

MUSÉE CANTONAL DES BEAUX-ARTS LAUSANNE Magdalena Abakanowicz. Textile Territories. Homage to Elsi Giauque



23.6.2023 – 24.9.2023

Press kit

Musée cantonal
des Beaux-Arts
Plateforme 10

Place de la Gare 16
1003 Lausanne
Suisse

 FONDATION
TOMS PAULI

 **10**  QUARTIER
DES ARTS
LAUSANNE

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1. Press release

The Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts de Lausanne (MCBA) and Fondation Toms Pauli are presenting an exceptional exhibition devoted to Magdalena Abakanowicz, a textile-art pioneer and leading 20th-century sculpture artist. *Textile Territories* celebrates the stunning works of Abakanowicz in the period 1960 to 1985 and brings to light the emergence of a new art form. Organised in partnership with Tate Modern, this international event offers a fascinating immersion into the Polish artist's category-defying creative universe.

Magdalena Abakanowicz (1930–2017) was a key figure at the Lausanne Tapestry Biennials in the 1960s and 1970s, widely acclaimed for the power and originality of her woven creations. Her works were soon displayed in Europe, and then worldwide, so that by the 1980s the artist had gained global recognition on the contemporary art scene. After studies in painting and weaving, Abakanowicz began exploring the possibilities of organic fibre as a means of artistic expression, crafting large-scale three-dimensional works in biomorphic shapes that were given the name *Abakans* after her surname. The artist then shifted her focus to the human body, creating huge ensembles of limbless figures.

The *Textile Territories* exhibition traces the early period of Magdalena Abakanowicz's international career between 1960 and 1985. Under the communist regime in Poland, the artist exploited the potential of fibre, a living and malleable material, to express in an innovative way a vision inspired by her observations of nature and humans. Lausanne, with its Biennials, the Alice Pauli Gallery and the many collectors in the region, played a pivotal role in Abakanowicz's success.

The exhibition stages the artist's early weavings, including large soft sculptures, castings, knotted works, and drawings that constitute the core of the show. Viewers will be able to discover major works such as *Abakan Red*, which was first displayed in Lausanne in 1969 and is now part of the Tate Collection. There will also be a number of hitherto unseen works on view that belong to the Fondation Toms Pauli, holder of one of the largest collections of the artist's work outside Poland.

The Tate curators' selection of works has been reviewed for the Lausanne venue and augmented by 25 works from the Fondation Toms Pauli Collection and some lenders in the French-speaking part of Switzerland as well as by a major series of *Backs*, on loan from Tate. The choice of the additional works highlights the important donations made to the State of Vaud by Association Pierre Pauli, the collectors Pierre and Marguerite Magneat, and the Alice Pauli Gallery.

In parallel with the world of Abakanowicz, a room dedicated to Elsi Giauque (1900–1989) brings to light the poetic and colourful creations of this Swiss artist. Considered the doyenne and leader of the New Tapestry movement in Switzerland, Giauque's explorations of geometric worlds composed of lightness and transparency provided important innovations. After a successful career in interior design and teaching, from 1965 she devoted herself to creating works that explored the interplay of colours, materials, and light. The two artists participated in the Lausanne Biennial events over the same period and were known to hold each other in great esteem.

The itinerary of the exhibition offers viewers a captivating immersion into the artistic universe of these two major personalities. The works of Magdalena Abakanowicz bear witness to her tireless search for new forms of expression through the use of organic fibres, while the geometric compositions of Elsi Giauque demonstrate her boldness and her mastery of colour and yarn.

Curated by

Magali Junet, Curator, Giselle Eberhard Cotton, Director, Fondation Toms Pauli.

Ann Coxon, Curator, International Art, Tate Modern; Mary-Jane Jacob, Independent Curator.

The exhibition was organised by Tate Modern, in collaboration with the Fondation Toms Pauli, the MCBA and the Henie Onstad.



We hereby express our sincere gratitude to the Abakanowicz Arts and Culture Charitable Foundation that has provided support for the exhibition.



Exhibition guide and podcast

Exhibition guide:



Podcast: *the artist's voice* (in French)

Magdalena Abakanowicz talks about her technique, the metaphysical aspects of her practice, and her freedom of expression.

You can listen to the audio before, during or after the visit = 6 mins.



2. Fondation Toms Pauli

Created in 2000 by the State of Vaud, Fondation Toms Pauli moved to the new Plateforme 10 Arts District in Lausanne in 2020. Active in both Switzerland and on the international scene, the foundation's chief mission is to research, conserve, and showcase its ancient and modern textile-art collections. This public heritage comprises a prestigious ensemble of 16th- to 19th-century European tapestries and embroideries bequeathed by Mary Toms in 1993 as well as a collection of 20th-century textile works.

Through its research work and loans, Fondation Toms Pauli regularly participates in major international textile and Fiber Art exhibitions. As successor to the International Centre of Ancient and Modern Tapestry (CITAM) that organised the Lausanne Tapestry Biennials from 1962 to 1995, it holds artists' records from that period and also houses a specialised library.

The Fondation's works can be viewed at temporary exhibitions held at Plateforme 10, or other sites in Switzerland and abroad.

admin@toms-pauli.ch
www.toms-pauli.ch

3. The 20th-Century Textile Art Collection

Over recent years, the growing reputation of Fondation Toms Pauli has enabled it to enhance its 20th-Century Collection with many important creations. The acquisitions were made possible thanks to the generosity of the collectors Pierre and Marguerite Magnenat and Alice Pauli, as well as that of artists and patrons. The original ensemble donated by Association Pierre Pauli to the State of Vaud in 1996 has now expanded to include 220 works representing the New Tapestry movement.

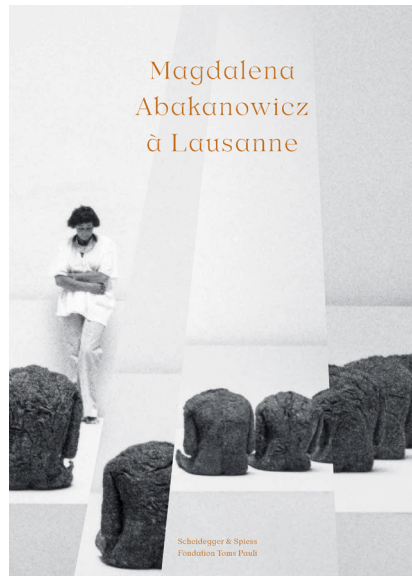
Comprising mural pieces, embroideries, reliefs, soft sculptures and installations, the works in Fondation Toms Pauli's contemporary collection were created in the second half of the 20th-century by internationally famous artists such as Magdalena Abakanowicz, Olga de Amaral, Jagoda Buić, Ritzi and Peter Jacobi, Mariette Rousseau-Vermette, Elsi Giauque and also Naomi Kobayashi and Machiko Agano.

To date, Fondation Toms Pauli conserves 50 works by Magdalena Abakanowicz, one of the most important ensembles of the artist's work outside Poland.

4. Publications

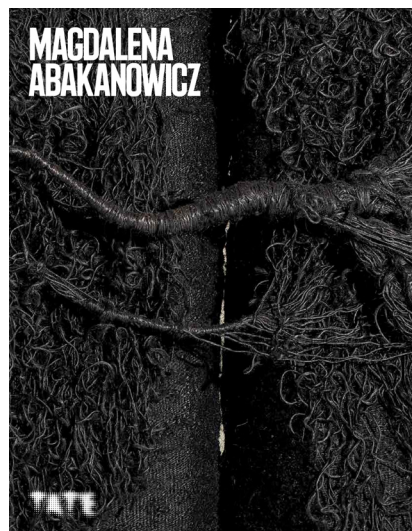
Magdalena Abakanowicz à Lausanne, ed. by Magali Junet and Giselle Eberhard Cotton; co-published by Fondation Toms Pauli, Lausanne, and Scheidegger & Spiess, Zurich, 2023, 128 pp, in French, CHF 38.00

The book traces the key role played by Lausanne in launching the artist's international career, in particular through the Tapestry Biennials, the Alice Pauli Gallery, sponsors and collectors, art critics and friends.



Magdalena Abakanowicz, ed. by Ann Coxon and Mary-Jane Jacob, Tate Publishing, London, 2022, 208 pp., in English, CHF 42.00

A catalogue of the artist's work compiled by the two curators of the London exhibition *Magdalena Abakanowicz: Every Tangle of Thread and Rope*. With contributions by several international authors, it includes an article reviewing the Abakanowicz drawings conserved by Fondation Toms Pauli.



→ At the MCBA Book- and Gift Shop during the show's run
shop.mcba@plateforme10.ch

5. Press images

To download → mcba.ch/presse

Views of the exhibition available on 22 June 2023, 12am

The images are free of rights for the duration of the exhibition. All reproductions must be accompanied by the following information: author, title of the work, date, name of the lender, name of the photographer and co-pyright. Other indications (dimensions, duration, techniques, etc.) are welcome but not obligatory. After publication, we would be grateful if you could send a copy of the publication to the press service of the Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts de Lausanne.

For works of Abakanowicz

© Fundacja Marty Magdaleny Abakanowicz Kosmowskiej i Jana Kosmowskiego



1.

View of the exhibition *Magdalena Abakanowicz: Every Tangle of Thread and Rope*

Tate Modern, 2022–2023 © Tate, photo Norbert Piwowarczyk

Abakan Red, 1969, sisal, 405 × 382 × 400 cm, Tate, London

Abakan Orange, 1968, sisal, 360 × 360 × 45 cm, National Museum, Stockholm



3.

Magdalena Abakanowicz

Abakan – Situation variable II (Abakan – Variable Situation II), 1971

Sisal and rope, 400 × 250 × 100 cm

© Collection d'art de la Ville de Bienne

Photo Norbert Piwowarczyk



2.

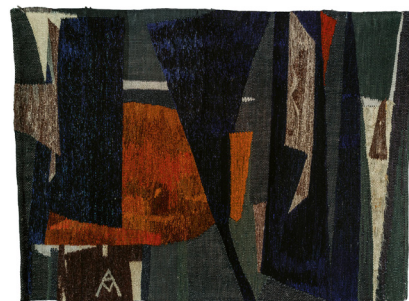
Magdalena Abakanowicz

Abakan étroit (Narrow Abakan), 1967–1968

Sisal and wool, 320 × 100 × 100 cm

© Fondation Toms Pauli, Lausanne

Photo Norbert Piwowarczyk



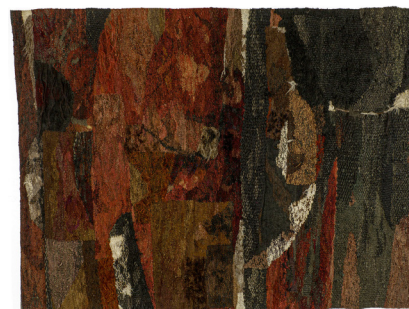
4.

Magdalena Abakanowicz

Soleil ou La Construction noire (Sun or The Black Construction), 1963

Wool, cotton, and artificial silk, 152 × 211 cm

© Musée central des textiles de Łódź



5.

Magdalena Abakanowicz

Desdemona, 1965

Wool, sisal, cotton, artificial silk, and horsehair, 300 × 410 cm

© Musée central des textiles de Łódź

Photo Piotr Tomczyk



6.
Magdalena Abakanowicz
Rectangle avec ouverture ronde (Rectangle with Round Aperture, 1973
Sisal, 108 × 144 × 30 cm
© Fondation Toms Pauli, Lausanne
Photo Norbert Piwowarczyk



10.
Magdalena Abakanowicz in her workshop and *Standing Figure*, 1980–1983
© Artur Starewicz / East News



7.
Magdalena Abakanowicz
Backs, 1976–1982
Burlap and resin, c. 75 × 65 × 60 cm each one
© Fondation Toms Pauli, Lausanne
Photo Arnaud Conne



11.
Magdalena Abakanowicz
Grande Fleur (Large Flower), 1981
Sisal and linen warp, 374 × 300 cm
© Fondation Toms Pauli, Lausanne, Arnaud Conne AN Ville de Lausanne



8.
8th Lausanne Tapestry Biennial, 1977
Session du cycle Altérations – Images de la structure humaine (Alterations Cycle Session – Images of the Human Structure), 1976
Phot. inc, archives André Kuenzi



12.
Magdalena Abakanowicz
Embryology, 1981
Ink, charcoal, and lead pencil on paper, 48.5 × 63 cm
© Fondation Toms Pauli, Lausanne, AN Ville de Lausanne



9.
Magdalena Abakanowicz and Alice Pauli, 1981
Phot. inc., archives Galerie Alice Pauli, Lausanne



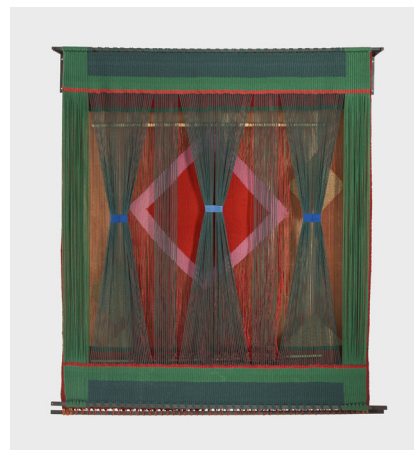
13.
Magdalena Abakanowicz
Embryology, 1981
Ink and charcoal on paper, 63 × 49 cm
© Fondation Toms Pauli, Lausanne, AN Ville de Lausanne



14.
Vernissage, 4th Lausanne Tapestry Biennial, 1969
Marcel Imsand © Photo Elysée, Lausanne



15.
Elsi Giauque
Colonne en couleurs qui chantent (Coloured Column Singing), 1966–1967
Silk, 412 × 35 × 35 cm
© Museum für Gestaltung Zürich, Decorative Arts Collection, ZHdK



16.
Elsi Giauque
Theater-Hommage à Dürrenmatt
(Theatre-Homage to Dürrenmatt), 1967–1968
Wool, sisal, synthetic fibres, 222 × 200 × 15 cm
© Museum für Gestaltung Zürich, Decorative Arts Collection, ZHdK

6. Public engagement – Public outreach services

Reservations required for all events

→ mcba.ch/agenda

Guided tours (in French)

Thursday 20 July, 17 August, 21 September at 6:30pm

Every Sunday at 11am

(Summer break from 23.7 to 13.8)

Guided tour (in English)

Sunday 17 September at 2pm

Guided tours for Les Ami·e·s du MCBA

Tuesday 29 August at 12:30pm

With Giselle Eberhard Cotton

Thursday 7 September at 6pm

With Magali Junet

Final guided tour with the exhibition curators (in French)

Sunday 24 September at 3pm

With Giselle Eberhard Cotton and Magali Junet

Conference (in French)

Thursday 31 August at 6:30pm

Revoir Magdalena Abakanowicz à l'aune des biennales d'art contemporain

By Joana Badia, history of art student at the Sorbonne

Université de Paris

Admission free

Writing workshop for adults (in French)

Saturday 16 September, 2–5pm

Fils de trame

Working with memories as the basic material. By exploring the fabric of our lives and its constituent strands, we can discover the close ties between two modes of expression: writing and weaving. Mathias Howald's second novel, *Cousu pour toi* (Stitched for You) (published by Scribes / Gallimard) is about the NAMES Project Memorial Quilt created to celebrate and honour the memory of the people who have died of AIDS.

CHF 50.– + entrance ticket

Museum night

Saturday 23 September, 10am–2am

Creative workshops for children (in French)

Saturday 8 July and 9 September, 2–5pm

Du fil à retordre

Create amazing forms using threads, string, feathers and sequins, inspired by the works of the artists Magdalena Abakanowicz and Elsi Giauque. 9–15 years old / CHF 15.–

Tuesday 15, Wednesday 16, Thursday 17 August, 10–4:30pm

Jeux de fils

A one-day workshop to try out different weaving techniques and discover the work of the artists Magdalena Abakanowicz and Elsi Giauque.

9–15 years old Part of Passeport

vacances / to register

→ apvrl.ch

A free intergenerational workshop (in French)

Saturday 2 September, 11am–6pm, non-stop

Filer doux

With family or friends, try your hands on a weaving technique seen in the exhibition.

Free / no registration required

Kids activity booklet (in French)

Free, available at the reception desk

Program for schools and private tours

→ mcba.ch

6. Information and contact

Florence Dizdari
Press coordinator
florence.dizdari@plateforme10.ch
T +41 79 232 40 06

All our press releases and press kits are available under:
→ mcba.ch/presse/

Press conference: 22 June at 10.30am

Presentation of the exhibition by the curators

Magali Junet, Curator, Giselle Eberhard Cotton, Director, Fondation Toms Pauli

Ann Coxon, Curator, International Art, Tate Modern; Mary-Jane Jacob, Independent Curator

Upon registration: → presse.mcba@plateforme10.ch

Public Opening: 22 June at 6.30pm

Hours:

Tuesday – Sunday: 10am–6pm

Thursday: 10am–8pm

Monday: closed

1. August: 10am–6pm

Federal Fast Monday: 10am–6pm

Admission and Online Tickets:

→ mcba.ch/billetterie

First Saturday of the month: free

Access:

SBB Lausanne train station, 3 minutes on foot

Bus: 1, 3, 20, 21, 60, Gare stop

Bus: 6, Cecil stop

Metro: m2, Gare stop

Car: Montbenon parking, Reduced fee

Address:

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www.mcba.ch

 @mcbalausanne

 @mcba.lausanne

8. Partners and sponsors

The MCBA building was inaugurated on 5 April 2019. The museum's new premises were built by the canton of Vaud with the generous support of the City of Lausanne and the following private partnerships:

Fondation
Les Mûrons



Fondation
Art et Vie

Fondation
Anita et Werner Damm-Etienne



Abakanowicz Arts and
Culture Charitable Foundation

AUDEMARS PIGUET
Le Brassus



Madame
Alice Pauli

Association rétrospective
Pierrette Gonseth-Favre

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