

Basic Detail Report

Pothi Box

Date

2018

Primary Maker

Dayanita Singh

Medium

30 image cards, teak wood enclosure, and inscribed napkin

Description

Pothi Box, one of Dayanita Singh's many innovative "book-objects," is made up of thirty unbound offset-printed photograph cards in a wooden container. Produced in an edition of 360, the photographs found in Pothi Box depict stacked archival documents and unknown bundles of material, as well as novels and towers of film. The images of accumulated objects reflect the concepts of gathering and interconnectedness. These ideas are also present in the construction of the "book-object" itself, as the thirty photographs are always meant to be kept together and considered as a unit. Singh's "book-objects" are created in a process that she refers to as "book-building," where her photographs become building blocks for a final product. According to Singh, photography is "just a medium, and I excavate forms out of it. In some ways, I am the medium: things pass through me and become something else." In terms of display, Pothi Box is meant to either be hung as a complete set within its wooden structure (with the visible front image being interchangeable), or placed on a table. The fluid nature of its display highlights how Pothi Box occupies a "third space" between the art gallery and the publishing house. It is a book made for handling, a collage made for rearranging, and a window for contemplating. Singh emphasizes and celebrates the mutability of her work, urging viewers to constantly question its meaning: "It's always good to ask why: Why is it a book? Why is it an exhibition? Why is it in a frame?"

Dimensions

Overall: 8 1/4 × 6 1/4 × 1 1/8 in. (21 × 15.9 × 2.9 cm)