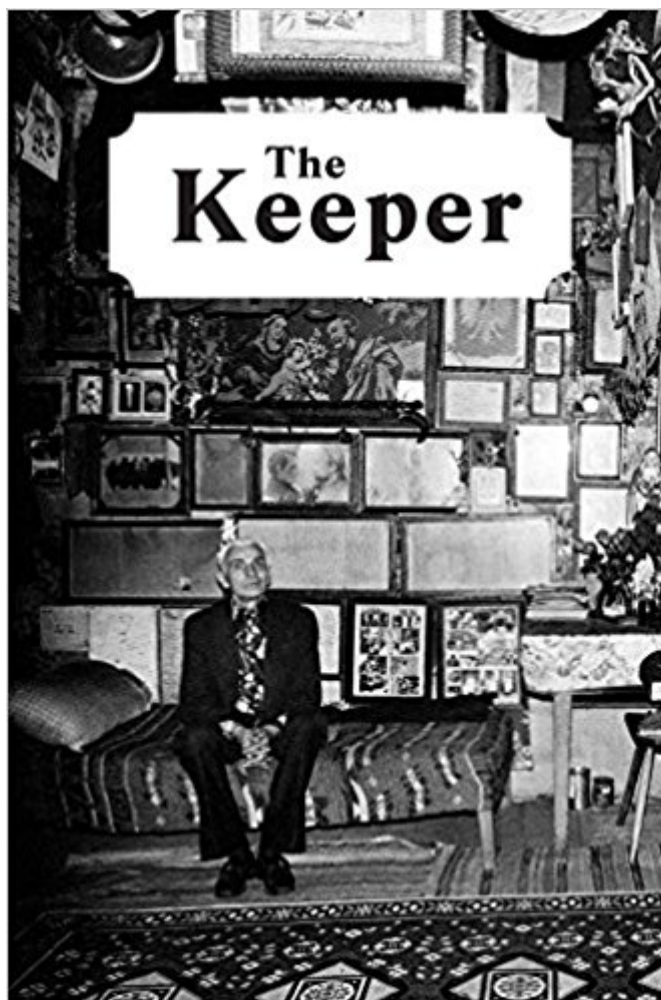


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The Keeper



Synopsis

The Keeper accompanies an exhibition dedicated to the act of preserving objects, artworks and images. Through a variety of imaginary museums, personal collections and unusual assemblages, it offers a reflection on the impulse to save both the most precious and the apparently valueless, and reveals the devotion with which artists, collectors, scholars and hoarders have created sanctuaries for endangered images and artifacts. Through works spanning the 20th century, The Keeper tells the stories of various individuals through the objects they chose to safeguard. Some, such as Roger Caillou's collection of rare stones and Harry Smith's string figures, pursue a universal syntax. Other collections were not so much kept as withheld, such as Hilma af Klint's suite of abstract paintings from 1906-15, which she kept hidden for decades after her death, venturing that her work would be better appreciated beyond her own time. Shinro Ohtake's feverishly collaged scrapbooks burst with found materials as free associations of images and everyday ephemera. In a ceremonious personal custom, Ye Jinglu had a studio portrait of himself taken every year for decades. These photos, preserved by Tong Bingxue, represent collecting as a mode of auto-ethnography that inadvertently also traces social and political changes over time. The centerpiece of the book is a vast display conceived by Ydessa Hendeles, composed of over 3,000 family-album photographs of people posing with teddy bears, and vitrines containing antique teddy bears.

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