

## Margaret Atwood to be first contributor to 100-year literary art project

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By **Lucy Draper** 5/18/15 at 5:35 PM



Margaret Atwood will be the first author to contribute to the project. Mark Blinich/Reuters

A Scottish artist has launched a 100-year project which will see one author produce a book every year until 2114, with the stories remaining unpublished until that year. The Canadian poet and novelist Margaret Atwood was chosen to be the inaugural writer for the project, which is entitled Future Library, and is due to hand in her story next week.

The paper for the books will be supplied from 1,000 trees which have been planted in a forest located just outside the Norwegian capital of Oslo. Katie Paterson, the artist behind the idea has **previously said** that she believes 3,000 anthologies will be able to be printed from the 1,000 new Norwegian Spruce trees which have been specifically planted for this purpose.

Paterson is also to design a special room at the New Deichmanske Public Library, opening in Oslo in 2018, where the manuscripts will be kept. Although the name of each author and the title of their work will be displayed, the manuscripts won't be available to read until 2114. She has established the Future Library Trust which will work with the City of Oslo to make sure that both the manuscripts and the forest will be protected over the next hundred years.

Commenting on her involvement, Atwood, who has produced more than 40 volumes of work, was keen to praise the positive implications of Paterson's idea. "This project, at least, believes the human race will still be around in a hundred years! I am very honoured, and also happy to be part of this endeavor."

Speaking to the Guardian newspaper last year, the award-winning author described how the project reminded of her games that children play. "I think it goes right back to that phase of our childhood when we used to bury little things in the backyard, hoping that someone would dig them up, long in the future, and say, 'How interesting, this rusty old piece of tin, this little sack of marbles is. I wonder who put it there?'"

Paterson herself was very pleased that Atwood was on board. "I imagine her words growing through the trees, an unseen energy, activated and materialized, the tree rings becoming chapters in a book."

The decision of which other authors will contribute to the project will be made by the Future Library Trust, which is made up of leading editors and publishers. Founding members include the literary director of the Man Booker Prize Ion Trewhin and Simon Prosser, publishing director of the British publishing house Hamish Hamilton.

Other projects Paterson has produced include a sound installation that allowed people to call an icecap and listen to the melting glacier and translating Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata into Morse-code radio signals which were then 'bounced' off the moon.