



Press release October 7, 2020

Katie Paterson to create IHME Helsinki Commission 2021

IHME Helsinki is happy to announce that the artist **Katie Paterson** will create the second IHME Helsinki Commission in 2021. The new commission entitled *To Burn, Forest, Fire* will take place on numerous sites in Helsinki during summer 2021.

Katie Paterson (born 1981, Scotland) is widely regarded as one of the leading artists of her generation. Collaborating with scientists and researchers across the world, Paterson's projects consider our place on Earth in the context of geological time and change. Her artworks make use of sophisticated technologies and specialist expertise to stage intimate, poetic and philosophical engagements between people and their natural environment. One of the best known works of Paterson is *Future Library* in Oslo, Norway.

"I am absolutely delighted to have been chosen as IHME's commissioned artist for 2021 and fully support their current direction. My fundamental drive is to create artwork that heightens awareness of the sixth extinction the world is living through. We share a quarter of our DNA with trees, they are our life source, yet Earth has lost more than half of its trees since humans first started cutting them down. We are destroying rainforests so quickly they may be gone in 100 years. I believe that the planet and all the life it supports are deeply interconnected, and we can face up to the climate catastrophe more effectively when we use our senses and connect on an emotional, intuitive level. In creating *To Burn, Forest, Fire*, my hope is that participants in Helsinki will be transported back in time by this ritualistic artwork, that through their senses they will be reminded of the increasing levels of extinction caused by humanity, whilst simultaneously being carried forward into this futuristic scenario – a place I hope we will never get to – encouraging people to act now."

To Burn, Forest, Fire will consist of the scent of the first-ever forest on earth, and the scent of the last forest of the age of the climate crisis, made into incense and then burned across a variety of sites around the city of Helsinki in summer 2021. In order to find definitions which forests are the first and the last forest in question Katie Paterson has collaborated with emeritus professor **Jan Zalasiewicz**, School of Geography, Geology and the Environment, University of Leicester and Docent in Palaeoclimatology **J. Sakari Salonen**, University of Helsinki.

There will be two IHME Helsinki Commissions produced in 2021. Norwegian artist Jana Winderen's IHME Helsinki 2020 commission is due to covid-19 pandemic postponed to August 2021.

Further information and interview requests: Executive Director Paula Toppila: paula.toppila@ihmehelsinki.fi, +358 45124 0096.

Press materials and photos: <https://www.ihmehelsinki.fi/en/media/>. Password from Cultural Producer Päivi Matala: paivi.matala@ihmehelsinki.fi, +358 45 235 0080.

IHME commissions works of contemporary art that unite the worlds of art, science and climate work. Each year, we produce a public artwork and a series of events that offer a vision and hope amid the environmental crisis. Artist Jana Winderen will conceive the first IHME Helsinki commission 2020 in 2021. Our work is possible with the support from our founding foundation Pro Arte Foundation Finland, Kone Foundation and Saastamoinen Foundation in 2020-22.

IHME Helsinki
Pro Arte Foundation Finland
Kalevankatu 4, 2nd floor
00100 Helsinki

info@ihmehelsinki.fi
www.ihmehelsinki.fi