

DIGITALE KUNSTAUSSTELLUNG: Wegbereiterinnen in Kasachstan und Deutschland

Lotte Hahm (1890-1967)

Accomplishment

Lotte Hahm was a famous political and entrepreneurial key figure of the lesbian movement in the Weimar Republic. She was involved in Berlin's homosexual and trans subculture, founded the first lesbian bar with a permanent registration and created many new jobs for restaurateurs, performance artists, and musicians in the catering and entertainment sectors.

In 1926, Lotte Hahm founded the ladies' club (Damenklub) Violetta in Berlin, of which she also took over the management. She decided on purpose the name Damenklub (Ladies Club), since the word 'Dame' was then a cipher for lesbian women.

In 1929, she also opened the Monokel Diele and the Manuela Bar. Through her club, she significantly shaped Berlin's lesbian and trans subculture as well as nationwide. From 1932, the company was increasingly hindered when the NSDAP's rised to power. For her Jewish partner Katharina Fleischmann, with whom Lotte Hahm ran the clubs and business in Berlin life became more and more dangerous. Lotte Hahm helped her to escape and temporarily accompanied her in her search for new places to hide.

She campaigned for more political mobilization of lesbian and trans people by promoting the founding of new clubs as well as networking in other cities and across national borders. Therefore, she wrote for various magazines such as Frauenliebe and called up for the Alliance for Ideal Women's Friendships. In photographs, Lotte Hahm always let herself be portrayed in men's clothing and with short her. Her texts were considered lurid.

She also created practices of solidarity. Through her initiatives, money was redistributed among lesbian women. Poor lesbian women received free admission to her clubs and were sometimes given the income of an evening as a gift. It was her wish to create a place of solidary exchange for women, starting from the ladies' club Violetta. In this way, she was able to reach out to lesbian women living in isolation and to give them space to network and entertainment.

Family and life

Lotte Hahm was born May 23, 1890, in Dresden. Her birth name was Charlotte Hedwig Hahm. She grew up in a protestant home with three siblings. She was in a relationship with Käthe Fleischmann, who was a restaurateur. Their relationship probably ended in the 1950s. Lotte Hahm died in Wannsee, Berlin, in 1967, at the age of 77.

Education

Lotta Hahm completed an office training. She initially set up her own bookstore. After the death of her mother, she moved back to Berlin and started her career as an entrepreneur.