

SISTERHOOD AS A CONSEQUENCE AND AS A STRATEGY

Abstracts

The individual who has succeeded in breaking away from the solidarities and loyalties reserved for the family, the group of origin, the village, the co-religionists... has emerged from a system of thought in which the clan, the tribe, the group provides him with a range of answers to all the questions he might have.

When solidarity is exercised outside the natural group, the individual becomes co-responsible, rather than diluting responsibility for the benefit of an indefinite, mythologized higher authority. The extension of the duty of solidarity beyond the confines of the native group responds to a demand for justice that is no longer focused on a limited number of people, but extends to human beings as a whole. Justice then becomes the framework for dignity and equal rights.

Once we've achieved this awareness, we can define our priorities for action to match the demands we make of our democracies. For if we make demands on democracy, democracy makes demands on us. It requires that each of us take responsibility for oneself and for the society in which we live. One of our first obligations is to ensure that our societies provide everyone with the same means of influencing their own lives. Since in all patriarchal societies it's women who have the least power over their own lives, it's only natural that we start with them.

Anyone who has art as a profession or as an object of interest, whether professional or not, has the capacity to contribute to the edifice of equality. What's needed is awareness of the problem and the will to participate in the paradigm shift, even on a small scale.

The conference "Sisterhood as a consequence and as a strategy" will first look at women who, through their profession or function, contributed to forms of solidarity with women artists from ancient Greece to the early 20th century: poets, writers, journalists, patrons, curators, art critics...

Secondly, we'll look at what the artists themselves have done to contribute to the training and visibility of their female colleagues.

Finally, we'll look at the contemporary example of FemLink-Art, the international collective of women video artists.