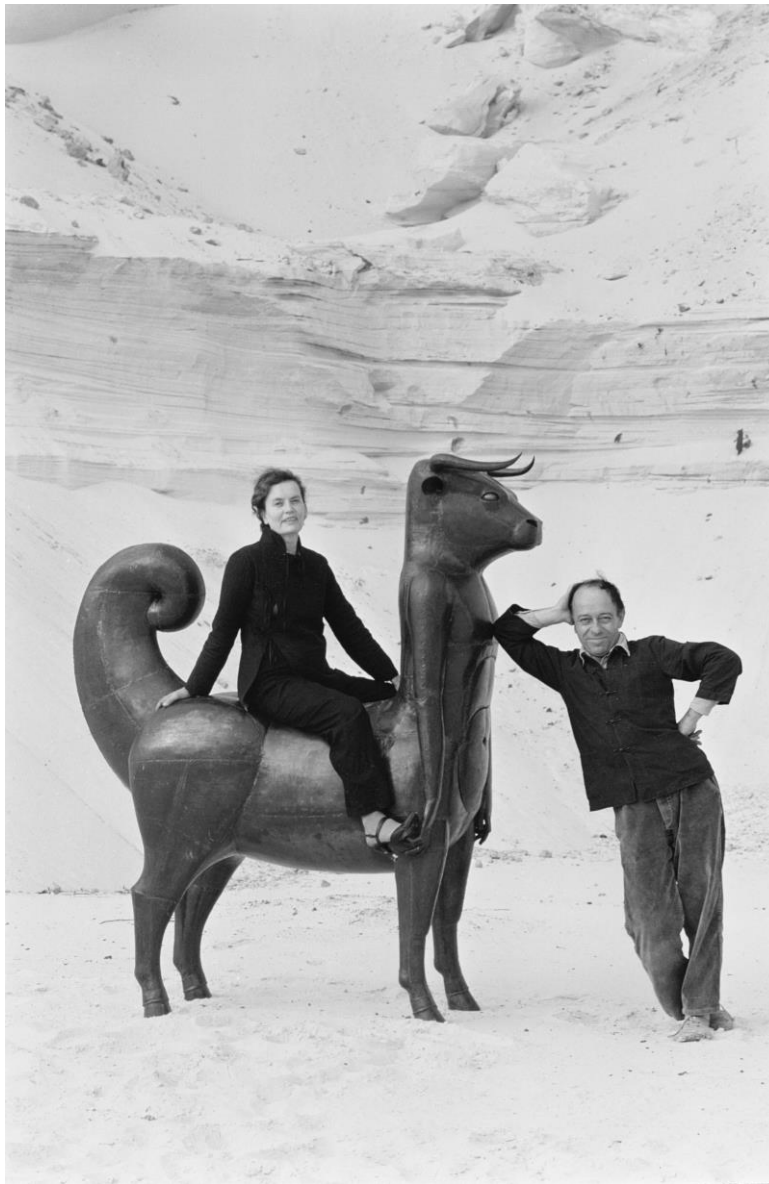


BEN BROWN FINE ARTS



Claude & François-Xavier Lalanne avec *Le Minotaure* de François-Xavier, 1973.
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**CLAUDE & FRANÇOIS-XAVIER
LALANNE**

**24 NOVEMBER 2016 – 26 JANUARY 2017
PRIVATE VIEW WEDNESDAY 23 NOVEMBER, 6-8PM**

This autumn Ben Brown Fine Arts is delighted to present *Claude & François-Xavier Lalanne*, a major exhibition devoted to the wonderful and whimsical work of French artists Claude and the late François-Xavier Lalanne. Choreographed by interior designer Manfredi della Gherardesca, the exhibition brings together almost 30 works by both artists, including Claude Lalanne's latest creations.

Claude and François-Xavier Lalanne met in Paris in 1952 and began working and exploring the natural world together through sculpture. Their early days together were marked by interactions with the thriving community of artists in Montparnasse, not least François-Xavier's early neighbour Constantin Brâncuși who inspired his transition from painting to sculpture. While very distinct in their styles, with François-Xavier's witty, bold and majestic animal sculptures - commonly doubling as functional storage spaces - in contrast to Claude's delicate flora and fauna inspired pieces, together they created a world of fantasy, their work in many ways defying categorisation.

Only in recent years has the work of 'Les Lalanne' achieved iconic status, propelled by the 2009 Christie's Paris sale of Yves Saint Laurent's collection and a major retrospective at Musée des Arts Decoratifs in Paris in 2010, curated by an ardent collector and admirer, Peter Marino. Their cult-like following has grown exponentially and now includes private collectors and luminaries from around the world such as Tom Ford, Karl Lagerfeld, Marc Jacobs, François Pinault and Bernard Arnault.

At the age of 91, Claude is still creating captivating works from her home and studio near Fontainebleau, a creative environment she shared with her husband for nearly half a century. For this exhibition she has produced a number of striking new sculptures including the *Choupatte Géante* (2016), representing an oversized cabbage with chicken legs. *Choupatte* is amongst Claude's most notorious works and a theme that has run through her work over the last decades. An early example on display is the small nymph-like *Olympe* (1988/1994) adorned with foliage, while her most famous variation *L'Homme à Tête de Chou*, provided inspiration for the title and sleeve of Serge Gainsbourg's 1976 album.

Other new works include a pair of *Fauteuils Entrelacs* (2015) and five elaborate *Miroirs*, evocative of the Art Nouveau movement with their flowing curves and natural forms. Always inspired by her surroundings, Claude's process involves moulding organic forms directly from life, using contemporary electroplating methods.

In dialogue with these works, the gallery presents a large herd of *Moutons Transhumant* (1991) and *Moutons de Laine* (1965/1974), the iconic sheep by François-Xavier Lalanne. The *Moutons* became a popular symbol of François-Xavier's work and were the animals to feature most heavily in his oeuvre right up to the end of his career. These are showcased alongside *Babouin* (1984), a quirky cast iron fireplace, as well as the graceful *Mouflon de Pauline* (1993/2008), reflecting the artist's delicate attempts at bringing nature into the home.

NOTES TO EDITOR

Artist biographies

Claude Lalanne (b. 1924 in Paris, France) and François-Xavier Lalanne (b. 1927 in Agen, France; d. 2008 in Ury, France) have been known as 'Les Lalanne' since the 1960s. François-Xavier Lalanne moved to Paris at the age of 18 to study sculpture, drawing and painting at the Académie Julian. After renting a studio near Montparnasse, he met artists Constantin Brâncuși, Max Ernst, Man Ray, Marcel Duchamp and Jean Tinguely, who have all influenced his work significantly. It was not until 1952, when he met Claude (née Dupeux) at his first gallery show, that he abandoned painting for sculpture. Claude studied architecture at the École des Beaux-Arts and the École des Arts Décoratifs. She became friends with American artists Larry Rivers and Jimmy Metcalf, who helped her develop the techniques she continues to use today.

The Lalannes' works are represented in many prominent collections around the world including the National Design Museum (New York), Musée Nationale d'Art Moderne/Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris), Cooper Hewitt Museum (New York) and Musée d'Histoire Naturelle (Paris).

Ben Brown Fine Arts

This exhibition (24 November 2016 - 26 January 2017) follows on from *Claude & François-Xavier Lalanne* at Ben Brown Fine Arts Hong Kong (15 September - 9 November 2016), the second gallery exhibition devoted to the artists in Hong Kong. Ben Brown Fine Arts London has previously exhibited the work of Claude and François-Xavier Lalanne in 2007 and 2013.

Founded in 2004, Ben Brown Fine Arts is located on Brook's Mews in the heart of Mayfair. The gallery has prominently positioned itself on the contemporary art scene with the sole UK representation of artists such as Ron Arad, Tony Bevan, Ori Gersht, Candida Höfer, Claude and François-Xavier Lalanne, Gavin Turk, Not Vital and Heinz Mack. Also renowned for its strong expertise in 20th century Italian art, the gallery has been exhibiting the work of Lucio Fontana and Alighiero Boetti, amongst others, since its inception. In 2009 Ben Brown Fine Arts took their first step in an international expansion with the opening of an exhibition space in Hong Kong.

FOR FURTHER PRESS INFORMATION AND ENQUIRIES PLEASE CONTACT:

Reiber + Partners
Catharina van Beuningen
T. +44 (0)20 7436 6082
E. catie@reiberandpartners.com

Ben Brown Fine Arts
12 Brook's Mews, London W1K 4DG
T. +44 (0)20 7734 8888
www.benbrownfinearts.com