



Press Release

May 29, 2017

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## **The Franz Kafka International Literary Prize 2017**

**The Franz Kafka Society is proud to announce that the 17<sup>th</sup> laureate of the prestigious Franz Kafka Prize is the Canadian writer Margaret Atwood.**

**On Monday, May 22, 2017 at its annual meeting at the headquarters of the Franz Kafka Society in Prague, the international jury selected a new laureate of the Franz Kafka International Literary Prize for the year 2017, the Canadian writer Margaret E. Atwood (born 1939).**

Margaret Eleanor Atwood (1939 Ottawa) is a Canadian poet, novelist, literary critic, essayist, and environmental activist. She graduated at Harvard's Radcliffe College and her theoretical work mainly focuses on Canadian literature and Canadian identity. She is the author of many collections of short stories: *The Tent* (2006), novels: *Life Before Man* (1979), *The Robber Bride* (1993), *The Blind Assassin* (2000), collections of poems: *The Journals of Susanna Moodie* (1970), *True Stories* (1981), and books for children: *Rude Ramsay and the Roaring Radishes* (2003).

Atwood's most famous work is a "speculative" fiction situated in the near future called *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985). A television series based on the book was created this year.

Atwood has won more than 55 awards both in Canada and internationally, and has received numerous honorary degrees.

**The Franz Kafka International Literary Prize has been awarded by the Franz Kafka Society since 2001.** Its laureates to date include writers Philip Roth, Ivan Klíma, Péter Nádas, Elfriede Jelinek, Harold Pinter, Haruki Murakami, Yves Bonnefoy, Arnošt Lustig, Peter Handke, Václav Havel, John Banville, Daniela Hodrová, Amos Oz, Yan Lianke, Eduardo Mendoza and Claudio Magris.

**In 2017, the jury included Peter Demetz, André Derval, Marianne Gruber, Oldřich Král, Petr Matoušek, Lorenzo Silva, Jiří Stránský, Jiří Stromšík and Hans Dieter Zimmermann.** At its meeting, the jury chose among the leading figures of contemporary world literature.

**“This is a very great honour and I would be most pleased to accept. Franz Kafka has a special place for me, since as an undergraduate I wrote one of my first pieces of serious literary criticism about his work,”** said the laureate. Margaret Atwood will travel to Prague in the Fall to attend the traditional award ceremony in the Brožík Hall of the Old Town Hall, where the laureates receive the main symbol of the prize – a bronze statuette of Franz Kafka by the sculptor Jaroslav Róna. The financial award is USD 10,000.

**The main partner of the Franz Kafka Society in organising the Franz Kafka International Literary Prize is the City of Prague.** The award ceremony regularly takes place under the aegis of the President of the Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic and the Mayor of the City of Prague. **The mission of the Franz Kafka Prize is to reward artistically exceptional literary production of a contemporary author whose work addresses readers regardless of their origin, nationality or culture, like the work of Franz Kafka.** The Prize is presented for the entire work of the particular author to date.

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The award ceremony of the Franz Kafka Prize takes place under the aegis of the President of the Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic and the Mayor of the City of Prague

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The main partner of the Franz Kafka International Literary Prize is the City of Prague



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The partner of the Franz Kafka International Literary Prize is the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic



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The partner of the Franz Kafka International Literary Prize is Hotel Century Old Town Prague



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