

FRAENKEL

49 GEARY STREET SAN FRANCISCO 94108 415 981 2661

For immediate release:



SOPHIE CALLE

Feb. 27 – Apr. 12, 2025

Fraenkel Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition by Sophie Calle. For more than forty years Calle has made work that draws from her life, transforming elements from her public and private relationships into intimate narratives. The exhibition features several series exploring questions about legacy and loss, topics Calle approaches with her typical humor and candor. Making its U.S. debut, *Catalogue Raisonné of the Unfinished* focuses on projects Calle previously conceptualized but didn't pursue. Each piece pairs fragments from the project with Calle's text about its failure. Another series, *Picassos in Lockdown*, comprises photographs Calle made at the Musée National Picasso in Paris during the pandemic. Each shows a painting covered for protection while the museum was closed. The exhibition also features a selection of works looking at death and remembrance through the lens of Calle's relationship with her parents. This will be Calle's fifth exhibition at Fraenkel Gallery since 1994. A public reception with the artist will take place on Saturday, March 1, from 2-4pm.

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Catalogue Raisonné of the Unfinished collects photographs, handwritten notes, comic books, and other documents, each paired with a short text describing the artwork Calle had originally imagined and how it came to (not) be. A red stamp across each text pronounces her reason for rejecting the work. The projects range from Calle's request for museum visitors to propose ideas for her to enact ("Not exhilarating"), to an attempt to insert herself into a Mexican comic book collection that included the word "Calle" in the title ("Anecdotal"). Together, the series presents a sort of self-imposed salon des refusés, revealing glimpses of Calle's process and celebrating the transformation of many dead ends into a final positive form.

In 2023, Musée National Picasso presented a solo exhibition of Calle's work, timed to the 50th anniversary of the death of Pablo Picasso. The deliberately retrospective exhibition, titled *À toi de faire, ma mignonne*, ("It's up to you, my darling") included photographs Calle made while the museum was closed during the pandemic, recording the cloth and paper coverings that shielded Picasso's paintings from light and dust. Calle has described her encounter with the paintings: "The Picassos were under protection, wrapped up, hidden. Underneath — a ghostlike, less intimidating presence," she writes. Titled after the works they conceal, the photographs in *Picassos in Lockdown* encourage the viewer to recall the original painting.

A third gallery presents selections from *Autobiographies* and other elegiac, family-focused works, pairing photographs and texts in frames or urn-like wooden boxes. In *Autobiographies (Morning)*, Calle awaits her father's last words, while *Autobiographies (My Mother Died)* reproduces notes about death from Calle's diary and her mother's. A glass-fronted box titled *Unforeseen* presents the obituary Calle commissioned for herself, hidden behind pinned butterflies to remain unreadable. The piece incorporates Calle's commentary about her decision to obscure the writing: "So as not to attract too much attention from death, I decided it was best to cover up what I did not want to read," she notes. In these and other works, Calle addresses her own mortality with characteristic honesty and wit, taking on the question of how we remember and are in turn remembered.

Sophie Calle was recently featured in *Sophie Calle: Overshare* at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, and *Absences: Sophie Calle & Toulouse-Lautrec* at the Mitsubishi Ichigokan Museum, Tokyo. Her work was presented in the solo exhibition *Finir en Beauté* (Neither Give Nor Throw Away), held in the cryptoporticus at Arles as part of the photography festival Rencontres d'Arles in France. Her work has been shown in museums around the world and is in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Centre Pompidou, Paris; and Tate, London, among many others. Calle is the recipient of numerous awards, including most recently the Praemium Imperiale Award in 2024, as well as the Royal Photographic Society's Centenary Medal, an Infinity Award from the International Center of Photography, and the Hasselblad Foundation International Award in Photography, among others.

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Image: Sophie Calle, *Calle-Joconde (Wrong turn)*, 2025 (detail)
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