

A close-up photograph of a tree trunk. The bark is dark and heavily textured, showing signs of decay and damage. A prominent, bright red, rust-like stain runs diagonally across the center of the frame, contrasting sharply with the dark, greyish-brown bark. The background is blurred, showing more of the tree's structure.

**rust+moth**  
WINTER 2009

**Faith de Savigné**

DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOU ARE?  
MISSED MOMENTS

**Jason Joyce**

ROUGH BELLIES, DIRTY MONSTERS  
POPULATION

**Niki Escobar**

AZALEA TO A STONE

**Elaine McGinty**

FOR N

**Jack Conway**

WE REAL TIRED

**J.A. Batty**

THREE FEET  
THE INSOMNIAC LODGER

**John Egan**

FOR CAROLINE BYRNE

**Chen-ou Liu**

THROUGH A GLASS, DARKLY

**Sally Nava**

JERUSALEM

**Niki Escobar**

MOTH

**Credits**





## Faith de Savigné

### DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOU ARE?

I'm on the beach  
Going to work  
Waiting for my order  
Getting packed  
Off to morning coffee  
Driving to shop

*No, look around, who is the President?  
Of Cleveland?*

*No*

*I've never seen this place*

*What's your name?*

*All these questions I'm going home*

*You can't go home, you've had an accident*

*Who says, get me out!*

*You're not well, you can't go*

*Yes I can, I have to, I'm doing something else*

*It's 1979, I know where I am*

*I need to get there*

*Now let me go*

*We can't, you're here and you'll never be the same*

## Faith de Savigné

### MISSED MOMENTS

On eastbound train  
You: dark hair, stunning  
Me: shy in green vest  
You alighted before  
I made the connection

You: blue uniform on bus  
Me: waiting for wake-up call  
Blue until you respond

At opposite corners of Joe's  
You me we stared  
Should've didn't regret  
Now let's cross the divide

*Please you know who you are I was wearing you were  
I could hardly you were so I couldn't now can't stop  
please give second chance wasn't expecting rush  
with everything else sat next to boiled up  
reworking scene in street aisle office  
looking everywhere fear lost in city  
in hustle of moment transformed  
by face rushing by give sign call  
write anything but this silence  
of not knowing if we can be  
no longer lonely reading  
these classfides seeing  
If you saw me*





## Jason Joyce

### ROUGH BELLIES, DIRTY MONSTERS

The second dentist  
x-rayed me without  
the lead vest,  
but the friendly assistant offered a  
coupon to an ice cream shop with  
a train that ran above our heads  
I will need not watch my mouth  
in front of the children and grandchildren  
Smells of worn out wallpaper and  
slowly using up our bodies  
My parents delivered news as follows:  
My foot has become wedged under the f-ing lawnmower  
or  
The f-ing doctor ordered the wrong color prosthetic leg  
or  
I'm f-ing someone else, have your things moved out by tomorrow  
Once and a while  
I peeked at the rough bellies of taxidermy animals to see if the genitals  
travel along in a body's partial reincarnation  
My mother did let 'goddamn' slip though  
the evening we were watching Friends  
and her boyfriend Jeff maimed a German Shepherd  
with his Kia on the way over;  
I wondered that night if Courtney Cox  
had ever killed an innocent creature  
Authenticity is the word here for today



## Jason Joyce

### POPULATION

A toothy smile  
like the yellowing sign of the dated Dairy Queen,  
plaque bits collecting around the base  
killing the grass,  
the marquee proposes something profound  
twisted words from the sale some summers ago  
You were wearing that same top  
the day the cat died on our bed  
curled up in the clean laundry  
little head fighting to surface,  
a child in the car without a pillow,  
a great battle we missed  
while we watched America's Funniest Home Videos  
like green and gray toy soldiers  
tossed in the Tinkertoy tin  
The same top  
the day the furniture  
joined our conversation,  
I had not meant to say  
you were replaceable,  
sea legs of anger  
poor aim  
Fireworks bought in the next state  
A gunfight on the only road we had  
A letter to you mother,  
We are learning to settle



## Niki Escobar

AZALEA TO A STONE  
(IF ONLY YOU COULD LOVE ME)

A woman and a man must ache  
from a series of betrayals:  
percussive love  
from his body to hers  
and then to others  
a touch on the hand  
like an empty blue sí  
a touch on the jaw  
like thunder with blood  
looks from across the room  
as dirty as plain English—  
unwanted love letters  
mailed without a scent of home  
a kiss that isn't  
a kiss, but two  
closed mouths  
waiting for air  
proud errors left open  
and flying like urgent arrows,  
migration, and an errant stitch;  
a jungle of punishment  
and then,  
they will struggle  
alongside their own people  
against the same series of betrayals



## Elaine McGinty

### FOR N

I look and I see  
A retreat  
A retreat  
Together  
Apart  
I see a man and woman  
Who no longer speak  
Together  
Left and right  
To and fro  
They know the steps  
And they take them  
His move is hers  
And hers his  
He loves the dance  
She not so much  
Yet  
To and fro  
She steps  
The years go by  
And then one day  
She steps away  
And he must stop  
One foot on the ground  
One foot up  
I've seen this before  
I know the tune  
I know all ends well  
That ends  
But the two small eyes  
See all  
And take their first steps  
Anyway  
And this is all that is new

A close-up photograph of a tree trunk with a vertical red stripe painted on it. The tree bark is dark and textured, and the red stripe is a vibrant, solid color. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

## Jack Conway

WE REAL TIRED

(THE GWENDOLYN BROOKS'  
NOCTURNAL LAMENT)

We can't sleep. We  
count sheep. Have  
cold feet. Turn  
up heat.

We feel ill. We  
take pill. We  
have chill. We  
lie still.

We close eyes.  
Try and try.  
Look outside.  
It's sunrise.

No Jazz June.  
No play pool.  
No desire.  
We real tired.



J.A. Batty

THREE FEET

From beneath, behind, over, under, beside,  
Fear in soft clothes comes—  
Closer, constant, sudden, swift  
The eternal weavers work their silver looms  
Line upon line of fragile menace spools a ghost bridge to the nidus  
I did not wish to know this, but I wouldn't change his telling me.



**J.A. Batty**

THE INSOMNIAC LODGER

A nice day, people say.  
A beautiful day, they say, an hourglass in every word.  
Raise your face to the sky and fists of sunlight crush bone,  
shards now freed, float, skim, scrape inside your head and elbow against your eyes.  
The lodger claws its way hot, hot down the throat.  
Circling, circling it makes a bed in the stomach, clamping in sharp teeth before falling asleep.  
Keep still, breathe carefully, try not to wake it.  
It never sleeps for long.



## John Egan

FOR CAROLINE BYRNE

I'd never worked with glamour.  
Sorry, all I did  
was ogle your legs—  
short skirts, a model's  
tools of trade I guess  
and no one's young forever  
though you continue to be  
in ways you never knew  
or wanted.

The occasional corridor smile,  
greetings as we passed.

I hardly knew your name  
or what you did.

You radiated poise—  
confidence in the direction  
life was taking you.

And now you're gone eleven years.

Hurled to death, they say,  
because of secrets  
you were unlucky to know,  
the men

you were unlucky to love.

A long way – Clarence Street  
to the rocks and darkness  
at The Gap.

There's money, power and fear,  
work and pleasure.

There's beauty  
and there's death.

## Chen-ou Liu

### THROUGH A GLASS, DARKLY

I hold  
the mirror of my life  
up to my face.

I see  
a man in black  
staring back at me.

With a swing  
I smash the mirror.  
The day and I  
grow dark as one.





## Sally Nava

### JERUSALEM

I've been rebuilt.  
Walls torn down countless times.  
With each wall that goes up  
another ruin is discovered  
by some sharp-minded searcher  
digging deeper than advised.  
Someone who won't follow the rules  
has found and plundered hidden  
jewels and now my love  
shining for you bright and louder  
than the shouts of the prophets  
rendered false amidst  
the atrocities unfeeling and unfelt.

## Niki Escobar

MOTH

living in the mouth of a guitar  
that has not been embraced in years  
that sits in a zinc house belonging to a small man  
with curved shoulders and hands the size of desperation

she listens

his wife's singing is the low, downward cry of uncontainable death:  
it spreads like graveyard flowers during All Souls Day  
the songs fall like the bodies of their eldest son  
and youngest daughter  
a father who endowed his children  
with all the opportunities he had himself,  
a mother who passed an infinite lull through her breast milk—  
now their children have children  
who have died from measles and tuberculosis—

she follows

flying with the weight of trinkets  
and sticky burdens  
flying over a glass of sugar water  
flying like a young mother  
who is not yet ready to be a mother

erratic archipelago path  
scooping saline memories of fishless summers under her wings:  
empty nets desirable objects with undesirable shadows  
empty promises  
of tomorrow, of an American savior—  
daughter.  
she is moonshine hitting a blue rock  
and scattering onto eyelids  
forever shut forever a fuzzy photograph  
in an unfilled wallet

she watches

bringing with her a message of transformation  
of the revelation that life continues  
next time with wings—  
the seraph lifts oppressive dimness from the spirit  
and the lungs a hieroglyph of light  
superstitious code for opportunity and sacred visits  
from the dead

she lands

a tickle on his oily shoulder  
the man of the house  
a parabola of a lifeline  
picks up this guardian angel of garbage and salt  
with his index finger and thumb—  
knowing the myths, legends, folklore  
remembering his own conversations with god—  
and squeezes



**rust and moth**

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Layout and Design by Josiah Spence  
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