

Giller Prize

Oprah book

THE SLEEPING CAR PORTER (Suzette Mayr, Coach House CA)

Dear friends,

We are so excited to share with you that THE SLEEPING CAR PORTER by Suzette Mayr (Coach House) has won the biggest literary prize in Canada, the Scotiabank Giller Prize!! And that UK rights have finally closed with Sharmaine Lovegrove of Dialogue Books (Hachette UK).

THE SLEEPING CAR PORTER tells the story of Baxter, a queer Black train porter in 1929 on a remarkable journey across the continent.

In addition to the Giller Prize winner, the book appears in the [Publishers Weekly Top 20 Literary Fiction Books of 2022](#) and [Oprah Daily](#).

► **IN ONE SENTENCE:** *The Sleeping Car Porter* brings to life a long-neglected part of Black and queer histories through the spellbinding, magical story of the singular –and unforgettable– Baxter.

► **THE GILLER JURY:** "As only occurs in the finest historical novels, every page in *The Sleeping Car Porter* feels alive and immediate –and eerily contemporary."

► **PW starred REVIEW:** "Readers will be captivated."

► **OPRAH DAILY:** "Mayr evokes the mystique of transcontinental travel and the tumult of lives on the margins in this much-anticipated period novel. All aboard!"

► **THE ATRHOR SAYS:**

'What I really wanted to do with this book was **call attention to the lost history of LGBTQIA2S+ folk**, and our essential contributions to history. Because of societal pressures (including the threat of violence and worse), previous generations of queer folk had to hide, and some did a very good job of it. It's **important that Black people become part of the fabric of the history** of this country. It gets a little tiring when the only time you talk about it is in February because it's Black History Month. It's every month. It's everywhere ... **Black history matters, every month of the year.**'

► **PRAISES:**

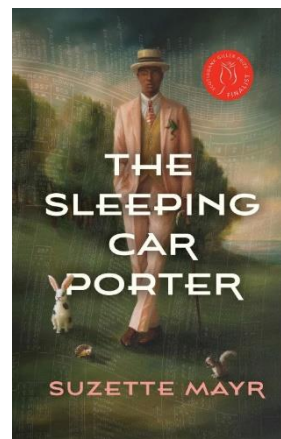
'Readers will be captivated. [...] Mayr's prose is vivid but never overwrought, capturing the surrealism of intense fatigue in constant motion.' – ***Publishers Weekly, starred***

'Mayr evokes the mystique of transcontinental travel and the tumult of lives on the margins in this much-anticipated period novel. All aboard!' – ***Oprah Daily***

'In 1929, being a passenger train porter was fraught with challenges.' – ***Kirkus Reviews***

'An artfully constructed story that moves, beguiles, and satisfies.' – ***Toronto Star***

'Affecting, imaginative, and visceral enough that you'll feel the rocking of the train, *The Sleeping Car Porter* is a stunning accomplishment.' – **CBC**



'Just weeping watching Suzette Mayr's acceptance speech. The first queer winner of the Giller prize. She's been publishing inventive, often funny, and always moving queer literary novels for two decades. I'm so happy.' – **Zoe Whittall, author of *The Best Kind of People*, on Twitter**

When a mudslide strands a train, Baxter, a gay Black sleeping car porter, must contend with the perils of white passengers, ghosts, and his secret love affair.

***The Sleeping Car Porter* brings to life a long-neglected part of Black and queer histories through the spellbinding, magical story of the singular –and unforgettable– Baxter.**

- [Winner of the 2022 Scotiabank Giller Prize](#)
- [Publishers Weekly top 20 literary fiction books of 2022](#)
- [Oprah Daily: Books to read by the fire](#)
- **Rights sold:** UK to Sharmaine Lovegrove of Dialogue Books (Hachette UK).

It's 1929, and Baxter is considered lucky, as a Black man, to have a job as a sleeping car porter on a train that crisscrosses the continent. He has to smile for the white passengers, not too much and not too little, and when they call him 'George,' he just has to nod and look invisible. Meanwhile, he's obsessed with teeth, and saving up enough nickel and dime tips to pay for dentistry school. On this particular trip west, the passengers are more unruly than usual, especially when the train is stranded for days in the mountains – the passengers' secrets start to leak out and blur with the sleep-deprivation hallucinations Baxter is having. And then, when he finds an illicit postcard of two men, Baxter's memories and longings are reawakened; keeping the postcard puts his job in peril, but he can't part with it or his thoughts of a certain Edwin Drew, Porter Instructor.

“Suzette Mayr brings to life – believably, achingly, thrillingly – a whole world contained in a passenger train moving across the Canadian vastness, nearly one hundred years ago... The sleeping car porter in this sleek, stylish novel is named R.T. Baxter – called George by the people upon whom he waits, as is every other Black porter. Baxter's dream of one day going to school to learn dentistry coexists with his secret life as a gay man, and in Mayr's triumphant novel we follow him not only from Montreal to Calgary, but into and out of the lives of an indelibly etched cast of supporting characters, and, finally, into a beautifully rendered radiance.” – **2022 Scotiabank Giller Prize Jury**
