

# NO MORE FEMALE DEVOTION!

*Female\* artists strike!*

Dear colleagues,

We are Rosa, Theresa, Lilli, Antje, Irène and Franziska. We are CindyCat. We are all artists and people engaged in the cultural sector. We do work that is conceptual, politically engaged, enduring, process-oriented, not focusing on objects. This work is done under very precarious conditions dependent on residencies and funding. Since we are producing art with conviction and with love, it means to work triple: We are not only artists, but we also do domestic work and that which is part of everyday life; both have in common that they are not or poorly paid. In both cases, there is a tendency to think that we like to do this kind of work so much that being paid for it is not necessary. Since we are not or poorly paid, we need a job to survive, this is in addition to the

creative and domestic labour. Therefore, this leads to the fact that we are working in three shifts: cultural work, domestic work, and wage work. All three forms of our work happen under the patriarchal conditions that also affects all other spheres of society. Since art is a lot about networking, about symbolical and representative power, the insider deals/rope teams of white men hinder us in specific ways: They refer to each other, invite their buddies for exhibitions, and write books about other white men. This is extremely boring. It is also striking that the unpaid emotional labour plays a role in our socialisation as women as much as it does in our artists' careers. We passionately state: **IT'S ENOUGH.**

## WE WILL NOT ACCEPT ANY LONGER, that ...

- ... we - being pushed to be freelancers - have to carry all the responsibility for our badly-paid and overburdening labour relations ourselves.
- ... our work, meaning the never-ending projects and application procedures faces degradation repeatedly.
- ... every project proposal, every application, every open call means a lot of money and time spent on a completely unsure cause.
- ... being a female\* artist is a matter of class, because (1) in many cases people from non-academic households don't even make it to art and music academies (2) if they make it, they cannot take the risks of this profession without any savings and (3) the question about what is art still follows bourgeois ideals.
- ... the making culture is in many cases still the sphere of white men.
- ... our colleagues of colour have to face the racist structures of culture over and over again.
- ... feminist issues and concerns are appropriated by big institutions, but without changing the structures, and/or relations of production. We call this fem-washing and we refuse it, even if such an approach would, unfortunately, be already a progress in classical concert halls.
- ... female\* artists of different sections in Germany earn in average 30% less than their male colleagues. Furthermore, this number deteriorated between 2010 and 2014.<sup>1</sup>
- ... women are seen as muses and men as genius painters. It is more the skill of interpretation rather than composition that is attributed to women.
- ... we have to offer not only our work but also our lives, personalities and our passion to be taken seriously as "real" artists. An "exciting" biography, a stage-managed body, an "informal" studio visit - all this is part of it.
- ... the myth of the "genius artist" still legitimises the commonplace sexism in our work field. Each of us reminds many situations, in which our professor, the critic or others dropped a comment on the side - maybe even half-drunk.

It is as transparent as the glass ceiling: The narration of unlimited freedom of freelancers is a fairytale. "Freedom" is an euphemism for project-shaped, insecure, rarely sustainable, and individualised work. We refuse to tell it any longer or to believe it. This is why we call for a strike. We do not want to fight as lone fighters against our own working conditions. We will no longer accept to be pushed in a situation of concurrence one against another. The only answer to the freelancer/separation in the field of culture is solidarity!



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## WE STRIKE!

- WE** strike against the narration of personal responsibility of freelancers and we do not deliver ourselves entirely alone to the business.
- WE** will face the problems and the precarity together in solidarity.
- WE** will raise consciousness of those who enjoy art and culture, who in most caes, do not realise the conditions under which we work.
- WE** will arrange for transparency by talking to our colleagues about the conditions, the salary, precarity, and poverty.
- WE** aim at a division of time that allows everyone to dedicate time to creativity.
- WE** strive for an art that can disturb, raise questions that are complex and not necessarily an art that is used to entertain, disperse, and intellectually reproduce depleted subjects.