

Dayanita Singh presents  
*Conversation Chambers: Museum Bhavan*  
at Kiran Nadar Museum of Art



Museum of Chance MUSEUM BHAVAN, Image © Simon White

**Opens for Public:** 17 December 2015 - 30 June 2016

**Venue:** KNMA, 145, DLF South Court Mall, Saket, New Delhi 1100

Being shown for the first time in India, with three entirely new museums and others expanded, **Conversation Chambers: Museum Bhavan** at KNMA will present Dayanita Singh's 'museums within the museum' as self-sufficient structures that function as sites of display, preservation, circulation and storage. Bringing together photographs spanning decades of her artistic oeuvre, these structures - which she refers to as 'photo-architecture' - function as repositories that also provide a performative space in which her images come together in infinite permutations to allow for unexpected poetic and narrative possibilities. Dayanita challenges a singular interpretation of the still image through the composite narrative produced within these architectural structures, reminiscing the ensemble of images in contact-prints but constantly shuffling them with her physical intervention.

Dayanita's current practice is constantly attempting to push the boundaries of the medium of photography. She considers the tactile nature of the book, which does not allow for a passive interaction, to be the form closest to her own practice. She has been equally fascinated by an engagement with multiple shifting views and sifting of time that displaces the fixed position of the viewer's vantage point, unsettling the reality encountered within a single image, by spilling it into an expanding framework.

**In Dayanita's words,** *"The design and architecture of the museums are integral to the images shown and kept within them. Each large, wooden, handmade structure can be placed and opened in different ways. It holds around a hundred framed images, of which some are in view, whilst others wait for their turn in the reserve, stored inside the structures."*

These editable and mutating chronicles - sometimes with deliberate blank spaces - allow the person interacting with them, the agency, to form their own personal associations. They could be read like large books that have opened up to allow the observer to navigate the labyrinth thus produced and to bring their own dialogues to the work, while oscillating between the experience of intrigue as well as fatigue with the overbearing presence of visuals. As 'Conversation Chambers' they demand sustained and prolonged interaction from the viewers, in their encounter with its sumptuous substance and structure. Interestingly, it will take on the form of a living exhibition with the artist serving as a curator-in-residence, performing multiple transmutations that may alter the experience for viewers, each time they walk into the space.

Regarded by the artist as 'a living exhibition', this exposition brings together Dayanita's *Museum Bhavan*, a collection of nine mobile museums that include the *File Museum*, *Museum of Little Ladies*, *Museum of Chance*, *Museum of Furniture*, *Museum of Machines*, *Museum of Photography*, *Museum of Vitrines* and *Museum of Printing Press*. The *Museum of Vitrines*, with the images of various kinds of vitrines and display cases, initiates a dialogue when we consider that this nano museum of display cases is housed within a museum itself. In housing these nano museums, Kiran Nadar Museum of Art is not merely a location for their display but is transformed into a site for conversations, dialogue and provocations.

*Roobina Karode, Director and Chief Curator, Kiran Nadar Museum of Art.*

#### Notes to Editors

Born in New Delhi in 1961, Dayanita Singh studied Visual Communication at the National Institute of Design in Ahmedabad and Documentary Photography at the International Center of Photography in New York. She has published twelve books: *Zakir Hussain* (1986); *Myself*, *Mona Ahmed* (2001); *Privacy* (2003); *Chairs* (2005); *Go Away Closer* (2007); *Sent A Letter* (2008); *Blue Book* (2009); *Dream Villa* (2010); *Dayanita Singh* (2010); *House of Love* (2011); *File Room* (2013); *Museum of Chance* (2014). Her works have been shown in solo exhibitions at the MMK, Frankfurt (2014), Art Institute of Chicago (2014), The Hayward Gallery, London (2013), Frith Street Gallery, London (2012), and the Mapfre Foundation, Madrid (2010). She has also shown in the 2nd Kochi Biennale (2014), the German Pavilion at the Venice Biennale (2013), the Fourth Guangzhou Triennial, as part of ILLUMInations at the 54th Venice Biennale (2011) and at Manifesta 7 (2008).

Dayanita Singh's art uses photography to reflect and expand on the ways in which we relate to photographic images. Her recent works, drawn from her extensive photographic oeuvre, are a series of mobile museums that allow her images to be endlessly edited, sequenced, archived and displayed. Stemming from Singh's interest in the archive, the museums present her photographs as interconnected bodies of work that are replete with both poetic and narrative possibilities. Publishing is also a significant part of the artist's practice: in her books, often published without text, Singh extends her experiments on alternate forms of producing and viewing photographs.

Dayanita Singh lives and works in New Delhi.