

BEN BROWN FINE ARTS



LES LALANNE A LIVING LANDSCAPE

21 March - 13 June 2026

Private view: Saturday 21 March 6-9pm
Ben Brown Fine Arts Hong Kong
201 The Factory, 1 Yip fat Street, Hong Kong

Ben Brown Fine Arts is pleased to announce **Les Lalanne: A Living Landscape**, a comprehensive exhibition of the celebrated artistic duo Claude and François-Xavier Lalanne, presented at the Hong Kong gallery in conjunction with Art Basel Hong Kong 2026. Conceived as an imagined garden – an enigmatic, contemplative environment inspired by the philosophy and spatial poetics of the Japanese Zen garden – the exhibition invites viewers into a slowed, reflective encounter with the sculptural world of Les Lalanne.

The exhibition draws directly from the Lalannes' environment. Their home in Ury, France, was a place of constant activity, where family life, animals and craftsmen shared the courtyard and art was inseparable from everyday existence. The house functioned as a working studio, while the surrounding gardens became a living museum. Gardens were particularly central to Claude's practice – carefully shaped spaces of controlled wildness, where vegetation was allowed to flourish freely yet deliberately, animated her sculpture. This fusion of nature and art, cultivation and imagination forms the conceptual core of *A Living Landscape*.

The enduring appeal of Les Lalanne lies in their playful ingenuity and their ability to transform nature into fantasy. Their work blurs the boundaries between functional design, fine art and the decorative arts, infused with Surrealist wit and a timeless elegance. Although Claude and François-Xavier shared a studio and exhibited together throughout their careers, their practices are distinct. Claude's work is sinuous and ethereal, rooted in direct observation of flora and fauna, while François-Xavier's sculptures possess a formal gravity and functional intelligence that reimagines animal forms. He was drawn to angularity and structure; she to texture and growth. Yet their works are inextricably linked, and are most fully experienced together, as they transform the gallery into an enchanted, dreamlike world.

At the heart of the exhibition is a major installation of François-Xavier's iconic *Mouton*, set within the imagined garden landscape. Evoking the rhythms of grazing and transhumance, the sheep appear momentarily paused within the terrain. Comprising key variations of Lalanne's celebrated series, this installation marks the largest public presentation of the *Moutons* ever shown in Hong Kong. Lalanne first

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introduced the series with *Moutons de Laine* in 1965, later expanding it to include epoxy stone and bronze versions from 1977 onwards. The exhibition features significant works from *Les Nouveaux Moutons*, including *Bélier* (1994), *Brebis* (1994), *Agneau* (1996) and *Le Mouton Transhumant* (1988), alongside examples from the earlier *Mouton de Pierre* series, produced between 1979 and 1984. At once whimsical and functional, the sheep embody Lalanne's concept of domestic surrealism, dissolving distinctions between sculpture, furniture and everyday life.

These works are presented in dialogue with major creations by Claude, including her celebrated *Entrelacs* and *Ginkgo* furniture, flora-adorned mirrors, electroplated candelabra and enchanting *Choupatte* sculptures. Together, they reflect Claude's enduring fascination with nature, her distinctive humour, her Surrealist sensibility and her engagement with Nouveau Réalisme, as well as her pioneering integration of art into the domestic sphere. Through precise naturalism combined with moments of poetic transformation, Claude's works turn familiar botanical forms into functional objects of wonder.

The exhibition also includes the artists' celebrated collaborative work *Singe aux Nénuphars*, a rare and eloquent synthesis of their shared vision. In this piece, Claude created the tabletop, its surface evoking floating water lilies, supported by the outstretched arms of François-Xavier's sculptural monkey. The work exemplifies the unique dialogue between the two artists, uniting Claude's lyrical treatment of flora with François-Xavier's sculptural interpretation of fauna.

Like a garden that distills the vastness of the natural world into a contained microcosm, the Lalannes distilled nature into objects. Experienced collectively, *A Living Landscape* transforms the Hong Kong gallery into an immersive environment where sculptural flora and fauna exist in poetic balance, where fantasy and reality converge, and where viewers are invited not to interpret, but to experience.

ABOUT CLAUDE AND FRANÇOIS-XAVIER LALANNE

Claude Lalanne (b. 1925, Paris - d. 2019, Fontainebleau) and François-Xavier Lalanne (b. 1927, Argen – d. 2008, Ury), known collectively as Les Lalanne from 1966, were a French artistic duo whose intertwined yet distinct practices developed over more than five decades. They met in 1952 and worked closely together throughout their careers, sharing studios and exhibiting jointly while maintaining individual approaches. Claude, trained at the École des Arts Décoratifs and the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, specialised in sculptures and functional objects derived from vegetal forms, employing techniques of casting from life and electroplating. François-Xavier, initially trained as a painter at the Académie Julian, abandoned painting in 1952 to focus on sculpture, becoming known for his life-size animal forms, influenced in part by his time working as a guard in the Egyptian and Assyrian galleries of the Musée du Louvre and drawing on the tradition of animal sculpture from Barye to Pompon. The artists lived and worked in Paris, notably at the Impasse Ronsin in Montparnasse, where they were part of a Surrealist-inflected artistic milieu that included Constantin Brancusi, Max Ernst, René Magritte, Jean Tinguely and Niki de Saint Phalle. Their first exhibition at Galerie J in 1964 led to an international career supported by gallerist Alexander Iolas, and their work soon attracted prominent collectors including Yves Saint Laurent and Pierre Bergé, Karl Lagerfeld, Valentino, Baron Guy and Baroness Marie-Hélène de Rothschild, and John and Dominique de Menil. Today, their work has been presented in significant exhibitions across Europe, Asia and the United States, including presentations at the Palace of Versailles, Versailles; Clark Institute, Williamstown, MA; Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris; and the Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, Coral Gables, FA. Their work is held in major museum collections 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 the Musée d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris.

ABOUT BEN BROWN FINE ARTS

Ben Brown Fine Arts is an international gallery specialising in post-war and contemporary art with locations in London, Hong Kong and New York. Founded in London's Mayfair in 2004, the gallery operates across both primary and secondary markets and represents a group of leading contemporary artists including Tony Bevan, Awol Erizku, Candida Höfer, Vik Muniz, Yoan Capote, Nabil Nahas, Gavin Turk, José Parlá, Enoc Perez and Ena Swansea. Alongside its contemporary programme, Ben Brown Fine Arts is known for exhibitions of post-war figures such as Alighiero Boetti, Frank Auerbach, Alexander Calder, Lucio Fontana, Gerhard Richter and Claude and François-Xavier Lalanne. The gallery expanded to Hong Kong in 2009, opened a seasonal space in Palm Beach in 2021, and established a New York gallery in 2024. Recent landmark exhibition projects include *Planète Lalanne* at the 60th Venice Biennale (2024), *Calder: Extreme Cantilever* (London, 2024), and *Alighiero e Boetti: Embellishing the Sky* (London, 2025). The gallery participates regularly in international art fairs, including Art Basel (Basel, Hong Kong and Miami Beach), Frieze Masters, TEFAF (Maastricht and New York), Miart, the Armory Show and Art Mumbai.

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