



Margaret Atwood submits manuscript to Future Library; won't be read for 100 years

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Under a drizzling sky in a forest in Oslo on Tuesday, Canadian literary legend Margaret Atwood submitted an unread manuscript to a project that will keep the work under wraps for the next century.

The Toronto-based Man Booker Prize winner is the first author to hand over an unpublished piece to the Future Library in Oslo.

The international project will see one writer contribute a new, unread text to the collection every year for the next 100 years.

The pieces will be kept locked up until 2114, when 1,000 trees planted for the project in a forest just outside Oslo will be cut down to provide paper for their publication.

Anne Beate Hovind, the project director, said Atwood walked with a large crowd through the forest on Tuesday and handed over the manuscript in a simple ceremony amongst the newly planted trees.

The manuscript was sealed in a box, so no one could see how long it was, but Atwood did reveal its title: "Scribbler Moon."

Seated on a wooden bench while the audience sat on the ground, Atwood also read from her novel "MaddAddam."

"It was magic," said Hovind, who is also a chairwoman in the Future Library Trust, during a telephone interview.

"People were totally silent and there was just about enough rain, so we didn't get very wet. People were very touched."

Atwood later participated in a Q&A with Scottish artist Katie Paterson, who created the project.

Paterson is also helping design a room in the New Deichmanske Public Library that will hold the manuscripts in trust. Opening in 2018, the room will be lined with wood cut down from the forest last year.

None of the manuscripts will be available for reading until their publication 100 years from now.

Organizers will reveal the next writer who will contribute to the project on Wednesday.

Atwood was the perfect author to launch the project because the themes she explores in her books parallel those in Paterson's work, said Hovind.

"She was just meant for this project, I think, in a way."

In a statement, Atwood said she was honoured to be a part of it, noting: "This project, at least, believes the human race will still be around in a hundred years!"