**Magdalena Abakanowicz’s works return to France after more than 40 years – the renaissance of one of the most outstanding Polish artists of the second half of the 20th century continues**

**Magdalena Abakanowicz’s work returns to Paris after more than 40 years Although her radical and pioneering works have been regularly exhibited around the world – from the United States to Japan and Europe, and most recently at the Tate Modern in London and the Musée Cantonal des Beaux-Arts in Lausanne – the French public has had the opportunity to admire them only once, at the Musée d’Art Moderne in 1982.**

**As early as on 20 November 2025, the first such large monographic exhibition of Magdalena Abakanowicz “La trame de l'existence” / “The thread of existence” will open at the Musée Bourdelle in Paris, restoring the artist to her rightful place among the great sculptors of the 20th century. The Musée Bourdelle offers a chance to look at the artist’s work from the perspective of her biography and political involvement, presenting a broad overview of her work: more than 80 monumental sculptures, textile works, drawings, and photographs.**

**The exhibition is a result of cooperation between the Marta Magdalena Abakanowicz-Kosmowska and Jan Kosmowski Foundation, the Adam Mickiewicz Institute, and the Polish Institute in Paris.**

**“La trame de l'existence” / “The thread of existence” – the first major retrospective dedicated to Magdalena Abakanowicz in France**

**The Musée Bourdelle presents the first French retrospective dedicated to Magdalena Abakanowicz, the Polish pioneer of contemporary sculpture and artistic textiles.** The exhibition will run from 20 November 2025 to 12 April 2026 and will be accompanied by a rich programme of events.

Magdalena Abakanowicz (1930–2017) was not only one of the most important artists on the Polish cultural scene of the 20th century, but also a key figure in the avant-garde of Central and Eastern Europe. A comprehensive presentation of her work in Paris, one of the capitals of world art, gives the artist a whole new dimension – that of a precursor of contemporary artistic practices from a global perspective.

Abakanowicz’s biography is marked by the difficult experiences that defined 20th-century Poland: war, repression under the communist regime, and censorship. These experiences found resonance in her work, which took the form of immersive, poetic, and sometimes disturbing sculptures and textiles, often commenting on political issues. Inspired by the organic world, seriality, and monumentality, her work also possesses undeniable power and relevance, remaining a living reference to contemporary ecological, humanistic, and feminist concerns.

**The exhibition “La trame de l'existence” / “The thread of existence” takes a biographical and political perspective, guiding viewers on a journey through time – from Abakanowicz’s early works to her mature, most recognisable pieces, such as “The Crowd” and “Embryology”.** The newly restored interiors of the Musée Bourdelle will display over 80 monumental sculptures, textile works, drawings, and photographs. **The concept for the presentation of Abakanowicz’s works was developed by the exhibition’s chief curator, Ophélie Ferlier Bouat, who is the director of the Musée Bourdelle, and the scientific curator, Jérôme Godeau, a long-time expert at the institution.**

The title of the exhibition, “La trame de l'existence” / “The thread of existence”, combines two terms the artist used to describe her work: fabric as an organism, and the interweaving of body and destiny. Abakanowicz created a unique collection of works in which fabric becomes a metaphor for the human body, transformed and shaped by the upheavals of history. Each work expresses the tension between fragility and monumentality. In the vast spaces of the museum, visitors will move among impressive, almost totemic sculptures that raise questions about the human condition, community, and memory. The dialogue with the austere architecture of the concrete walls enhances the impact of the works, providing space for reflection and discussion.

The exhibition is the result of cooperation between the Marta Magdalena Abakanowicz Kosmowska and Jan Kosmowski Foundation, the Polish Institute in Paris, and the Adam Mickiewicz Institute. The works have been loaned by the Marta Magdalena Abakanowicz Kosmowska and Jan Kosmowski Foundation in Warsaw, the Toms Pauli Foundation in Lausanne, the Central Museum of Textiles in Łódź, Tate Modern in London, the National Museum in Wrocław, and the Musée d’Art Moderne in Paris.

**Magdalena Abakanowicz’s art brought even closer to the audience – programme of accompanying events**

The exhibition is accompanied by a rich programme of events, lectures, and meetings. Guided tours and workshops are also offered. A completely new format is the meditative visits, allowing visitors to experience the exhibition through an approach that combines body and mind and to learn about mindfulness meditation. As part of the European Craft Days, there will be a meeting with a weaving artist who will present her work, highlighting the materiality of Magdalena Abakanowicz’s art and her weaving techniques. During “Nuits de la lecture” (Reading Nights) in January 2026, an actress will read texts by Magdalena Abakanowicz, giving voice to the artist herself.

The programme will also include events aimed at children. A path with labels will guide them through the exhibition, and family workshops entitled “The Tree of Life” and “Life in the Forest” will encourage them to explore the strength and fragility of the animal and plant world.

**On 8 and 9 December 2025, a conference entitled “Weaving/Creating: The Revival of Textile Art from 1945 to the Present Day” will be held.** Organised in collaboration with the Polish Institute in Paris, the conference will shed new light on Magdalena Abakanowicz’s work and on textile art after 1945.

**Musée Bourdelle – a unique museum housed in the former studio of French sculptor Antoine Bourdelle**

Located in the 15th arrondissement of Paris, near Montparnasse, the Musée Bourdelle was established in 1949 in the workshops and gardens where the sculptor Antoine Bourdelle (1861–1929) lived and created his masterpieces.

The museum was thoroughly renovated in 2023, with careful attention to the architectural heritage of the sculptor’s studio. The layout of the collection has been redesigned using innovative textual and digital solutions, including a technique room where visitors can explore the creative process of sculpture at various stages. The museum presents one major exhibition per year related to the work of Antoine Bourdelle, the art scene of the 19th and 20th centuries, the museum’s collections, or contemporary artistic counterpoints.

**The renaissance of Magdalena Abakanowicz’s legacy, supported by the Adam Mickiewicz Institute**

Magdalena Abakanowicz – a major artist and icon of Polish contemporary art – has for years remained the most recognisable Polish sculptor worldwide, inspiring artists and audiences across many regions. In recent years, major monographic exhibitions at Tate Modern in London, the Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts in Lausanne, and Henie Onstad in Oslo have rekindled fascination with Abakanowicz’s work. Today, this inspiration has led to growing interest from cultural institutions around the world, which are increasingly including events related to her work in their programmes.

Abakanowicz’s legacy is experiencing a renaissance, and the Adam Mickiewicz Institute, as the main promoter of Polish art abroad, plays a key role in presenting her artistic achievements. Below you can find recently completed projects, ongoing projects, and announcements for the coming year.

**Calendar of exhibitions and events dedicated to Magdalena Abakanowicz:**

* Stavanger Kunstmuseum, Stavanger, Norway – exhibition “The Plastic Body: Sculpture from Poland 1960–1989” (28 September 2024 – 26 January 2025)
* Court of Justice of the European Union, Luxembourg – presentation of Magdalena Abakanowicz’s sculpture “The Sages” from the collection of the National Museum in Wrocław (April 2025 – 30 June 2025)
* TextielMuseum, Het Noordbrabants Museum, and Provinciehuis Noord-Brabant, Netherlands – exhibitions “Magdalena Abakanowicz: Groots, Groter, Grootst” and “Magdalena Abakanowicz – Everything is Made of Fiber” (17 April – 25 August 2025)
* Musée d’Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean, Luxembourg – screening of the documentary film “Abakamania” (15 October 2025)
* Musée Bourdelle, Paris, France – exhibition “Magdalena Abakanowicz – La trame de l’existence” (20 November 2025 – 12 April 2026)
* HAM Helsinki Art Museum, Helsinki, Finland – monographic exhibition of Magdalena Abakanowicz (6 May – 30 August 2026).

**Media contact:**Malwina Malinowska   
e-mail: [mmalinowska@iam.pl](mailto:mmalinowska@iam.pl)

**The Adam Mickiewicz Institute** **(IAM)** brings Polish culture to people around the world. Being a state institution, it creates lasting interest in Polish culture and art through strengthening the presence of Polish artists on the global stage. It initiates innovative projects, supports international cooperation and cultural exchanges. It promotes the work of both established and promising artists, showing the diversity and richness of our culture. The Adam Mickiewicz Institute is also responsible for the Culture.pl website, a comprehensive source of knowledge about Polish culture. More information: <https://iam.pl/en>.