



Kalliopi Lemos, *The Plait*, height 650cm, 2020. Photo: Bram Vreugdenhil.

**ROTTERDAM.-** One of the most beloved pieces at FRIEZE Sculpture in London's Regent Park last November has found a permanent location. Kalliopi Lemos' giant steel sculpture *The Plait* has been acquired for the public sculpture collection Rotterdam. At a height of no less than six and a half meters, *The Plait* was unveiled on International Women's Day. The *Plait* is the title of the slender steel sculpture by the London-based, Greek-born artist Kalliopi Lemos (1951). *The Plait*, made in 2020, is an upright cut off plait of dark brown hair of monumental proportions. Kalliopi Lemos is best known for her large-scale public installations of everyday objects, sometimes of colossal size. *The Plait* raises questions about the role of femininity in modern society and rebels against patriarchal coercion. *The Plait* is the first work by a female artist on the sculpture terrace. The sculpture terrace was founded in 2001 during Rotterdam European City of Culture. *The Plait* connects to the theme of the human figure of which the sculpture terrace displays examples. Ranging from modern classical bronzes by Auguste Rodin (*l'Homme qui Marche*, 1907) and Henri Laurens (*La Grande Musicienne*, 1938) to more abstract works by Fritz Wotruba (*Reclining Figure*, 1969) or Joel Shapiro (*Untitled*, 1999). Today, the international ensemble on the sculpture terrace forms the centerpiece of a much larger collection that can be found throughout the city. After the devastating destructions in May 1940, when the historical city centre was destroyed by heavy Luftwaffe bombing, Rotterdam was rebuilt and contemporary public sculpture was regarded a vital component for the inhabitants of the new city. Works by renowned artists such as Ossip Zadkine, Alexander Calder, Henry Moore, Marino Marini and the Rotterdam-born Willem de Kooning a.o. were purchased or commissioned. This collection has grown over the years and will now be enriched once more. *The Plait* is the first addition to the terrace since 2001. Twenty years later, Monday, March 8, 2021, *The Plait* was unveiled.

#### International Women's Day

The unveiling on Monday, March 8th coincides with International Women's Day. This year's theme is 'Influence with impact', an issue to which *The Plait* offers a topical answer. Indeed, Lemos' cut-off hair plait alludes to a gesture of disobedience, maturity and a protest against patriarchal coercion. Likewise, it refers to cutting off old ideas and making way for change. For this work that is a symbol of women's struggle, Lemos says she also pays homage to the recently deceased American Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg.

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Kalliopi Lemos: "Real change happens one thing at a time - enduring change happens one step at a time, said Ruth Bader Ginsburg the US Supreme Court Judge. I was saddened to hear that this guardian angel of women's human rights passed away. The Plait could serve as a memorial for her qualities, her philosophy, and the principles that guided her life - a compass for humanity! The Plait, is a feminine sensual symbol made of hundreds of intertwined thin rods that rises ambitiously towards the sky as if just by standing upright is making its own statement of self-worth and defiance."

#### Donation Droom en Daad Foundation

The philanthropic Droom en Daad Foundation sets itself the goal of making Rotterdam more attractive by investing in the city's cultural landscape. For the first time they are doing so with a donation to the city with a public sculpture. CBK Rotterdam acted as advisor and curator in this process. Droom en Daad: "The Plait by Kalliopi Lemos represents a valuable contribution to the international sculpture collection of Rotterdam. The Plait forms a wonderful beginning to revitalize and further enrich this Rotterdam collection."

The Plait by Kalliopi Lemos is part of Sculpture International Rotterdam (SIR). Kalliopi Lemos is represented by Gazelli Art House, London

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