ALMINE RECH

Leonora Carrington

Sep 8 — Oct 10, 2026 | Paris

Almine Rech is pleased to announce Leonora Carrington's first solo exhibition at the gallery, presented at the Turenne space in Paris from September 8 to October 10, 2026. Organized in collaboration with the Consejo Leonora Carrington and rossogranada, the exhibition will bring together the full range of mediums explored by the artist throughout her career: drawing, painting, sculpture, tapestry, and writing.

Leonora Carrington
The art of transmutation

From September 8 to October 10, 2026, Almine Rech Paris is dedicating a solo exhibition to Leonora Carrington (1917–2011), a leading figure in international Surrealism and one of the most singular artists in the history of art. Bringing together paintings, sculptures, works on paper, and masks, the gallery invites visitors to rediscover a body of work whose visionary power continues to fascinate through its ability to create a dialogue between myth, magic, and metamorphosis.

Spanning the 20th century and its upheavals, from the rise of fascism to exile, Carrington nevertheless defies any strictly biographical interpretation. Neither muse, nor disciple, nor mere heir to Surrealism, she created a language that is profoundly free, unbound by aesthetic categories or assigned identities. Her world never seeks to represent reality: it displaces its very laws, opening pathways between the visible and the invisible, the human and the animal, nature and culture, dream and matter.

The exhibition highlights one of the key aspects of her work: art as a process of transmutation. In Carrington's work, nothing is static. Beings change form and gender, boundaries become porous, realms intermingle. Dragons, horses, birds, hyenas, primates, and mythical creatures make up a cosmology in which each form seems caught in permanent movement. The hybridizations that run through her work do not belong to the realm of fantasy in the sense of an escapist imagination; they offer an alternative way of thinking about the living, based on continuities rather than divisions. The marvelous thus becomes a way to inhabit the world.

This vision is rooted in a culture of rare breadth. Fascinated by alchemy, mythologies (particularly Celtic and Mesoamerican traditions), tarot, and spiritualities, Carrington constructs an iconography where ancient knowledge and modern sensibilities converge. The paintings *The Lovers* (1987)[1] and *El Laberinto* (1991), reunited here, echo these major themes. More broadly, her work invites not so much to solve riddles as to accept the existence of multiple, sometimes contradictory, but always open-ended realities.

After spending several years in France, from 1937 to 1940, Carrington settled in Mexico in 1942 and found a home there. Indigenous cosmologies, the richness of folk traditions, and the idea of a world animated by invisible forces fueled her imagination. Without ever renouncing her British roots, she developed a personal mythology in which cultures and temporalities freely intersect. In her work, historical time gives way to a mythical time, where past, present, and future coexist within the same symbolic space.

The collection also reveals the full scope of a practice that extends far beyond painting. As much a writer as a visual artist, Carrington developed a truly multifaceted body of work. Drawing, sculpture, tapestry, masks, theater, costume design, jewelry, and literature all form part of the same exploration. The images extend the narratives, the texts respond to the sculptures, and the materials engage in a dialogue with one another. Each medium becomes an expression of a singular spirit, rejecting any hierarchy between artistic forms.

Particular attention is paid to sculpture, which accompanied the artist throughout her life. From her earliest experiments to the large bronze works created in the final years of her life, Carrington never ceased to explore the possibilities of volume. Bronze occupies a unique place in this regard. Created right up until her final days using wax or plasticine models, these sculptures encapsulate the figures that have always populated her world: animals, fantastical entities, protective deities, and guides between worlds. They appear to be the culmination of a reflection on the transformative power of beings, images, and forms — a process in which matter itself plays a part.

Long before ecological, feminist, or posthumanist issues came to the forefront in contemporary debate, Carrington was already challenging the major dualisms inherited from Western thought. Her work thus comes across as profoundly contemporary. The distinctions between human and non-human, feminine and masculine, microcosm and macrocosm dissolve in her work, giving way to a relational view of the living. This insight undoubtedly explains why she continues to inspire artists, writers, and fashion designers.

Through this exceptional collection, Almine Rech seeks to showcase the richness of an inexhaustible creative process. More than just a historical figure of the 20th century, Leonora Carrington stands out as one of the great visual thinkers in art, which she viewed as a potential for transmutation. Her work invites us to reconsider our relationship with the world, with other living beings, and with imagination itself. At a time when certainties are wavering and new narratives are needed, her works remind us that transformation is not merely an iconographic theme: it embodies a way of being in the world. Between myth and matter, magic and knowledge, memory and becoming, they create a space where boundaries cease to be limitations, opening up passages and crossing new thresholds. Perhaps this is where her undiminished power still lies today.

— Dr. Mylène Ferrand, art historian and curator

[1] Loan from FAMM (Femmes Artistes du Musée de Mougins) / The Levett Collection