

**EMMA DOVE  
DIRECTOR/CUSTODIAN  
THE KATY DOVE ARCHIVE**

**YOUR BACKGROUND**

I am an artist filmmaker based in Dumfries and Galloway, working across moving image, photography, sound and collaborative projects. I also I work part-time with CAMPLE LINE, supporting exhibitions, events, film screenings and accessibility across the public programme.

Alongside my own practice, I have been custodian of the Katy Dove Archive since 2015, caring for and activating the work of my late sister, Scottish artist Katy Dove (1970–2015). My experience as a filmmaker - and Katy's and my shared interests in landscape, psychology, the body and collaborative ways of working - gave me an intuitive way into caring for her archive, and has helped me navigate the creative, technical and ethical decisions involved in its stewardship.

Katy was an important mentor in my own creative development, and caring for her archive allows that dialogue to carry on - I continue to learn from her through the processes and materials she left behind. This relationship informs the sensitivity, responsibility and long-term commitment I bring to her legacy.

My role within the archive includes cataloguing, digitisation, exhibition support, fundraising and developing new ways for Katy's work to be seen and experienced. Recent projects include an open studio event and pop-up exhibition in November 2023 and *The Subtle Body*, a major exhibition and public programme developed for Glasgow International 2026.



*Emma Dove, Custodian of The Katy Dove Archive*

## YOUR ARCHIVE

The Katy Dove Archive brings together the multidisciplinary practice of Scottish artist Katy Dove (1970–2015), spanning animation, film, painting, drawing, printmaking, photography, sound and collaborative work.

The collection includes more than 17 animations, 58 framed works, and over 800 unframed drawings and prints, alongside over 25 sketchbooks. There is also a large body of digital material including scanned drawings, video, animation and sound composition files, as well as extensive documentation.

Alongside these works, the archive holds a rich range of ephemera - diaries, notebooks, project notes, correspondence, and materials from collaborations, residencies and workshops - as well as legacy media such as VHS, MiniDV, Hi8, Super8 and 16mm film.

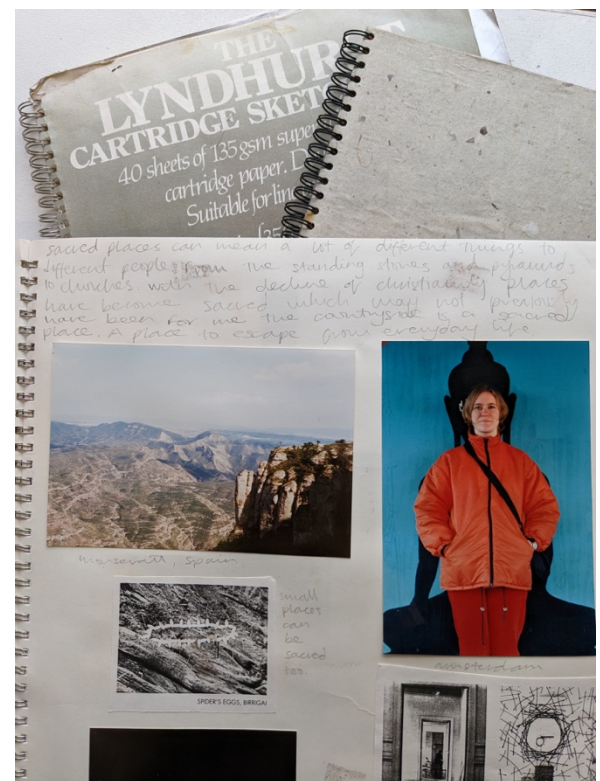
Katy's practice was grounded in rhythm, improvisation, colour, sound and gesture, often developed in dialogue with musicians, choreographers and communities. This reflected in the archive, which includes materials from collaborative projects, as well as recordings from the bands *Muscles of Joy* and *Full Eye*, of which Katy was a member. Together, these materials form a layered record of process, experimentation and cross-disciplinary exchange.

Since Katy's death, I have acted as custodian of her archive, working to consolidate, catalogue and digitise the collection and to develop ethical approaches to its care, interpretation and future use. This involves balancing preservation with active engagement and access. I approach the archive as a living and evolving resource rather than a static repository and seek to support conversation and support research or creative engagement with Katy's work.

The archive is stored in a dedicated studio in Dumfries, with the majority of physical works catalogued and a public-facing digital collection available via Artwork Archive. The archive can be visited by appointment, and is also accessible through exhibitions, partnerships, and research enquiries, as well as through the digital archive, website and social media channels.



*Katy Dove*



*Materials at The Katy Dove Archive*

## YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE

One of the central challenges in stewarding Katy's archive has been navigating the question: *What would Katy do?* In the early years, I felt the need to defer every decision back to an imagined version of her wishes. As I have learned more about the realities of caring for a posthumous archive - and spoken with others managing the creative legacies of loved ones - I have gradually gained more agency in decision-making, informed by Katy's ethos but also by my own learning and the advice of experienced peers.

Katy died in the midst of her career. She had no opportunity to consider her legacy, articulate her wishes, or prepare her archive. She left behind a rich and complex body of work, but relatively few clues about what she considered "finished," what she felt comfortable exhibiting, or how she hoped her work would be organised and cared for. This creates ongoing challenges around interpretation, selection and presentation. Much of her working process involved gathering, sketching, free drawing, painting, collecting photographs, sound recordings and video footage, and scanning, layering and animating shapes, sounds and textures. These materials are compelling and invaluable in understanding her practice yet were often never intended to be shown publicly.

A significant challenge has been determining how to honour this abundance of working material - and the insight it offers - whilst respecting and navigating those public-private boundaries and preferences. This is particularly acute in relation to Katy's 2013-14 project at Duff House, which remained unfinished when she died and includes video and animation work-in-progress. Deciding whether, when or how to share elements of an incomplete project requires careful ethical consideration.



*The Katy Dove Archive*

Beyond the conceptual and emotional dimensions, there are also practical challenges. The archive has no commercial gallery representation, which creates difficulties around pricing, valuation and selecting works for sale in ways that are aligned with contemporary art practice and with Katy's career. A sustainable funding model is also needed to support the archive's ongoing work and ambitions, as well as a long-term legacy and management plan to ensure that Katy's work remains visible and cared for beyond my own custodianship. With all this in mind, the archive is now incorporated as a community interest company, which will provide more structure and clarity around the archive's management going forward.

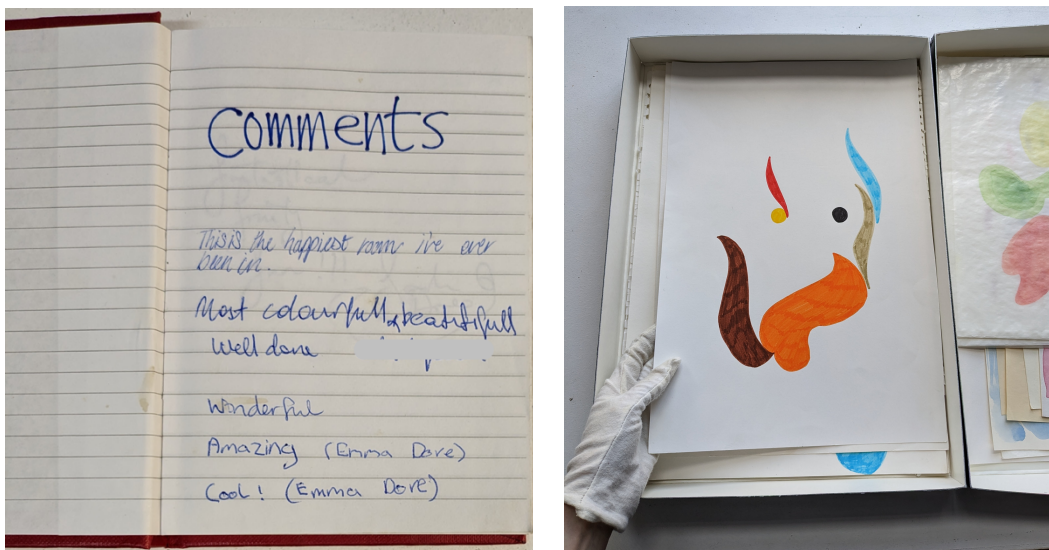
## YOUR FAVOURITE ITEM IN YOUR COLLECTION

Choosing a single favourite item from the archive feels impossible, because my connection to the collection is not only rooted in appreciation but also in memory, relationship and discovery. Some of the most meaningful moments emerge when I come across something I didn't know existed, or when I find an object that unexpectedly intersects with my own memories.

One example is the guestbook from Katy's degree show at DJCAD. Tucked among the comments is a message from my childhood self: *Wonderful. Amazing. Cool! - Emma Dove*. I have no memory of writing this, yet I vividly remember the exhibition - a bright neon-pink sculptural tunnel, multi coloured drawings and shapes emerging from walls, copies of Katy's first animation *Fantasy Freedom* on VHS. I do remember thinking that my big sister was very cool.

This is what I value most within the archive: the way objects hold layers of significance that shift depending on who encounters them. A sketch may be admired as a drawing by one person, yet for another it can unlock a cascade of sensory memories - a shared moment in a studio, a collaboration, a gig, a holiday, a hill walk, a rehearsal, an install, a conversation.

During the Archive Open Studio in 2023, we invited friends and former collaborators of Katy to choose a work and share its personal resonance. Their responses revealed how each item becomes a bridge between Katy's life, relationships and creative practice. So rather than a single favourite object, I cherish the archive's capacity to reveal hidden memories, forge connections and continually expand my understanding of Katy's work and the many lives it touched.



Archival materials at The Katy Dove Archive

