**Maria Pinińska-Bereś at Kunstmuseum Luzern – Switzerland’s First Ever Comprehensive Retrospective of a Feminist Art Pioneer**

**On 28 February 2026, Kunstmuseum Luzern will open Switzerland’s first comprehensive retrospective of Maria Pinińska-Bereś the pioneering Polish feminist artist. *Under the Pink Flag*, curated by Heike Munder and Jarosław Suchan, presents the most important stages of the artist’s work, from her monumental 1960s sculptures to subversive performances that challenged both communist censorship and patriarchal art world structures. The exhibition at Kunstmuseum will run until 14 June.**

The increasing new attention on the late Maria Pinińska-Bereś began with an exhibition presented in 2024 at the Four Domes Pavilion in Wrocław. That same year, her works were also on view in Leipzig. In spring 2025, they were shown in The Hague, meeting with tremendous interest from international audiences and critics alike.

In collaboration with Kunstmuseum Bochum and the Adam Mickiewicz Institute, Kunstmuseum Luzern will be presenting the most important stages of Pinińska-Bereś’s artistic and emancipatory development. At the same time, the exhibition constitutes a significant intervention in art history – both in the strand focused predominantly on male artists and the one written from a Western perspective, which for decades marginalised the multifaceted and distinct art of 20th-century Central and Eastern Europe.

During the Cold War, Pinińska-Bereś developed an autonomous and distinctive artistic language and consistently addressed the subject of female identity and the social constraints imposed on women. The artist’s work encompasses sculpture, installation and performance. At the core of her poetic-political artistic practice was a reflection on femininity – its social entanglements, corporeality, sexuality and the experience of being marginalised within a male-dominated art world. Trained as a sculptor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków, the artist quickly transcended the framework of traditional thinking about sculpture. She incorporated performative actions and interventions in public space into her practice, challenging academic conventions and the patriarchal order.

As early as the beginning of the 1960s, Pinińska-Bereś created monumental cement figures titled **‘Rotundas’ (Rotundy),** and subsequently – within her series of paper **‘Corsets’ (Gorsety)** – subjected cultural forms of oppression imposed on the female body to critical analysis. As she herself stated: **‘I got rid of the weight in my works. For I always dreamed of being able to carry my sculptures without anyone’s (any man’s) help.’** In the second half of the 1960s, she created the ‘**Psychofurniture’ (Psychomebelki)** series – objects combining elements of interior furnishings with nude fragments of the female body made of painted papier-mâché and sponge. These works express her interest in female sexuality, its pleasure, but also its objectification.

From 1970 onwards, the colour pink became the artist’s hallmark – symbolic and subversive. Associated with what is ‘feminine’, domestic and corporeal, pink became a tool of feminist critique, and at the same time a clear counterpoint to the omnipresent red of communist Poland – the colour of the communist system. In open spaces – during performances carried out in rural areas – Pinińska-Bereś commented with humour and irony on both the institutional art world and on the realities of life under an authoritarian system, consistently following her own artistic path.

Against the backdrop of the dramatic events of martial law in the early 1980s, the artist addressed themes of state repression and political violence. The issue of the invisibility and marginalisation of women artists repeatedly reappeared in her work. In the piece **‘Author’s Banner’ (Sztandar autorski)**, she expressed a firm gesture of struggle for recognition and visibility within the art world.

The exhibition *Under the Pink Flag* at Kunstmuseum Luzern is a unique opportunity to present the work of Maria Pinińska-Bereś in Switzerland for the first time – an artist whose works have not lost their relevance and, indeed, now gain new meanings in the context of contemporary debates on femininity, artistic freedom and art history. The presentation in Lucerne, forming part of an international exhibition cycle, underscores that artistic strategies developed in Central and Eastern Europe – often under conditions of political pressure – today remain an important reference point for contemporary debates on art history, artistic freedom and the role of women in culture and society.

**Exhibition „Under the Pink Flag”**

**Venue:** Kunstmuseum Luzern, Lucerne

**Opening event:** 27 February 2026

**Open to the public:** 28 February 2026 – 14 June 2026

**Curators:** Heike Munder, Jarosław Suchan

**Cooperation:** Kunstmuseum Bochum

**Co-organiser:** the Adam Mickiewicz Institute

**More information:** [KUNSTMUSEUM LUZERN](https://www.kunstmuseumluzern.ch/)

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