



BIG PICTURE

Streetlight Storm by Katie Paterson.

At any one time there are around 6,000 lightning storms happening across the world, amounting to some 16 million storms each year. Such dizzying statistics are useful to hold in mind while experiencing Katie Paterson's *Streetlight Storm*. For one month on Deal Pier in Kent, during the hours of darkness, the pier lamps will flicker in time with lightning strikes happening live in different parts of the world.

Katie Paterson creates poetic artworks exploring landscape, space and time. She uses technology to bring together the commonplace and the cosmic. *Streetlight Storm* deftly harnesses everyday technology to connect with vast natural phenomena, collapsing the distance between the viewer on Deal Pier and remote meteorological events around the globe. Lightning signals from as far away as the North Pole or North Africa are received by an antenna on the pier and translated into light pulses. As the pattern of lightning strikes changes, so the pier lights oscillate correspondingly, with a subtlety that contrasts with the power and drama of the storms they reflect. The artist says, "I am interested in the way the ordinary and the otherworldly intersect, and much of my work uses everyday technologies from doorbells to record players and connecting with vast and intangible phenomena such as dying stars and the moon."

Pairing the commonplace with the sublime is a recurring theme in Paterson's work. Viewers can gaze out to the horizon from the pier as these everyday streetlights connect the imagination with faraway places and the Earth's ecosystem at large. For this commission Paterson has worked with technologists, engineers, meteorologists and lightning scientists within the UK and internationally.

Katie Paterson graduated from the Slade School of Fine Art in 2007. She has recently exhibited at *Altermodern: Tate Triennial 2009*, Tate Britain, *Universal Code*, Powerplant, Toronto, and *Lifeforms*, Bonnier Konsthall, Stockholm. Recent works include *Earth-Moon-Earth* (*Moonlight Sonata Reflected from the Surface of the Moon*), in which she transmitted Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata* to the moon and back and *Vatnajökull* (the sound of), a live phone line to an Icelandic glacier. Upcoming shows include *PERFORMA 09*, New York. *Streetlight Storm* runs from 21 December – 30 January and is supported by Vauxhall Motors and Albion Gallery, in partnership with Turner Contemporary and Whitstable Biennale. An artist's talk will take place at 4.30pm on 21 December.

www.katiepaterson.org
www.vauxhallcollective.co.uk

Katie Paterson, *Streetlight Storm* (artist's impression), site-specific intervention at Deal Pier, 2009. Copyright: MJC. Courtesy: the artist