

BEN BROWN FINE ARTS



Claude and François-Xavier Lalanne. Image courtesy of Ben Brown Fine Arts

PLANÈTE LALANNE

17 April - 3 November 2024

Ben Brown Fine Arts at Palazzo Rota Ivancich, Venice

"If there exists a planet where plants move on legs, one might see the grass fleeing at the approach of a cow. Unless on that land, animals are rooted like the oyster to its rock. In that case, the stationary would seize the mobile. This is how the carnivorous plant does it. It is then that the animal would be the vegetable. Perhaps, in the end, we live on another planet." - **François-Xavier Lalanne**

Ben Brown Fine Arts is thrilled to announce ***Planète Lalanne***, a comprehensive exhibition of the celebrated artistic duo Claude and François-Xavier Lalanne that will take over the historic Palazzo Rota Ivancich in Venice, running concurrently with the 2024 Venice Biennale from April 17 to November 3, 2024. Continuing a decades-long relationship between Ben Brown Fine Arts and Les Lalanne, *Planète Lalanne* is one of the largest exhibitions – with a selection of over 150 works – by the artists, and the first to take place in Italy.

Curated by Jérôme Neutres, former director at the Réunion de Musées Nationaux-Grand Palais and former president of Musée du Luxembourg, the fantastical sculptures, furniture, and *objets d'art* are placed throughout the palazzo in intimate dialogue with this unique environment, highlighting their ingenious functionality and surrealist whimsy to imagine an enchanted 'Palazzo Lalanne'. Journeying throughout the exhibition, viewers immerse themselves into a domestic, yet surreal setting with which to encounter the mythological creatures, fauna, and flora that inhabit the Lalanne world and explore the blurred intersection between decorative and fine arts at which their practice exists. Works throughout *Planète Lalanne* are thoughtfully placed with the intent Les Lalanne imagined as "*works to live with*", – tables and chairs inhabit living rooms, a bed in the bedroom, and the *Hippopotame I* bathtub in the

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bathroom. An invitation for visitors to live with the Lalanne artworks, this staging emphasizes the artists' intention to transcend myopic schemas of decorative versus fine arts.

Curator Jérôme Neutres comments, *"Presented in the splendid and mysterious Venetian Palazzo Rota Ivancich, Planète Lalanne allows us to (re)discover a selection of the masterpieces of these artists who are as legendary as they are unclassifiable. This exhibition offers the opportunity to experience living with these poetically designed art objects."*

Building upon the success of recent and historic exhibitions of Les Lalanne by Ben Brown Fine Arts, including *Les Lalanne: Makers of Dreams* in 2022, *Planète Lalanne* incorporates over 150 rare objects, photographs, artworks, and archives. The most comprehensive presentation of Les Lalanne to date, *Planète Lalanne* brings together culturally significant works by the artists, including the *Sauterelle* bar, one of three *Sauterelle* bars ever created by the artists – the other of which belongs to King Charles III – and *Lit Hibou et 2 Tables de Chevet*, a unique bed from Ben Brown's personal collection that marks the beginning of his longtime relationship with Les Lalanne. The exhibition will also bring together for the first time every sized iteration of Claude's surrealist *Choupatte*, with their superbly detailed veined cabbage leaves atop whimsical chickens' feet, as well as every bar François-Xavier Lalanne ever made.

"Claude and François-Xavier Lalanne, true visionaries of the artistic realm, crafted a legacy that seamlessly blended whimsy with profound craftsmanship. Their imaginative sculptures transcend the boundaries of conventional art, offering a harmonious dialogue between nature and imagination. I am proud to present this retrospective in Venice, which pays homage to the profound influence of these iconic artists, inviting patrons to immerse themselves in the timeless allure of the Lalannes' transformative creations." - **Ben Brown**

A book about Les Lalanne will be published on the occasion of *Planète Lalanne* at the Palazzo Rota Ivancich in June 2024. Featuring a selection of essays and archival images from an array of previous Les Lalanne exhibitions, the book will showcase the decades-long relationship between Ben Brown and Les Lalanne.



Photography by Willy Rizzo

ABOUT CLAUDE & FRANÇOIS-XAVIER LALANNE

Claude Lalanne (1925 – 2019) and **François-Xavier Lalanne** (1927 – 2008) 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, whilst Claude studied architecture at the École des Beaux-Arts and the École des Arts Décoratifs. Claude and François-Xavier met in 1952, at which point François-Xavier abandoned painting for sculpture. The last of a generation of avant-garde artists in Paris, they lived next door to Constantin Brâncuși, travelled in the same circle as René Magritte and Max Ernst, and worked with loyal collectors such as Yves Saint-Laurent and Pierre Bergé. While Les Lalanne shared a studio and exhibited together throughout their careers, their oeuvres are entirely distinctive. Claude's work takes on a more sinuous and ethereal form, depicting flora and fauna evocative of the art nouveau movement. François-Xavier's works—including sheep, rhinoceroses, gorillas, desks and bars—offer a gravity of form and functional ingenuity that redefine their original representation. The Lalannes' works are represented in many prominent private and public collections around the world including the National Design Museum, New York; Cooper Hewitt Museum, New York; Musée Nationale d'Art Moderne, Paris; Musée Nationale d'Art Moderne/Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam; Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris and Musée d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris.

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In 2004, Ben Brown Fine Arts opened its first location in the heart of Mayfair, London. The gallery quickly established itself on the international art scene with exhibitions of long-term gallery artists Candida Höfer, Tony Bevan, Claude & François-Xavier Lalanne, and Heinz Mack, amongst others, as well as momentous exhibitions of 20th-century masters including Lucio Fontana, Alighiero Boetti and Gerhard Richter. In 2009, Ben Brown Fine Arts opened an exhibition space in Hong Kong, becoming the first international gallery to move to the city that would soon become a major international art hub. In Hong Kong, the gallery introduced notable exhibitions of Pablo Picasso, Sean Scully, Frank Auerbach, and Miquel Barceló, as well as survey exhibitions of Chinese contemporary photography, the Düsseldorf School of Photography, 20th-century Italian art, and the ZERO movement. In 2021, Ben Brown Fine Arts opened a third location in Palm Beach, Florida, with an inaugural exhibition celebrating the legacy of American and European 20th-century artists who developed radical approaches to making art, among them Alexander Calder, Georg Baselitz, and Andy Warhol. The galleries regularly exhibit and develop programming for our renowned stable of international, multi-disciplinarian contemporary artists, including the aforementioned as well as Yoan Capote, Awol Erizku, Nabil Nahas, José Parlá, Enoc Perez, Ena Swansea, Hank Willis Thomas, Gavin Turk, and Jan Worst. With multi-lingual staff based in London, Hong Kong, New York, and Palm Beach, the gallery has strong relationships with private collectors, advisors, and public institutions, sourcing and placing important primary and secondary artworks for them. Ben Brown Fine Arts participates in major art fairs worldwide, including Art Basel, Art Basel Hong Kong, Art Basel Miami Beach, The Armory Show, Frieze Masters, TEFAF Maastricht, and TEFAF New York.

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