

Sunday Review

# Katie Paterson

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By KATE MURPHY    SEPT. 20, 2014

Katie Paterson is a Scottish conceptual artist. Her most recent work is “Future Library” — 1,000 seedlings growing in a Norwegian forest, which will be cut down in 100 years and made into previously unpublished books.

**READING** “Stone Mattress,” by Margaret Atwood, our first author for “Future Library.” I love her work because she can speak through generations and time. I’m also reading “Invisible Cities,” by Italo Calvino, which is a collection of texts that imagines cities of all varieties made of bizarre materials. And “The Blue Fox,” by the Icelandic author Sjon. You follow a blue fox through a hunted journey. It’s like a fairy tale. All three books travel through time and space. And they all have very poetic language as well.

**LISTENING** I bounced Beethoven’s “Moonlight Sonata” off the moon using a kind of radio technology called E.M.E., or Earth Moon Earth. It’s also called Moonbounce. People build radio stations in their gardens or backyards and they reflect Morse code off the moon, but it doesn’t come back all in one piece because of the shadows on the moon. When I sent the sonata, bits were missing when it came back.

**WATCHING** The Louisiana Channel, which comes from the Louisiana

Museum of Modern Art in Humlebaek, Denmark. They hold these literature festivals and the website has got loads of filmed interviews with authors and writers. Because we're researching authors for "Future Library," it's been a good resource.

When it comes to films, I always like to return to Herzog: "Encounters at the End of the World" and "The Cave of Forgotten Dreams."

**FOLLOWING** I was following the Scottish referendum on BBC Scotland, Yes Scotland and the Wee Blue Book Mobile Edition. I submitted my vote: Yes for an independent Scotland. I think we will see positive results from the referendum, even though the result is not what I had hoped for. It's gotten us to know more about politics and economics in our country. Everywhere people have been talking about it, in the shops, at the hairdresser, walking down the street. It's been very exciting.

**HUNTING** Fossil hunting is a new hobby of mine. It happened because I made a necklace of 170 beads carved from fossils and it charts all of geological time on Earth. The first bead is 3 1/2 billion years old and contains the first cellular life on earth and it goes on from there. I had no experience in paleontology and it took ages to work out what I was looking for. Scotland has got an amazing coast where you can find fossils just on the beach. I didn't know this at all. I also got fossils from fairs, eBay and auctions.

Kate Murphy is a journalist in Houston who writes frequently for The New York Times.