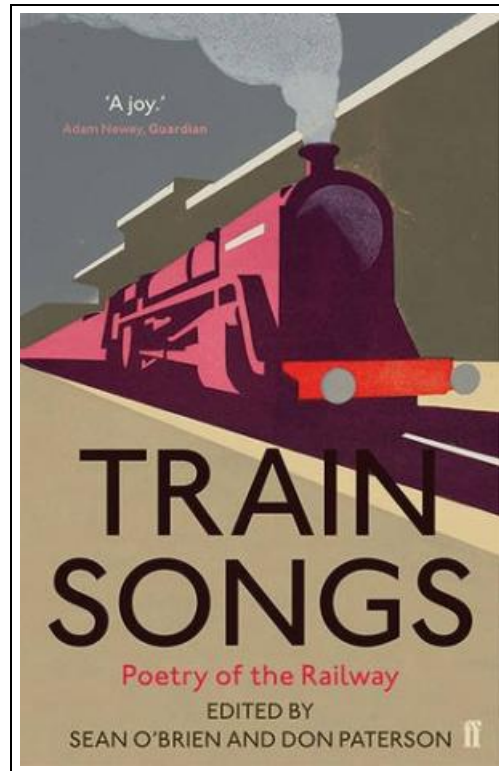


Train Songs: Poetry of the Railway



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Reviews

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(Earnestine Blanda)

TRAIN SONGS: POETRY OF THE RAILWAY



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Faber & Faber. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Train Songs: Poetry of the Railway, Don Paterson, Sean O'Brien, Don Paterson, "This is the night mail crossing the border, Bringing the cheque and the postal order.". (W.H. Auden). Wordsworth was the first laureate of locomotives: in fact he railed against them, and against the consequent opening up of the Lakes to holiday hordes ('On the Projected Kendal and Windermere Railway'). His dismay was echoed down the decades by disturbed ruralists, and yet the train has become part of our psychic landscape: some of the best-loved English poems - Edward Thomas' 'Adlestrop', or Philip Larkin's 'Whitsun Weddings' - have celebrated carriages, platforms and waiting rooms, while locomotion has inspired some of the most characteristic poetry of Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Stevenson, Hardy and MacNeice, Betjeman and Auden (whose 'Night Mail' was written to accompany a 1930s GPO documentary about the postal express from Euston to Glasgow). Co-edited by two of our most distinguished poets, Train Songs offers a round tour - from Wordsworth to Hugo Williams and beyond - starting from the poetry of departures and brief encounters, but taking in the American Blues, the troop trains of two world wars, and the addiction to speed which characterised the European revolutions. Trains have carried the freight of history from the Industrial Revolution onwards - the Armistice in 1918 was signed in a railway carriage, the death camps were organised around train timetables - and this new anthology shows how the train in all its forms has exercised a unique hold upon our collective unconscious.

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