

Booksellers Pick Winners

Booksellers are often the first to spot the outstanding books of each season, and their personal favourites have a way of becoming the most successful books of the year. With this in mind, *READ Magazine* asked booksellers across the country about their favourite book of the season.

Kelly Cameron, from The Book Room in Toronto, writes, “Diana Gabaldon’s newest project, **LORD JOHN AND THE PRIVATE MATTER**, is a spin-off book about a character from her famous **OUTLANDER** series. Readers familiar with Gabaldon’s work will be delighted at the opportunity to learn more about the English soldier Lord John Grey, while those new to her novels will be surprised with the depth and development of the plot. A great read that will leave you anxiously awaiting the next installment.”

Tracy at Bryan Prince Booksellers in Hamilton thinks **MY NAME IS RED**, by Orhan Pamuk, is the book for her. “As the sun sets on the glory of the Ottoman Empire, the Sultan desires an illuminated book to celebrate his reign. What follows is the devilishly clever novel that centres on the mysterious death of the master artist and the illuminations themselves. This book is intricately woven, thoroughly engrossing and immensely satisfying—colour me impressed.”

A VENETIAN AFFAIR is the pick of MaryJo Anderson, from Frog Hollow Books in Halifax, Nova Scotia. “Prepare for passion, jealousy, scandal and unrequited love when you fall under the spell of *A Venetian Affair* by Andrea di Robilant. A cache of love letters from the 1750s were found by the author’s father in the ancient family palazzo in Venice. The love story revealed is between Andrea Memmo (ancestor of the author), scion of one of the oldest Venetian families, and Giustiniana Wynne, a bright, beautiful Anglo-Venetian of illegitimate birth. This spell-binding, historically rich tale unfolds through more than 35 years of letters. The must-read of the fall.”

ONE HUNDRED MILLION HEARTS, by Kerri Sakamoto, is Lynn Wilbur’s choice. “I just loved Kerri’s first novel *The Electrical Field* and have been waiting too long for her next one. Her poignant and beautiful writing helps us to under-

stand the inner strength of the Japanese people and the true meaning of the wartime propaganda phrase ‘one hundred million hearts, beating as one.’” Lynn is the manager of the University of Western Ontario Bookstore.

Tom Nissley from Amazon.ca says that this fall he’s looking forward to Jonathan Raban’s **WAXWINGS**: “Overheated high-tech start-ups, street riots, the nearby wilderness: a number of writers have already taken a crack at getting Seattle at the millennium right—Richard Powers, Michael Byers, Kurt Andersen—but I think Raban, an Englishman best known for his genre-slipping travel books, might be the one to do it.”

“There are always titles that huddle undiscovered in the backlist for years,” writes Richard Bachmann, from A Different Drummer Books in Burlington. “Often they are worthy books of modest ambition. Occasionally they are titles formerly well-known and now obscured by newer or flashier offerings. Every once in a while, though, there is a book which has to wait for its right moment. Of these last, I’d draw your attention to **THE NAMES** by Don DeLillo. Originally published in 1982, *The Names* is a novel about—among others matters—America’s relations to the rest of the world, the breakdown of a marriage, the erosion of language, and the nature of terrorism. We expect certain authors to be prescient, to be our bellwethers; notably, Don DeLillo is one of those authors. Heaven knows what readers made of this novel in 1982. But in the early years of this new century, *The Names* seems shockingly pertinent.”

And there you have it, just some of the titles booksellers are talking about this season. Do yourself a favour and drop by your local bookstore and ask them what they are reading this fall. You may be pleasantly surprised at what you discover. ▣

