

Callicoon Fine Arts is pleased to present a special project by Dayanita Singh. The project marks a significant step towards realizing the artist's long-standing desire to offer her "book objects" for sale in a pop-up shop or bookstore setting, staged here in the gallery. The book objects are publications by Singh, often made in collaboration with Gerhard Steidl, that expand upon her photographic practice, concurrently acting as photobooks, art objects, catalogues, and exhibitions.

The book objects are installed like museum gift store items and situated among other objects created by Singh, recalling museum retail. A glass carafe, a coat, a silk scarf, a poster, and canvas bags act as souvenirs and mementos of the artist's many projects. This experimental form of photography exhibition and distribution opens the institutional categories of art to redefinition.

The *Pothi Box*, presented here for the first time, is an unbound book of thirty image cards held together in a wooden structure. The box is meant to be hung on a wall or placed on a table. The set of images, which depict archival documents and materials, are not to be separated from each other or the box. The structure, however, has been built to allow the collector to change the front cover image as they please. *Pothi Box* has been published in a limited edition of 360 and is available in exhibition format only, acquired directly off the wall where another object will take its place. It is the book object version of the larger *Pothi Khana* museum structure, which will be on view at the 57th *Carnegie International* at the Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburgh concurrently with the pop-up shop at Callicoon Fine Arts.

To produce the image cards, Singh uses offset printing — a technique commonly used for the production of books, newspapers, and other published material. Offset printing allows Singh to produce hundreds of high-quality editions of her book objects, which she brings to the gallery wall to replace the standard silver gelatin print. Singh elevates the value of the book, no longer serving as an exhibition catalogue but rather the exhibition itself. In doing so, she also disrupts the book's fixity, allowing its sequence to be rearranged on the wall.

Shown alongside the *Pothi Box* are three earlier book objects: *Museum of Gestures*, *File Room*, and *Sent a Letter*. *Museum of Gestures* is a unique subset of nine book objects from a larger series titled *Museum of Chance Book Object*. *File Room*, like *Pothi Box*, emerged from Singh's ongoing interest in the paper archive. *Sent a Letter* is one of Singh's earliest published projects that initiated her work on "pocket museums." Currently out of print, copies will be made available here in customized leather cases. Like her book objects as a whole, these works reflect upon the viewer's relation to the archive and museum, and the artist's obsession with turning the book into its exhibition.

As Singh has stated, by owning one of her book objects, you become a curator of a museum of her work. The book objects serve to arouse the excitement of the would-be collector and to democratize the acts of collecting and curating.

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