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Slate

No One Will Read Margaret Atwood's Newest Work For 100 Years

By *Lily Hay Newman*



Margaret Atwood at a press conference in 2008

Photo by MIGUEL RIOPA/AFP/Getty Images

Time capsules are pretty awesome, but a new initiative called the Future Library project is taking them to a whole other level. For the next century, one author per year will contribute a piece that will then be sealed away until 2114. Margaret Atwood is up first. If you're a fan, you have 100 years to get pumped up.

Scottish artist Katie Paterson is behind [the Future Library project](#). She planted 1,000 trees in woods outside Oslo, and the plan is to cut them down a century from now to print the 100 works on. Paterson [told the Guardian](#) that Atwood is her "dream" first author. It seems like a perfect fit since Atwood is known for writing about the future, often dystopias, in novels like *The Handmaid's Tale* and the [MaddAddam trilogy](#).

Of the project as a whole Paterson said, "It freaks me out a bit when I think that many of these writers aren't born yet. Sometimes it does hit me—oh my God, if I live to 90, what will it be like then? It's very exciting as an artist."

Seventy-four-year-old Atwood says she isn't perturbed by the idea of producing work that won't be released in her lifetime. "It is the kind of thing you either immediately say yes or no to. You don't think about it for very long," she told the *Guardian*. "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. ..."

Delayed-gratification art is our window into the future.