Wheel Binding with Secondary Herringbone, 1752

'I cannot see any difference between a poem and a handshake.' Paul Celan

'Turn, and give the man a sign of peace now. You're old enough', she mouths.

I flap in the belly of his hand, retrieve my fingers and drive my dinkie car along those grooves of gold. She slaps my wrist off the Good Book's racetrack. 'Wheesht!' Now, much later,

here is the librarian proferring —like a fastidious *sommelier* a vintage Bible running on a well-tooled binding of scallopped wheels that turn in light. It pours like herring on the jetties.

There is the smoke of luggers, drifters, the oaths of Dutchmen through the east coast haar.

My fingers trace the white pitstops of the herringbones; the refrain of spokes which cross like fingers to fillet daylight. Open the handshake:

do this in memory

of the touch

of skin on skin the wrist angled

do you remember?

towards you the white bone the funny bone the wish bone turning towards you

like a promise?

David Kinloch This work was commissioned by the National Library of Scotland as part of Neu! Treasures!