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## **Love Difference Manifesto**

2002

**Love Difference – Artistic Movement for an InterMediterranean Politic** was established in Biella in Spring 2002 in the Politics Office of the Cittadellarte-Fondazione Pistoletto. The aim is to bring together, around the regions facing onto the Mediterranean Sea, people and institutions interested in creating new prospects that reach beyond the tragic conflict between different cultures.

### **Why an Artistic Movement for an InterMediterranean Politic?**

The course of world politics cannot be left purely to the logic of economic speculation. Politics and the economy need to be inspired by a new way of thinking. The formative space for this thinking is the creative laboratory of socially engaged art. Love Difference is a movement of ideas arising out of this laboratory. Traditional political systems have revealed their inability to face and deal with the major problems inherent in the current cultural transformation, which concerns global society and the physical condition of the planet. The Western world is now talking about art and creativity as a possible last resource to use in order to re-establish some kind of control over things. But creative commitment requires taking on much more important responsibilities than one might believe. The effective creative faculties of human beings are being put strongly to the test in all fields, not only specifically artistic ones.

Art, the foremost expression of creativity, is assuming social responsibility and becoming a compass bearing for a prospective new planetary civilization. The Cittadellarte projects put art into live contact with each sector of the social structure, including that of politics. Politics is no longer extraneous to art but is incorporated within it, sharing with it a vision and a responsible operative system. This gives rise to a political movement of creativity and art aimed at furthering discussion and cooperation with all other sectors of human activity in the search for solutions to the major problems of society.

### **Why Love Difference?**

Love Difference is a name, a slogan, a declaration of aims. The movement combines the universality of art with the idea of political transnationality, and focuses on the Mediterranean in that it mirrors the problems of global society.

On one hand the difference between ethnic groups, religions and cultures is the cause of terrible conflicts; on the other, the supremacy of powers, which is leading to uniformity and the erasure of differences, has led to a dramatic situation. The system of standardization clashes with the multiple and diverse geographic, cultural and political entities that have come to the surface in the aftermath of the Cold War between the US and the USSR.

Uniformity and difference are the two opposing terms that represent the maximum conflicting tension in the current world situation. A politic which leads people to 'love differences' is vital for the development of new prospects throughout the social domain. The name of the movement, Love Difference, encapsulates a concept which goes beyond a rational notion of 'tolerance' for what is diverse and penetrates directly into the

sphere of feelings: love means feeling attraction and emotion, expressing affection and dedication. The first thing to accept, in an open, sensitive and warm fashion, are the differences between people and social groups, in order to finally give meaning to the word 'humanity' in this increasingly globalized world.

### **Why InterMediterranean?**

The Mediterranean is the birthplace of differences stemming from many cultures, all of which are different expressions of common roots. In the past the Mediterranean was a 'workshop' of differences between peoples, ethnic groups, religions, arts and trade concerns. The Mediterranean Sea reflects the history of a large part of humanity, but it also reflects the future, in that the society which one day overlooks its shores will be a measure of civilization on a world scale. It lies on the edge – not only in geographical terms – of the large continental areas of Asia, America, Africa and Europe. World tensions are being relentlessly released into this basin.

Many institutions are currently active in the Mediterranean countries, each with its own programme. However, there needs to be an effective overall strategy so as to produce a significant inversion in the current state of affairs in the area. Love Difference seeks to activate a movement of thought and action that leads, through creative engagement, to the formation of a network of connections with and between the different countries of the Mediterranean area. The movement intends to use this network to lay the foundations for a Mediterranean Cultural Parliament. To change the current dramatic situation it is necessary to identify people and bodies throughout the Mediterranean area with whom it will be possible to work towards 'responsible social transformation'.