

## Give Us Back the Bad Roads



In late 1991 John Waters published his best-selling book, *Jiving at the Crossroads*, a quirky and idiosyncratic scrutiny of the underbelly of Irish life in what would emerge as the dying days of an era. Shortly afterwards, a whole new Ireland would begin to be born, as though under the assault of some existential climate change. This latest work, *Crossing the Road*, takes the form of an extended letter by Waters to his dead father, Tom, in which he explores some of the changes in his own life and the life of Ireland in the quarter-century since his fathers death. *Crossing the Road* will look at recent events in Irish life - the Celtic Tiger, the ensuing six-year downturn and the continuing drifting of the Irish economy in the light of Tom Waters lifetime opposition to Irelands membership of the EU. In the year marking the centenary of the 1916 Rising, Waters writes about what has improved in the Ireland of 2016 and what he feels has been lost. The themes of the book encompass the events and changes that have occurred in Ireland over the past quarter-century, but do not stop there. *Crossing the Road* bores deeper to ask the most fundamental questions about the nature of Ireland, the nature of a country, the nature of a nation in the modern world. In an age of relativism does anything matter? In a time of cynicism, can patriotism ever be anything other than laughable? In a country without leaders, is there any possibility of direction? Where can it all lead? Is there an endgame in sight for a country without a compass? *Crossing the Road* will surprise many who have come to see its author as a man of fixed, dogmatic beliefs. A book about life, in the public and personal realms, about Ireland at the national and parochial levels, about truths of the great and small kind, it will expose the reality of 2016 Ireland to a gaze forged in a different world as it hurtles towards another. Unflinchingly, it asks some of the most

momentous questions we face but refuse to ask ourselves.

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