

MEDIA RELEASE

28.02. 14.06.2026

Maria Pinińska-Bereś

Under the Pink Flag

Maria Pinińska-Bereś (1931–1999) is regarded in Switzerland as a new discovery; in her native country, Poland, she has long since been famous as a pioneer. The Kunstmuseum Luzern is devoting a comprehensive retrospective exhibition to this feminist artist.

Maria Pinińska-Bereś is one of the most exceptional personalities in 20th century Polish art. Her work includes sculptures, installations and performances. The focal point of her poetic-political art is her engagement with womanhood and the related social challenges. She trained as a sculptor and experimented with the conventions of that discipline by incorporating performances and actions in the public domain into her artistic practice. Her work is testimony to the experiences of an artist who liberated herself from social constraints and the patriarchal order during the Cold War. She broke with the conventions of her traditional training at the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków and developed her own formal idiom, into which she integrated soft materials like foam. The colour pink became her distinctive feature and is a definite statement of her critical attitude: a supposedly female colour standing for the homely, the body, and a feminist critique, but also clearly distinguishable from the omnipresent red in Poland, which was communist at the time. It speaks about diversity in an authoritarian system in which this artist pursued a path of her own.

This retrospective exhibition highlights the most important stages in Pinińska-Bereś's artistic and emancipatory development. Starting with her massive cement figures, *Rotundy* (Rotundas), in the early 1960s, and later with her papier-mâché *Gorsety* (Corsets), she explored the concept of sculpture in depth: "I got rid of weight in my works. For I had always dreamed of being able to carry my sculptures without anyone's (any man's) help." In the late 1960s she constructed *Psychofurniture* (Psycho-Tiny-Furniture) into which she added naked female body parts made of painted papier-mâché or sponge. These works represent her engagement with female sexuality, its pleasures, and its objectification. From 1970 onwards, the colour pink became a dominant feature of her works; she also carried out performances in the open countryside. In this free space, she commented both humorously and critically on the institutional art world in Poland. Against the backdrop of the dramatic political situation in the early 1980s, she made works dealing with state suppression and political violence. Repeatedly Maria Pinińska-Bereś engaged through her work with her feeling of marginalisation in an art world dominated by men: in *Sztandar autorski* (Author's Standard) she confidently struggles for visibility and recognition.

This retrospective exhibition highlights the most important stages in Pinińska-Bereś's artistic and emancipatory development. The exhibition intervenes twofold in art history: in the art history focussed on the works by male artists, and in the art history that is written from a western perspective and therefore overlooks the multifaceted art of Eastern Europe in the 20th century.

curated by Heike Munder and Jarosław Suchan

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DATES

Media Preview

Friday, 27.02., 10.15 am

Opening

Friday, 27.02., from 6 pm

Greeting and introduction

Andi Scheitlin, President Kunstgesellschaft Luzern

Fanni Fetzer, Director Kunstmuseum Luzern

Olga Wysocka, Director Adam Mickiewicz Institute

Heike Munder, Jarosław Suchan, guest curators

Introduction for Teachers

Wednesday, 04.03., 5 pm

Woman of...

Sunday, 08.03., 1.30 pm

Film, stattkino Luzern

Performance Living Pink

Sunday, 29.03., 11 am

With Bettina Bereś, artist, at
F*iZ – Frauen* im Zentrum Luzern

Toolbox Kunst

Wednesday, 01.04., 6 pm

Wednesday, 03.06., 6 pm

Further information according to website

Guided Tour for Generation 60plus

Thursday, 23.04., 3.30 pm

Family Tour

Sunday, 03.05., 11 am

Guided tour in cooperation with the Foundation Fokus
Familie

Feeling instead of Seeing

Sunday, 17.05., 11 am

Inclusive exhibition experience

The Curator as Guide

Wednesday, 27.05., 6 pm

Guided tour with Heike Munder

Embodied Art Education

Experimental formats by students of the Bachelor of Arts & Education program at HSLU, as per website

In cooperation with Kunstmuseum Bochum



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Republic of Poland

