

26 Treasures (2011)



Four national museums – London’s Victoria and Albert Museum, the Ulster Museum, the National Library of Wales and the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh – took part in this collaboration with the writers’ collective 26, to explore the responses of individual writers to individual objects.

The Brief: Curators at the National Museum of Scotland chose 26 objects, from the ground floor right to the top, moving through successive periods of time. 26 writers were randomly assigned one of these objects to respond to in a sestude (exactly 62 words long).

My object was a set of four metal links, part of the heavy Drag Chains used to slow down and control the launching of ships from the Glasgow dockyards. It can be found on Level 6 of the National Museum of Scotland: Scotland – A Changing Nation.

Learn more about the **National Museum of Scotland** at <https://www.nms.ac.uk/national-museum-of-scotland/>

The book **26 Treasures** is available from Amazon as a hardback and on Kindle.

Sea-Change: The Cry of the Drag Chain

you're so eager to be gone
fly
open-armed
down the slipway to the careless sea
suffer your sea-change joyously
go
where I can't follow
you don't know
what I see
there
beyond the smooth, safe harbour
the rich-and-strange that calls to you
I dread its fade, its knell
hear me over the cheering
don't go ...
don't go ...
don't go ...

