

ANIMAL !?

An exhibition of masterpieces

**Jun 14 — Nov 2, 2025 | Fonds Hélène & Édouard Leclerc,
Landerneau, France**

'ANIMAL !?', the thematic group exhibition curated by Christian Alandete, takes a cross-disciplinary, cross-historical approach to the place of the animal in artistic representations. Probably one of the earliest subjects in the history of art, the animal appears as early as cave art, and has remained just as important down the centuries.

Animal painting was a subject of excellence in academic art. At the turn of the twentieth century, the animal became the vector of successive avant-gardes. Other artists saw them as subjects of study that could revolutionise aesthetic experience by taking an interest - like the Surrealists - in hybrid species and specimens of the animal kingdom that had previously been classified as monsters. Through these new subjects of observation, it is also the evolution of a more humanist society that shines through, driven by a complete questioning of the place of humans and animals within the living community.

The study of animality over the centuries has helped to classify, catalogue and distinguish humans from animals, and among humans, the less human humans, by attributing animal characteristics to them. From physiognomy and its racist offshoots, to mimicry and anthropomorphism, artists have contributed through their works to showing the other side of the human from a different angle and to pointing beyond differences to what brings us together.

"There is no shortage of popular references to animal figures. They are found at the heart of our most common expressions, always in a game, a relationship, a comparison, an identification or a distinction between man and animal. They speak of them and of us, of them through us, of us through them. But who is the ape, man or animal? That's the subject of the incredible investigation being carried out this summer at the Fonds Hélène & Édouard Leclerc, in the form of this exhibition!"

— Michel-Édouard Leclerc