

The other presence

12th April – 20th June

Olivier Leroi

“Sometimes you feel crossed, you feel that you are part of the environment, and you get sort of little tingles. It's not mystical. It's a feeling of being present and of being in the right place”, Olivier Leroi.

Born in the Sologne region of France, Olivier Leroi initially trained as a forester in Corrèze, before going on to study at the “Institut des Hautes Études en Arts Plastiques” in Paris in the early 1990s.

Since the end of the 1980s, he has exhibited his work in solo and group shows and has undertaken several public commissions. He also did numerous residencies in France and abroad, including in Mexico, Mali, Greece, Spain, Serbia and Antarctica.

Based on an economy of gesture and means, he uses a variety of medium, always imbued with humour and poetry, to explore his relationship with the environment, revealing his work as an ‘unveiling’, a presence.

“The Other Presence” residency and exhibition

Olivier Leroi's exhibition ‘The Other Presence’ (‘L'Autre présence’) brings together works produced over the last few years and the fruit of his residency in Grand Chambord. Since the start of the year, he has been surveying the area, working with local stakeholders, the inhabitants and the animals themselves, to produce three works, each reflecting this relationship with the environment: ‘The Scruple’ (Le Scrupule), a contemporary echo of the footprint left 25,000 years ago by a teenager in the Pech Merle cave; ‘The Great flow’ (La Grande Coulée), clay dishes made in collaboration with the fauna of the Chambord forest; and ‘Inside/outside’ (Dedans/dehors), a series of photographs showing naturalised animals in interiors or public spaces.

“The Scruple” (‘Le Scrupule’)

It all starts with the footprint of an adolescent, made 25,000 years ago and found in the Pech Merle cave (Occitanie region). Although a thousand years old, it appears to have been made the day before, almost cancelling out the notion of time. It's a trace left behind us, a presence.

Olivier Leroi wanted to work with this imprint, linking it to the Grand Chambord area by working with locals and the ‘Choco'la Praline’ chocolate factory in Mont-près-Chambord on a chocolate imprint moulding workshop.

By association of ideas, chocolate induces the hazelnut, the hazelnut induces the pebble in the shoe, at the origin of the word 'scrupule' and from there, it's only a short step to reflexology. So, after the participants had moulded their feet in cornstarch and the chocolate had been poured into these moulds, each person was invited to place a hazelnut in a precise spot on their foot.

“Inside/Outside” (“Dedans/Dehors”)

The Sologne is full of animals that permeate the collective imagination of its inhabitants. It's not unusual to come across them on a walk in the forest, in the garden or on the side of the road, but also in more unexpected places and forms. For 'Inside/outside', Olivier Leroi set out to find and photograph the naturalised animals in public places (town halls, restaurants, etc.) and in the homes of local towns. Gathered in a family album, the photographs follow one another and create an intimate landscape of this bond.

“The Great Flow” (“La Grande Coulée”)

Here, the animals are no longer the subjects of the work, but the co-authors. This work presents us with several dishes of raw and baked clay marked with prints and traces. To create them, Olivier Leroi placed raw clay dishes in wild boars' pits to collect traces of their passage. Although they are very present in the area, wild boars are rarely seen because they are wary and nocturnal. The evidence of their presence is the tracks they leave behind.

For this work, Olivier Leroi collaborated with Hervé Rousseau, a ceramist based in Henrichemont, near La Borne in the Berry region, and with the Bretèche tileworks in Ligny-le-Ribault, where some of the ceramics were fired.

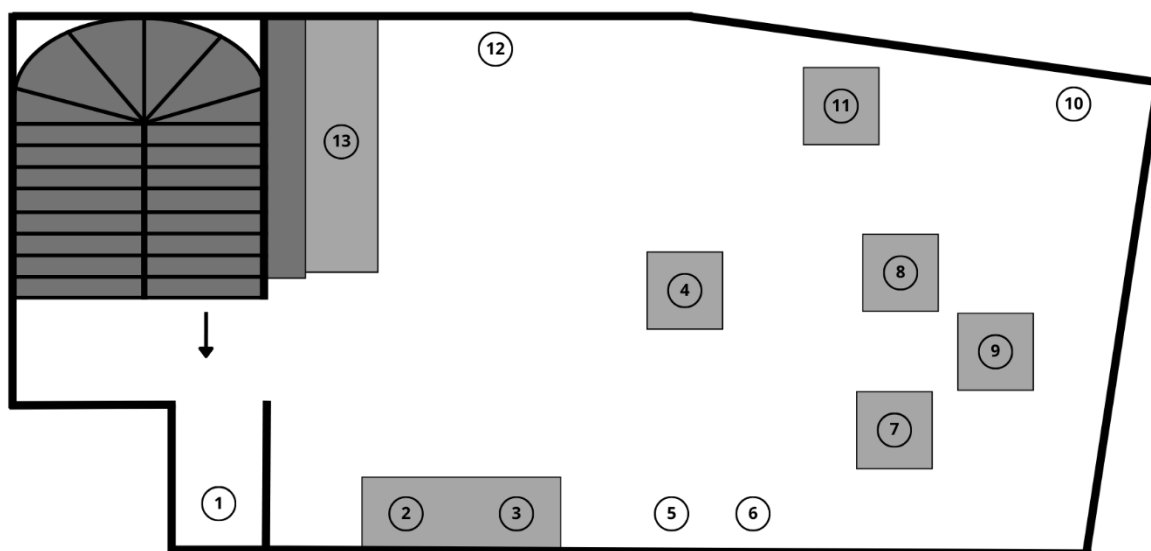
Alongside the three parts of his residency, Olivier Leroi is offering a selection of earlier works addressing the same theme of the relationship with the natural environment and the bond between inhabitants and animals. Produced over the last few years, the works presented here illustrate the diversity of Olivier Leroi's practice, both in terms of the mediums and materials used. You'll find drawings ('La nuit', 2024), cut-outs ('Le guide', 2023) and sculptures ('Un petit moment de confusion', 2025) in all the forms that these practices take in the artist's work.

Ground floor



- 1: **“Crossing appearances”**, *Tanned animal skin and decoupage*, 2021.
- 2: **“A little moment of confusion”**, *Charming branch, feathers, bird's feet*, 2025. Produced on the eve of D. Trump's election.
- 3: **“The third breath”**, *Taxidermized perch and blown glass*, 2013.
- 4: **“The guide”**, *Decoupage*, 2023.
- 5: **“Untitled”**, *Decoupage*, 2024. / **“The shadow”**, *Cut-out*, 2009. / **“Untitled”**, *India ink on print*, 2008.
- 6: **“The country”**, *Decoupage*, 2021.
- 7: **“Getting along well”**, *Carved wood sculpture*, 2024.
- 8: **“Darwin”**, *Cutting tanned boar hide*, 2024
- 9: **“The night”**, *India ink, buttons*, 2024.
- 10: **selection of different artworks**, *different techniques*, 2010-2024.
- 11: **“The lamb”**, *India ink on icons*, 2023.
- 12: **“Rifle-rod”**, *Wooden and telescopic fishing rod*, 2023.
- 13: **“The scruple”**, *chocolate moulded in a starch mould, hazelnuts and an almond*, 2025.
- 14: **“The imitator”**, *Naturalized crow, cardboard mask*, 2023.

First floor



- 1: **“Inside/outside”**, *Photographs*, 2025 (in progress).
- 2: **“An earthly vision”**, *Smoky terracotta, taxidermized bird's eyes*, 2017.
- 3: **“The shelter”**, *Cardboard box, photo of a communal hut, shell (barnacle)*, 2019.
- 4: **“The other”**, *Fishing book, wooden zebu*, 2019.
- 5: **“The Chambord Brigade”**, *Costume*, 2005.
- 6: **“The son of the farm”**, *Perfecto, painted fabric teats*, 2021.
- 7: **“The duck”**, *Carved bourdaine wood, graphite*, 2014.
- 8: **“Pinocchio with bird”**, *Carved bourdaine wood*, 2014.
- 9: **“Black hole”**, *Wooden box, bound wormholes, oil paint, ink*, 2012.
- 10: **“The day in the night”**, *Feathers and hare droppings*, 2016.
- 11: **“A world within”**, *Balloon cut-out*, 2024.
- 12: **“The level of the hare”**, *Oak branch, graphite, pen, coating*, 2019.
- 13: **“The big flow”**, *Raw or fired clay dishes*, 2025 (in progress).

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