From the very beginning, I have been making photographs to make books: Zakir Hussain, 1986.
I now make books that are the exhibition as well: Museum of Chance, 2014.

During the decades in-between, I made exhibitions of framed prints on the wall that seemed to me like catalogues of my books. It was like composing music where each note was separated by the display, and ended up in different symphonies/collections. The exhibition did not satisfy me in the way that the book did. Yet, everyone said that a book is a book and an exhibition is an exhibition.

In 2007, I made Sent a Letter, a box with seven accordion-fold books that became my first book/exhibition. I realized that it was possible to have a book that was also an exhibition, but I wanted to find a form that could be on par with my exhibitions of prints.

With Museum of Chance (Steidl, 2014), I finally found the way to make a work that is a book as well as the exhibition of the book. The single image/note would never be divorced now from the full symphony/sequence. Each book-cover led to the full symphony that was inside. Even if you can only see the front image, I know that the full symphony is waiting inside.

The book is bound to its sequence, its order, but with the book object I have a book that can be endlessly rewritten as I move the book objects in and out of their narratives, sometimes just by turning the cover around to reveal the back story. An endless book.

The key to this work was the editing, to make a set of images that, even if they spanned thirty years and came from very different contexts, was held together by their tonal quality. I have finally learned to listen to the tone of the images, rather than edit by content.

PS: I am particularly happy that I have beaten Amazon. You can order this mass-produced book on Amazon or elsewhere online, but if you want the whole concept – the idea, structure and individualizing of the book – then you have to come to one of the events where I am offering the special editions (I am the only one who has the full sets) I will individualize it for you, turning a mass-produced artist's book into a unique conceptual work.