

LOUISA GUINNESS GALLERY

BUTTERFLIES, BIJOUX & OBJETS

SMALL SCULPTURE BY CLAUDE LALANNE

9 JUNE – 29 JULY 2016

PRESS PREVIEW: 8 JUNE 6 – 8 PM



Clockwise:

Flower Pin, 2015, Brooch, galvanised copper, 11.0 x 11.0 cm, unique; *Flower IV*, 2014, Brooch, galvanised copper, diameter: 8.0 cm, unique; *Bague en Fleur IX*, 2012, Ring, galvanised copper, 7.5 x 7.3 x 1.9 cm, unique; *Flower III*, 2014, Brooch, galvanised copper, diameter: 9.0 cm, unique.

c. Louisa Guinness Gallery & Iona Wolff, 2016

Louisa Guinness Gallery is delighted to present *Butterflies, Bijoux & Objets*, a solo exhibition of small sculpture by renowned French artist Claude Lalanne. The exhibition brings together over 50 years of work from the 1970s to the present, including previously unseen pieces from the artist's personal collection, as well as two works from the iconic 1967 "Empreinte Series" created with Yves Saint Laurent.

Known for her sculptural collaborations with husband François-Xavier Lalanne, with whom she worked under the collective signature 'Les Lalannes', the exhibition offers a window into Claude Lalanne's most intimate world. Marking the first time the artist's small objects have been exclusively exhibited, *Butterflies, Bijoux & Objets*, celebrates the eclecticism and intimacy of her oeuvre. Including a handmade jewellery chest from the dressing table of the artist herself, the exhibition is characterised by the surreal marriage of flora and fauna: snails with fingers for heads, shells as spoons, rabbits in roughs and butterflies intended for the wrist, neck and hair.

The success of Lalanne's sculpture and jewellery is in part due to her mastery of electroplating, a process which allows the complete transformation of organic material into copper. Flora or fauna, often taken from the artist's garden, is submerged in a bath

of copper sulphate with a current running through it. The copper builds on the organic material, ultimately creating a perfect metallic replica of the original. The artist then sews these fossilised forms together, giving them new life as fantastical pieces of art. It is this process, enshrining creative spontaneity, that separates Claude's work from the meticulously drafted constructivism of her husband's.

Lalanne has used jewellery throughout her career as a medium of artistic expression and continues to do so at the age of 92. Displaying pieces from across her ubiquitous career, the exhibition traces the roots of her inspiration, from her work with Galerie J – the foremost surrealist dealer in Paris – to her friendships with fellow surrealist artists, including Man Ray and Dali.



Top Left: *Leaf Pod*, 2015, Earrings, galvanised copper & coral, 4.4 x 3.3 x 3.0 cm, unique; *Fushia*, 2015, Necklace, galvanised copper, diameter: 14.5 cm, unique; *Bague en Fleur XXV*, 2012, Ring, galvanised copper, 5.6 x 6.0 x 0.6 cm, unique; Bottom Left: *Ginko Leaf Bag*, ca. 1970-80, Evening Bag, pink silk and bronze dore, 20.0 x 22.0 x 1.7 cm, unrealised Art Curial edition of 250; *Papillon*, Bracelet, bronze dore, diameter: 6.5 cm, edition of 250 plus 6 artist's proofs; *Honeysuckle Candle*, 2011, bronze dore, glass, honeysuckle scent, burning time: 400 hours, diameter: 15.0 cm, edition of 700.

NOTES TO EDITORS

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ABOUT THE ARTIST

Claude Lalanne (b. 1925, Paris) lives and works in Ury, France. She studied architecture at the École des Beaux-Arts and École des Arts Décoratifs. After meeting her husband at a gallery in 1952, a series of commissions by Yves Saint Laurent and Pierre Bergé from the mid-1960s earned them widespread recognition. Claude Lalanne worked with her husband from 1956 until François' death in 2008. The first exhibition of her work was held in 1964 at the Galerie Claude Bernard in Paris. Les Lalannes were the subject of a major retrospective at Les Arts Decoratifs in Paris in 2010. Her pieces have since been incorporated into the collections of major institutions, such as the Cooper Hewitt, the National Design Museum in New York, the Georges Pompidou Centre and Musée National d'Art Moderne in Paris.

ABOUT THE GALLERY

Louisa Guinness Gallery works with today's leading sculptors and painters to create jewellery as well as collecting and dealing in works by master artists.

The gallery opened in May 2003 with its inaugural exhibition 'Past and Present; Jewellery by 20th Century Artists'. With this show Louisa Guinness departed from her original focus on artist-made furniture into the world of artists' jewels. Since then she has worked on over 18 separate projects with leading contemporary artists.

Each new work is published in a small edition to the highest standard. Most are handmade in London's famous Hatton Garden district or the artist's studio. The ethos behind the jewellery is that it should be treated as wearable sculpture: whilst it is not being worn it is a piece of art independent of function, at home on a coffee table or in a dressing room.

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