



François-Xavier Lalanne

1927-2008

Male boa

Oil on canvas signed and dated Lalanne 68 on the left canvas and on the back of each canvas

Dimensions : 82 x 570 cm

Dimensions : 32.28 x 224.41 inch

Exhibition : Exhibited in Quinta Botanica, Jérôme Jullien-Cornic's paper tube house in Portugal designed by Shigeru Ban.

Origin : Private European collection, acquired directly from the artist's family in the 1990s.



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Created in 1968, a pivotal and intensely creative year for Lalanne, *Serpent* consists of five separate panels of oil on canvas, each housed in a freestanding wooden frame. The multiple elements of the box allow flexibility and movement in the presentation of the work, echoing the movement of its subject.

In 1968, François-Xavier Lalanne created a pair of fantastic snakes, a male and a female, in inverted colours. They were each executed in the form of a carpet, two unique pieces, the female, made in 1968, measuring almost 5 metres, and the male, measuring 7 metres, made in 1979.

The polyptych we are presenting here is a representation of the male snake, never before seen on the market, and always a unique piece.

## Biography

François-Xavier Lalanne was a French sculptor and engraver. He was born in 1927 in Agen.

From 1945, he studied at the Académie Julian in Paris where he learned drawing, sculpture and painting. Working in a studio in Montparnasse, he met his neighbors Constantin Brancusi, René Magritte, Salvador Dali and Jean Tinguely.

In 1952, he made his first personal painting exhibition at the Cimaïse Gallery.

In 1956, he met Claude Lalanne, an artist of the same name. They got married and worked together, under the name " Les Lalanne ". In 1962, an exhibition entitled " Zoophytes " took place at the Jeanine Restany Gallery and presented their shared works.

Animals, fruits and vegetables were the main subjects of their sculptures. They worked with numerous references: Upper Egypt, Art nouveau, Pre-Raphaelite painting and Surrealism. Unique and funny, their works met success with many collectors in Paris, like the Rothschild, the Noailles or even Yves Saint-Laurent who François-Xavier met during the decoration of the Dior store of the avenue Montaigne.

The Lalanne were unclassifiable sculptors. Frequently hybrid, their works entertain and are filled with poetry, surrealism, plays on words, forms and materials. In their opinion, nature offers an infinite number of forms, becoming furniture, objects or jewelry. Animals are frequently presented in a decorative or in a humorous way. The Lalanne wished to combine beauty with utility, technique with creativity. François-Xavier Lalanne said : " when we can sit down on a work of art, it becomes more familiar ".

The Lalanne couple received great public recognition. In 1991, the Castle of Chenonceau presented an exhibition called " Les Lalanne ". In 1998, the Paris Town Hall organized a retrospective at the Bagatelle Park, " Les Lalanne à Bagatelle ".

In 2010, the Museum of Decorative Arts in Paris devotes a retrospective exhibition to them. In 2021, in an enchanted universe and for many outdoor pieces, the works of François-Xavier Lalanne are exhibited in Versailles, where they enchant the Trianon, the groves and the Queen's Pavilion.

## Museums

Jardin du Palais de l'Élysée, Paris  
Parc Georges Brassens, Paris  
Musée des arts décoratifs, Paris  
Château de Brécly  
Sarlat-la-Canéda, place des oies  
Musée de la Vallée, Barcelonnette  
Musée des Beaux-Arts, Agen  
Jardin d'aventure des Halles, Paris  
Parvis de La Défense  
Manufacture nationale, Sèvres  
Université de Pennsylvanie, Philadelphie

## Bibliography

Daniel Marchesseau, " Les Lalanne ", Paris, Flammarion, 1998, p.112 (related model)

Daniel Abadie, " Lalanne(s) ", Paris, Flammarion, 2008, p.336-337 (drawing of this model and other examples)

Robert Rosenblum, " Les Lalanne ", Genève, Skira, 1991

Olivier Gabet, " Les Lalanne ", Catalogue, préface par Hélène David-Weill, introduction par Béatrice Salmon et

Dominique Forest, Paris, musée des arts décoratifs, 2010