



NATIONAL BOOK & MAGAZINE FESTIVAL

For Immediate Release: Monday, July 13, 2009

**The Word On The Street Canada to launch  
Margaret Atwood's new novel  
at book and magazine festivals coast to coast  
[www.thewordonthestreet.ca](http://www.thewordonthestreet.ca)**

Toronto, ON – This September, **The Word On The Street** will connect festivals in Vancouver, Toronto and Halifax live using video and LongPen technology to launch **Margaret Atwood's** highly anticipated new novel, *The Year of the Flood* (publishing September 8 in Canada).

Canada's first live coast to coast book launch using LongPen technology will broadcast Atwood in person from The Word On The Street Toronto to The Word On The Street festivals in Vancouver and Halifax. The interactive video broadcast will allow festival participants to engage in a question and answer session with Atwood. Atwood will sign books for fans in Vancouver and Halifax using the LongPen, allowing her to talk with each fan via private video chat and to transmit a genuine, personalized autograph instantly to the interior pages of their copy of the book.

Atwood was approached to participate in a national launch to connect The Word On The Street festivals in a milestone year. On Sunday, September 27, The Word On The Street Toronto is holding its 20<sup>th</sup> festival with Vancouver and Halifax each marking their 15<sup>th</sup>. Atwood's participation in The Word On The Street festivals will begin with a live reading on Saturday, September 26 at the Kitchener Public Library, prior to The Word On The Street festival in Kitchener on September 27.

The Word On The Street is not new to using LongPen technology. In 2006, the Toronto festival used the LongPen to connect fans in Toronto with Atwood while she was in Edinburgh and Kate Mosse in London, England, marking the world's first transatlantic book signings.

"Ever since the first festival in 1990, I look forward to being involved with The Word On The Street. This year, with the LongPen, I can attend festivals in Toronto, Vancouver and Halifax - all on the same day - with my new novel, *The Year of the Flood*," said Margaret Atwood. Following her Canadian appearances Atwood will be embarking on an international tour with *The Year of the Flood*, the first full-length novel the author has released in six years.

Atwood's participation in The Word On The Street festival is possible with the support of the Ontario Media Development Corporation in partnership with the Association of Canadian Publishers and Open Book: Toronto (an initiative of the Organization of Book Publishers of Ontario).

“The success of The Word On The Street festivals across Canada is attributed to our national passion for the written word and advocacy for literacy, with over 250,000 Canadians attending festivals on a single day,” noted Ceta Ramkhalawansingh, board chair, The Word On The Street Canada. “We are delighted that writers and literacy organizations continue to show their enthusiasm.” In 2008, over 450 authors, illustrators, performers and workshop presenters participated in 400 programmed events in addition to 500 exhibits from publishers, booksellers and literacy organizations.

The Word On The Street Canada is a national charitable organization which licenses local organizations to hold annual book and magazine festivals to celebrate reading and advocate literacy. On Sunday, September 27, festivals will be held in Library Square in Vancouver, Queen’s Park in Toronto, Victoria Park in Kitchener and the Cunard Event Centre on the waterfront in Halifax. Information about each festival is available at [www.thewordonthestreet.ca](http://www.thewordonthestreet.ca).

**Media Contacts:**

Planet3 Communications Ltd.

Joanne Smale / Leanne Plummer

t: 647.346.4101, e: [info@planet3com.net](mailto:info@planet3com.net)

The Word On The Street Canada

Alex Moorshead, Executive Director,

t: 416.556.0812, e: [alex@thewordonthestreet.ca](mailto:alex@thewordonthestreet.ca)

**[www.thewordonthestreet.ca](http://www.thewordonthestreet.ca)**