

For immediate release
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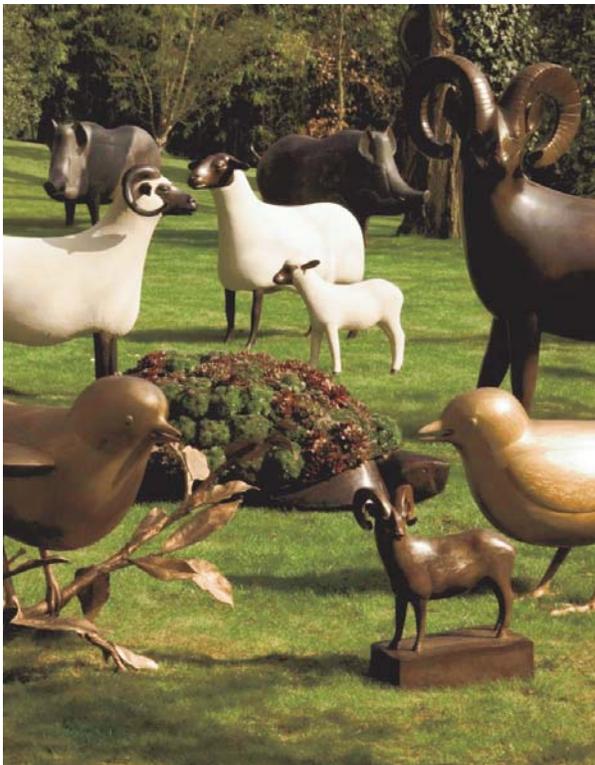
Contact: Capucine Milliot
Carine Decroi

+331 40 76 84 08
+331 40 76 85 88

cmilliot@christies.com
cdecroi@christies.com

CLAUDE AND FRANCOIS-XAVIER LALANNE 50 WORKS OF ART FROM AN IMPORTANT EUROPEAN COLLECTION Wednesday 27 May 2009

Paris- On 27 May 2009, Christie's will offer 50 exceptional works by French husband and wife artists Claude and Francois-Xavier Lalanne. Consigned from an Important European Collection, this selection offers a magnificent illustration of the talent of Claude and François-Xavier Lalanne and the various facets of their work.



From his classical training at the Académie Julian and his early years devoted to painting, François-Xavier Lalanne retained a taste for drawing and construction as a prelude to developing his sculptures. The influence of Constantin Brancusi (his neighbour in 1949) and the Egyptian art he discovered in the Louvre is evident in his adoption of classical forms with refined lines. The most unusual aspect of his work lies in his sculptures' possible uses and therefore the transformations he makes possible in his fantastic bestiary. Claude Lalanne's approach is radically different. Based on casting and assembly of organic shapes through the use of imprinting and electroplating techniques, she favoured improvised, natural sculptures, shifting meaning by juxtaposing disparate elements. Central to both of their work however was the desire to break down the barriers between art and design.

By combining indisputable technical skill with a great sense of poetry, their sculptures provoke astonishment, if not laughter, by confronting the banal and the fantastic through the metamorphosis of art into useful objects.

La Dame Blanche, 2005, (estimate: €180,000-250,000) a monumental marble owl, the ancient symbol of wisdom, is a key figure in François-Xavier Lalanne's menagerie, with its imposing, refined lines. At another level in the Lalannes' creations, the apparent oddity of nature *Lapin à Vent*, 2007, (estimate: €140,000-180,000), a fanciful creation combining a rabbit and a fish standing on four horses' hooves, can in fact, on closer examination, serve as a weather vane. Other animals which recur in François-Xavier Lalanne's work are sheep designed for the outdoors, made from epoxy concrete and bronze and doubling as seats. A first flock of these was produced in 1977 for the vocational college in Agen-Foulayronnes and another exhibited in 1991 at the Château de Chenonceau. We are offering several examples including ewes, rams, and a Big and Little *Ram Islands mountain sheep*.

Let us also take a special look at something even closer to us, a magnificent range of *Ginkgo* furniture, (estimate from €10,000 to €30,000), by Claude Lalanne, highlighting the technique of sculpture cast from nature which was so important to the artist and for which she restored respect. To round off this remarkable collection combining humour and poetry, let us return to several monkey-with-lillies tables (estimate: €10,000-15,000 each), some small and large birds (estimate: €6,000-8,000 to €10,000-15,000), a topiary tortoise (estimate: €12,000-18,000) and three boars. This wide range of works superbly illustrates the very special world which Claude and François-Xavier Lalanne created together and provides a fantastic opportunity to discover a whole world of unique diversity.

Viewing :	Saturday 23 May	(10am-6pm)
	Monday 25 May	(10am-6pm)
	Tuesday 26 May	(10am-6pm)
	Wednesday 27 May	(10h-12am)

Sale : **Wednesday 27 May at 3pm**

Christie's Paris – 9 avenue Matignon – 75008 Paris

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*Images available on request
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