

INGLEBY | REQUIEM

9th April – 11th June. 2022

A new exhibition by Katie Paterson that tells the birth and life of our planet in a single object – an object that uses dust gathered from material dating from pre-solar times to those of the present.

In the centre of the gallery will sit a large jar, a glass urn, the ancient form of funerary vessel. Around the walls a long shelf will hold a series of small vials, 370 of them in all, each containing a tablespoon of dust. Each is a layer of time waiting to be poured into the urn by members of the public, and by invited guests.

The dust has been obtained through collaboration with institutions and collections worldwide, and collectively, the vials map the story of the earth from before its existence to the present day, and offer a lament for the planet, a warning, a requiem on the theme of extinction.

Katie Paterson remarks, *“I’ve always made artworks that deal with nature and time and climate, but this is the first that isn’t afraid to be political and confrontational... It is both celebratory and mythical, and yet it is also the saddest work I’ve ever made, mourning life lost and expressing a dystopian vision”*.

The pouring will begin with a layer pre-solar dust from the oldest of meteorites, carbonaceous chondrite, stretching back across the furthest distances of time and place, then the asteroid Vesta, a reminder of our planet’s origin still visible as the brightest asteroid in the night sky. There follows a slow unfurling of planetary history, from the oldest earthly rock formation of the 4.5-Billion-year-old Pre-Cambrian era to the first creatures to open their eyes, the first flowers to flower, the first skeletal structures and the slow emergence of humanity’s antecedents from ocean to land. There are the crushed to dust remnants of our most archaic ancestors, from the earliest hunter-gatherers of Doggerland, through cultures and epochs long gone - Phoenician, Bactrian, Inca, Hellenistic, Roman, Pre-Columbian, Viking - each pouring of dust taking us layer by layer through the origins of everything, and the extinction of so much that is left in our wake.

A publication devoted to this extraordinary engagement with deep time and the history of the planet will be published in the summer of 2022, with an individual commentary on every layer by Jan Zalasiewicz (member of the Anthropocene Working Group and author of *The Earth After Us*) and essays by David Farrier (author of *Footprints – in Search of Future Fossils* and *Anthropocene Poetics*) and Jay Griffiths (author of *Wild, An Elemental Journey*).