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**Dayanita Singh**

*Let's See*

### **Main description**

*Let's See* is a photo-novel of Dayanita Singh's earliest years as a photographer, a return to a time when she did not yet consider herself a photographer, the probing remembrance of "an eye I no longer have access to." Singh has recently poured through 40 years of her archive—80% of which remains unseen—exploring scans of her contact sheets and being amazed by the gentle and tender images from the 1980s and '90s she had since forgotten—hostel roommates, friends with whom she lived, family, weddings, funerals; portraits of herself and those who would become important characters in her life: her mother Nony Singh, Zakir Hussain, Mona Ahmed whom she depicted in the emotive visual biography *Myself Mona Ahmed* (2001).

Singh's first camera, a Pentax ME Super with a 50mm lens, was a gift from the German publisher Ernst Battenberg (1927–92), and with it she "made photos of everything I could, trying to make a roll of film last as long as possible," creating contact sheets of all her images, but realizing the rare luxury of an individual print only for a publication or a book project. "I call this book *Let's See*," says Singh, "because these images are about exactly that: how we see, what we don't see, what only the camera sees..."

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### **Biography**

Dayanita Singh was born in New Delhi in 1961 and studied at the National Institute of Design in Ahmedabad and the International Center of Photography in New York. Her work has been exhibited at institutions including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Tate Modern, London; the Art Institute of Chicago; Hayward Gallery, London; the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, New Delhi; and the Tokyo Photographic Art Museum. In 2013 she represented Germany at the Venice Biennale. Bookmaking is central to Singh's practice. Her books with Steidl include *Privacy* (2004), *Chairs* (2005), *Go Away Closer* (2007), *Sent a Letter* (2007), *Dream Villa* (2010), *File Room* (2013), *Museum of Chance* (2014), *Museum Bhavan* (2017)—Book of the Year at the 2017 Paris Photo—Aperture Foundation Photobook Awards and winner of the 2018 ICP Infinity Award for Artist's Book—and *Zakir Hussain Maquette* (2019). Singh is the 2022 Hasselblad Award recipient.

### **Bibliography**

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