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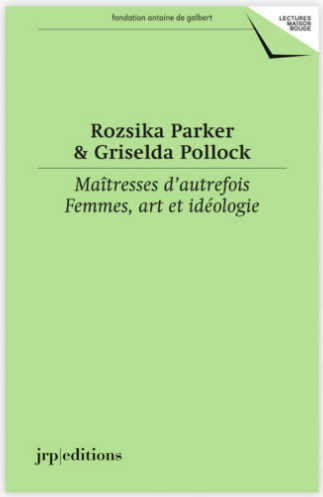
MAÎTRESSES D'AUTREFOIS. FEMMES, ART ET IDÉOLOGIE



EDITOR(S): Clément Dirié
AUTHOR(S): Giovanna Zapperi, Griselda Pollock, Rozsika Parker

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PARKER AND POLLOCK'S SEMINAL VOLUME OF FEMINIST ART HISTORY

Originally published in English in 1981 as *Old Mistresses. Women, Art, and Ideology* and translated here into French for the first time under the title *Maîtresses d'autrefois. Femmes, art et idéologie*, the ninth volume of the "Lectures maison rouge" series is not a history of women's art. This seminal volume by Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock is far more radical and emancipatory and, indeed, still relevant today. Their book deals as much with what art history, as a discipline and ideology, has done and is still doing to women artists and their work, as with what their practices are doing or could do to art history, if they were fully studied and considered.

The five parts of the book combine indepth case studies—from Sofonisba Anguissola, Élisabeth Vigée Le Brun, and Berthe Morisot, to Meret Oppenheim, Eva Hesse, and Mary Kelly—analyses of the structures of artistic production, such as the ideological opposition between art and craft or the stereotypes assigned to the "feminine essence," and dynamic developments on the oriented way in which the discipline "art history" has been forged, socially and symbolically.

The authors study the way women artists have been defined, characterized, included, relegated, and separated

through the centuries, showing “that the erasure of women from the history of art was not the legacy of antiquated prejudice; it was, in fact, the product, the actively produced result of the way modernist Art History and the modernist museum in the twentieth century constructed a narrative of its own contemporaries.” Spanning art history from Antiquity and the Middles Ages to modern art and the feminist practices of the 1970s, Parker and Pollock thus offer a salutary investigation to all those who, with them, not only want to add feminine names to art history, but also to profoundly modify its writing.

The book is introduced by art historian and Geneva University Professor Giovanna Zapperi and features a recent foreword by Griselda Pollock, firmly anchoring *Maîtresses d'autrefois* in the present.

Recipient of the Holberg Prize in 2020 in recognition of her outstanding contribution to research and her influence on thinking on gender, ideology, art, and visual culture, Griselda Pollock (b. 1949) is Emeritus Professor of Social and Critical Histoires of Art at the University of Leeds. Rozsika Parker (1945–2010) was a writer and critic in art history and psychoanalysis. In 1984, she published *The Subversive Stitch: Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine*, an important work on the intertwined histories of embroidery, gender ideologies, and women's resistance through creativity.

This volume is the ninth title of the “Lectures maison rouge” series, directed by Patricia Falguières and coedited with la Fondation Antoine de Galbert, Paris. It has received support from the French Friends of the National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington DC.