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New Museum Presents “Pia Camil: A Pot for a Latch,” the First Museum Exhibition of the Artist’s Work in New York

January 13–April 17, 2016

**Camil invites the public to participate in her sculptural installation, which will be
continually transformed through the exchange of visitors’ personal objects**

New York, NY...In her paintings, sculptures, performances, and installations, Pia Camil draws inspiration from the urban landscape of her native Mexico City and engages with the history of modernism. Her projects transform the remnants of dysfunctional commercial culture, revealing the inherent problems as well as the latent aesthetic potential within inner-city ruin. At the New Museum, Camil presents a new sculptural installation created specifically for the Lobby Gallery. The exhibition is curated by Margot Norton, Associate Curator.

Inspired by the modular display systems used by vendors, the artist has created a succession of gridwall panels of her own design, complete with built-on hooks, shelves, and other fixtures for displaying items. Composed of grids, lines, and geometric shapes, the structures form a volumetric drawing within the space of the gallery, referencing cheap commercial constructions as well as the serial patterning of paintings and sculptures made by Minimalist artists such as Sol LeWitt and Agnes Martin.

The title of the exhibition refers to the potlatch: a ceremonial gift-giving festival practiced by the Native-American peoples of the Pacific Northwest coast, for whom it continues to be a system of wealth redistribution. For “A Pot for a Latch,” Camil invites the public to participate in the ongoing creation of her piece on designated days, during which visitors are encouraged to exchange their own unique items for others in the installation. Camil thereby transforms the Lobby Gallery into a shop of sorts, in which the monetary value of an object is supplanted by its personal history and significance.

ARTIST’S INVITATION AND SPECIFICATIONS FOR PARTICIPATION

“A Pot for a Latch” is an invitation to exchange.

The object you bring is a talisman of sorts, and it should be thought of in the same way that the ancient Romans conceived of “res,” a term denoting a gift that has both a personal value and a history. Bring objects of power, of aesthetic interest, and of poignancy. The monetary value of

these items is insignificant; their value lies instead in their richness of meaning and in the new life that they acquire on the grid within the Lobby Gallery.

Potential exchange items may include: clothes, curtains, blankets, artworks, photographs, paintings, frames, nondescript items of undetermined function, objects that resemble parts of the human body such as wigs or mannequins, costume jewelry and accessories, mirrors and reflective items, potted plants, posters, colorful items and/or those with interesting shapes and forms, transparent materials such as shower curtains, lingerie, or X-rays, magazines, books, and trinkets.

Prohibited exchange items include but are not limited to: Electronics, heavy items (over twenty pounds), small-scale objects (less than six inches in diameter), food or other perishables, weapons, and chemicals or other hazardous materials.

Objects accepted for exchange will not be returned to the submitting party.

EXCHANGE DAYS

During the first event on Thursday, December 17, 2015, one hundred New Museum visitors swapped their items for a limited-edition sweatshirt designed by Pia Camil in collaboration with Lorena Vega.

After the show opens on January 13, New Museum visitors' objects can be exchanged for the items that are installed in the Lobby Gallery on designated days.

Upcoming Exchange Days will be held from 2 to 4 p.m. on the following Sundays:

- February 7
- February 21
- March 6
- March 20
- April 3

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Pia Camil was born in 1980 in Mexico City, where she continues to live and work. She has exhibited internationally at venues including Frieze Projects, New York (2015); Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art, Middlesbrough, England (2015); Saatchi Gallery, London (2015); Biennial of the Americas, Denver Colorado (2013); and Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León, Spain (2011). Her recent solo presentations include "The Little Dog Laughed," Blum & Poe, Los Angeles (2014); "Entrecortinas: Abre, Jala, Corre," Galería OMR, Mexico City (2014); "Espectacular Telón," Galerie Sultana, Paris (2013); and "Cuadrado Negro," Artium Basque Centre-Museum of Contemporary Art, Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain (2013). Camil's exhibition "Skins" is currently on view at the Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, through March 13, 2016.

SUPPORT

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ABOUT NEW MUSEUM

The New Museum is the only museum in New York City exclusively devoted to contemporary art. Founded in 1977, the New Museum is a center for exhibitions, information, and documentation about living artists from around the world. From its beginnings as a one-room office on Hudson Street to the inauguration of its first freestanding building on the Bowery designed by SANAA in 2007, the New Museum continues to be a place of experimentation and a hub of new art and new ideas.

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