

Katie Paterson: *Afterlife*

Scottish artist Katie Paterson presents *Afterlife* at Collective, reimagining ancient amulets using materials from endangered environments

Commissioned for Folkestone Triennial 2025, curated by Collective's Director Sorcha Carey, the exhibition makes its Scottish debut this summer

Opening from Friday 19 June – Sunday 6 September,
Afterlife is presented as part of Edinburgh Art Festival (EAF26)



Katie Paterson, *Afterlife* at Collective, 2026. © Owen Carey

This summer, Collective shares a solo presentation by internationally acclaimed Scottish artist Katie Paterson, as her new work *Afterlife* is exhibited in Scotland for the first time.

Commissioned for Folkestone Triennial 2025, curated by Collective's Director Sorcha Carey, this important new work will be shared with audiences from Friday 19 June – Sunday 6 September. The exhibition will be presented as part of Edinburgh Art Festival (EAF26) - the UK's largest annual festival of visual art, running from 14—30 August 2026.

Afterlife brings together nearly 200 amulets in a sculptural installation designed in collaboration with Berlin/Mexico City-based architects, Zeller & Moyer.

Amulets are miniature talismanic objects, typically carved in stone. Appearing across millennia and cultures, they are small enough to be held in the hand or worn, and are generally considered protective.

Afterlife reimagines this tradition. Working with museums around the world, Paterson has recreated amulets from civilisations across the globe (including Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Viking, Islamic, Japanese, Indian, Chinese, Celtic, Greco-Roman and Pre-Columbian), using materials sourced from endangered landscapes and fragile ecosystems, to serve as a bridge between past and present.

The materials used to recreate the amulets reflect the pressing environmental issues of our time. Rocks from glacial terrains left bare by retreating ice, coral from the Great Barrier Reef, stones from islands facing rising sea levels, and other materials from devastated or threatened ecosystems are transformed into tiny objects of reflection, connection and renewal. Each material carries a story of environmental fragility, symbolising urgent issues such as biodiversity loss, deforestation, and the impact of climate change.

Installed in a distinctive circular table crafted from sycamore by local makers Silvan, *Afterlife* explores themes of deep time, geology, and the environment. Drawing on centuries of cultural and spiritual traditions to reflect the fragility of the natural world today, *Afterlife* prompts us to consider the legacies we leave for future generations.

Afterlife was commissioned by Creative Folkestone for Folkestone Triennial 2025, with additional support from The Shifting Foundation, Collective, and Goethe-Institut Glasgow.

Talking about her exhibition, Katie Paterson said:

'*Afterlife* began as an attempt to hold deep time in the palm of the hand. These amulets carry stories from across millennia and cultures, remade from materials drawn from endangered places on Earth. They are small objects, but they hold vast landscapes — reminders of what is disappearing. *Afterlife* is an offering of protection and connection, across time, across cultures, and across the living Earth.'

Director of Collective Sorcha Carey said:

'We are so excited to be sharing this major new commission by one of Scotland's leading artists. *Afterlife*, like so much of Katie's work, transforms our sense of time, while welcoming us into ideas and thinking that extend far beyond our own lifespan. Originally conceived for Folkestone Triennial, *Afterlife* gains a new resonance in the context of Collective: set in a historic observatory on top of an extinct volcano, our gallery offers a unique vantage point from which to reflect on deep time and the landscape.'

For more information, visit: www.collective-edinburgh.art

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Notes to Editors

Assets

A press pack of assets [can be found here](#)

Press Contacts

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Address and Opening Hours

Collective, City Observatory, 38 Calton Hill, EH7 5AA
Open Wednesday – Sunday, 10am-5pm
Free entry and exhibitions

Social Media

Collective Instagram: [@collective_edin](#)
Collective Facebook: Collective, Edinburgh
Collective Bluesky: [@collective-edin.bsky.social](#)
Katie Paterson Instagram: [@studio.katie.paterson](#)

Listings

Preview of Katie Paterson: *Afterlife* on Thursday 18 June 2026
Katie Paterson: *Afterlife*: Friday 19 June – Sunday 6 September 2026

About Katie Paterson

Katie Paterson is known for her poetic and conceptually driven works that explore deep time, the cosmos, and the fragility of our planet. Collaborating with scientists, astronomers and researchers across the globe, her art connects the everyday with the vast and unknowable, from distant galaxies to disappearing glaciers.

Her projects have included broadcasting the sound of a melting glacier live, mapping dead stars, creating a light bulb that replicates moonlight, and sending a recast meteorite back into space. Paterson's practice is rooted in research and realised with scientific precision, yet her works retain a profound emotional resonance evoking wonder, humility, and the vastness of time.

Paterson has exhibited widely, with solo and group exhibitions at Turner Contemporary, Hayward Gallery, Tate Britain, Kunsthalle Wien, MCA Sydney, the Guggenheim, and the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art. She is the recipient of the South Bank Award for Visual Art and an Honorary Fellow of Edinburgh University.

Paterson lives and works in Scotland.

<https://katiepaterson.org/>

About Collective

Collective is a free contemporary art centre that brings creative new perspectives to the city of Edinburgh.

Situated in a heritage observatory, Collective develops and presents world-class exhibitions, events, workshops and discussions from ground-breaking local and international artists. We run artist-led activities for young people, as well as the sector-leading development programme for emerging creative practitioners, Satellites.

Founded in 1984 as an artist-run initiative, Collective now runs from our home on Edinburgh's iconic Calton Hill.

www.collective-edinburgh.art

Collective Gallery.

About EAF (Edinburgh Art Festival)

EAF (Edinburgh Art Festival) is the UK's largest annual festival of visual art, and will return from 14–30 August 2026. Founded in 2004, we work with local and international partners to present an ambitious and meaningful programme of exhibitions, events and projects across the city.

Since its beginnings, EAF has featured exhibitions including international and UK artists at a pivotal point in their career alongside the best emerging talent, major survey exhibitions of historic figures, and a programme of newly commissioned artworks that respond to historic sites in the city.

We support Scottish and international artists to make new and ambitious projects which engage with the extraordinary context of Edinburgh in August. Presented principally in public spaces, our projects allow access to overlooked or neglected stories or spaces in our city's heritage.

EAF's year-round community engagement programme has long-term relationships and partnerships across the city, creating relevant and memorable experiences with artists. We invite local people to explore culture, community, the city and self-expression, and value, with many festival projects reflecting this unique creative relationship.

Partners for EAF: the Community Wellbeing Collective; National Galleries Scotland; Jupiter Artland; Edinburgh Printmakers; Sett Studios; Collective; Edinburgh Sculpture Workshop; The Scottish Gallery; Travelling Gallery; Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh; Ingleby; Dovecot Studios; The King's Gallery; National Museum of Scotland; Talbot Rice Gallery; Edinburgh College of Art; Edinburgh Futures Institute; Stills Centre for Photography; Fruitmarket; City Art Centre.

For all EAF press enquiries contact Nicola Jeffs on nj@nicolajeffs.com / +44 (0) 7794 694 754
www.edinburghartfestival.com

EAF26

About Creative Scotland

Creative Scotland is the public body that supports culture and creativity across all parts of Scotland, distributing funding provided by the Scottish Government and The National Lottery. Further information at creativescotland.com. Follow Creative Scotland on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram.

Funders and Supporters

Collective is supported by Creative Scotland and the City of Edinburgh Council.

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