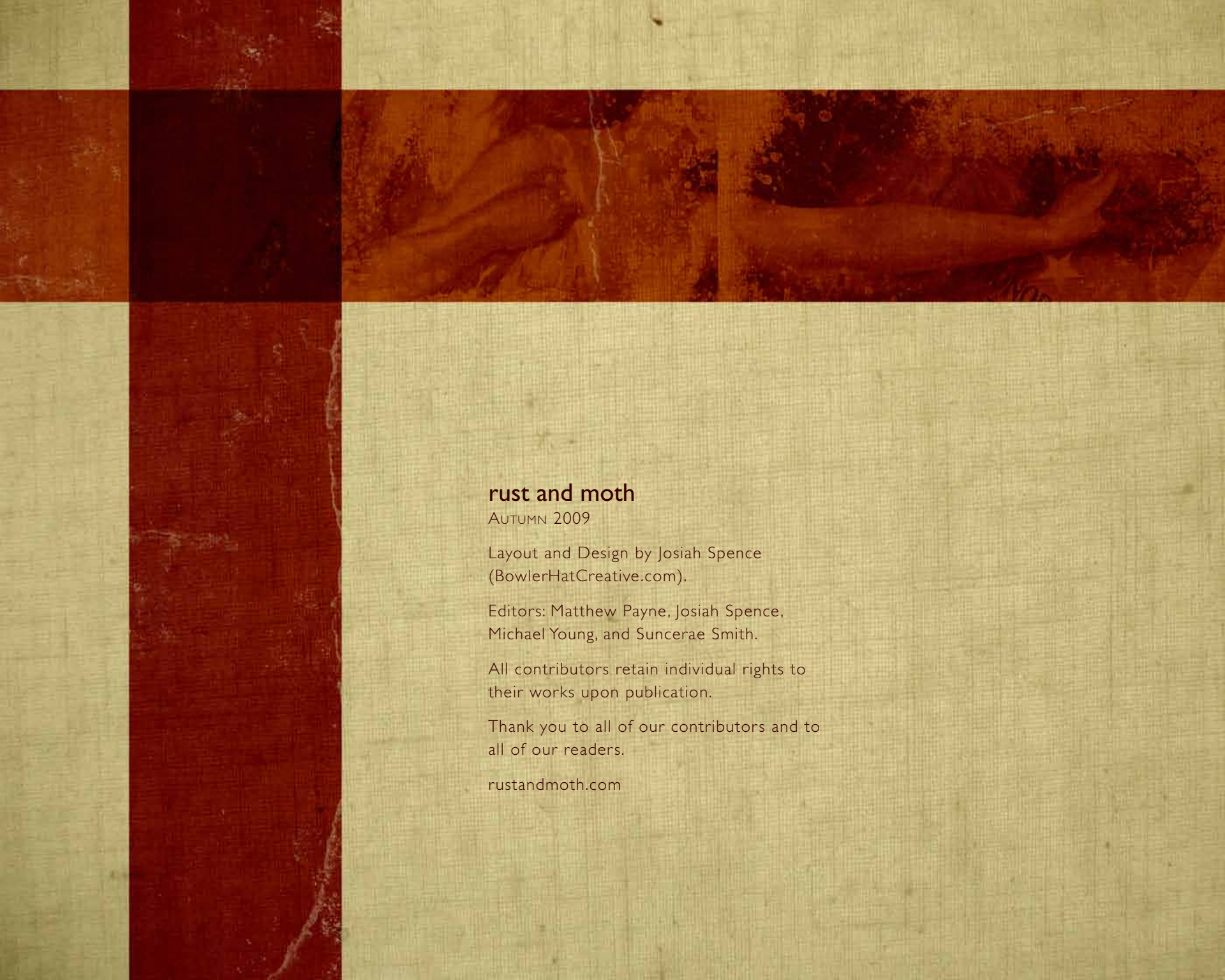
Eight.

Look into the face of love.  
The smile that always seemed to know  
Your deepest pain and understand  
And hold you when you fall.  
Now, gather your strength and stand.

Nine.

Into the cold and out of peace  
You rise to take another stand.  
Into his warm and loving arms  
That soothe your weary soul.  
Now, begin again.

Step Ten.



## **rust and moth**

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