**The Laughing Cow® *Collector's Edtion Boxes***
**Edition #13**
Press kit - July 2026




## Jean-Luc Moulène

# *Errata* La Vache qui rit®

Lons-le-Saunier, 2026

# FRENCH ARTIST JEAN-LUC MOULÈNE CREATES THE THIRTEENTH EDITION OF THE LAUGHING COW® *COLLECTOR'S EDITION BOX*

In 2014, Lab'Bel, the artistic laboratory of the Bel group, launched a project in collaboration with major contemporary artists resulting in the creation of The Laughing Cow® *Collector's Edition Boxes*. These yearly editions allow the brand to renew and update the connections it has cultivated with artists since its inception in 1921.

The *Collector's Edition Boxes* are considered by those who create them to be artworks in their own right. They offer the consumer a double choice: either they can eat the contents or conserve the box intact as a collector's object. This offbeat and highly original project allows Lab'Bel (est. 2010) to fulfil one of its main aims of making art available to a wide audience.

After Hans-Peter Feldmann, Thomas Bayrle, Jonathan Monk, Wim Delvoye, Karin Sander, Daniel Buren, Mel Bochner, Rosemarie Trockel, Franz Erhard Walther, Martha Wilson, Cildo Meireles and Henrik Olesen, French artist Jean-Luc Moulène has been entrusted with the creation of the thirteenth *Collector's Edition Box* by Lab'Bel.

Curator of the 2026 edition:
Erik Verhagen.

Jean-Luc Moulène's *Collector's Edition Box* will be premiered to collectors from 21 – 25 October 2026 at the Paris Internationale art fair. The boxes will then be available online at www.boutique.lavachequirit.com (within the limit of available stock).


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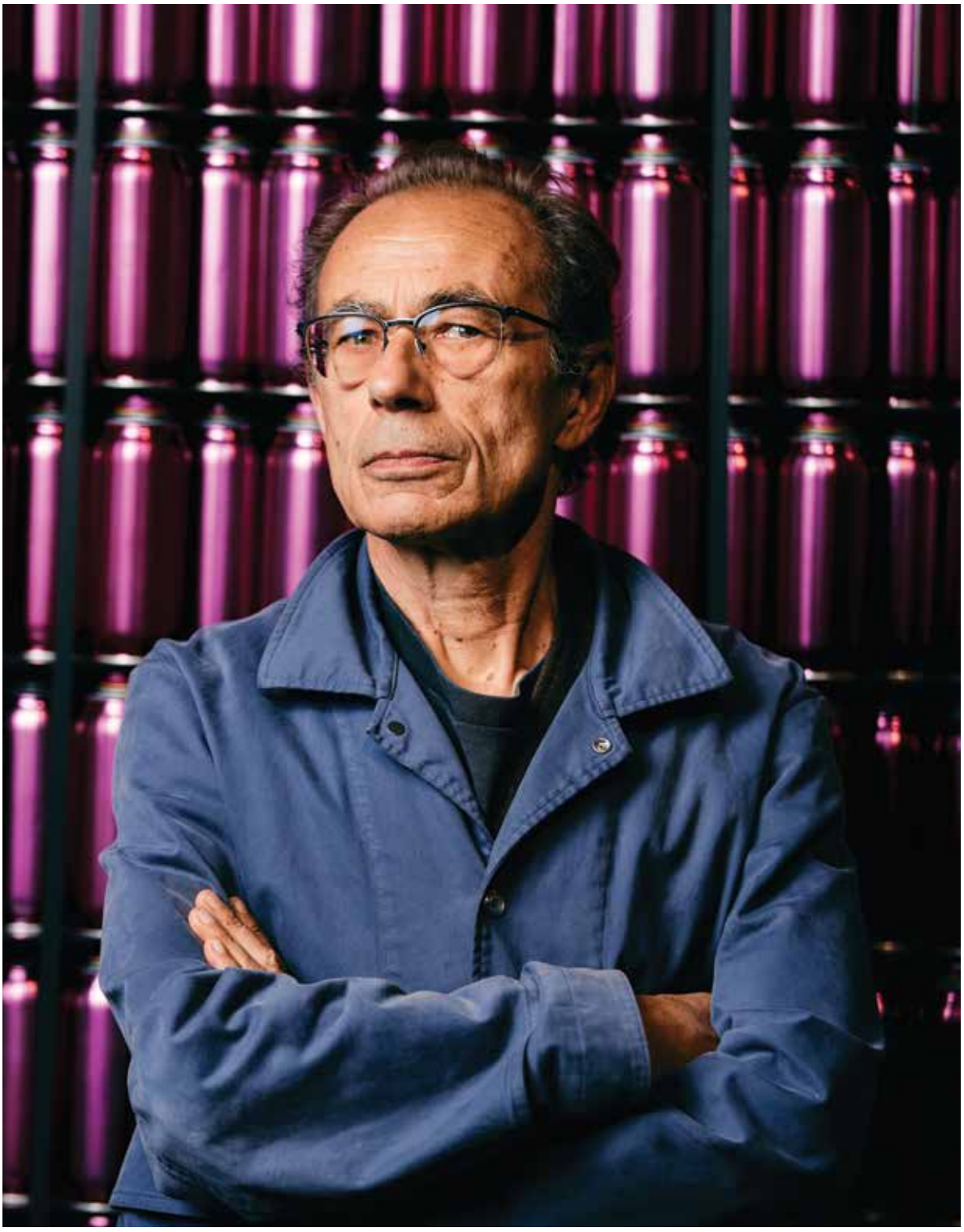
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# JEAN-LUC MOULÈNE



**Jean-Luc Moulène**, Portrait by Jesse Hunniford, 2024.
© MONA / Jesse Hunniford

Born in 1955, Jean-Luc Moulène is one of the most important artists of his generation. At the beginning of the 1990s, he was primarily associated with photography. From the following decade onwards, his work moved towards a more confident multidisciplinary dimension, making him one of the most "complete" creators of the contemporary era. As well as continuing photography, Jean-Luc Moulène has embarked on a practice of collage, drawing, painting, and sculpture. The latter allows him to embrace a particularly extensive repertoire of forms, nourished by a sense of experimentation and driven by a relationship to signs and images centred around transformation. His work is informed by numerous operations: appropriations, cuts, disjunctions, etc., which the artist explores through both "traditional" techniques and "new technologies", such as computers or 3D modelling, which has become widespread in recent years. The interest in the object, and subsequently in the product, is undoubtedly the common denominator of his heterogeneous corpus. Moulène endows these objects with a certain visibility, while at the same time examining the various parameters and facets—whether political, social, or symbolic—that come into play in the stages of production, distribution, and reception, with the object ultimately merging with the work of art in the most auratic sense of the term.

Jean-Luc Moulène's major solo exhibitions have been held in institutions such as the Museum of Old and New Art (MONA), Hobart (2023); Casa Sao Roque, Porto (2021); SculptureCenter, New York (2019); Secession, Vienna (2017); Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (2016); Villa Medici, Rome (2015); Kunstverein, Hanover (2015); Beirut Art Center, Beirut (2013); Modern Art Oxford, Oxford (2012); Dia:Beacon, New York (2012); Carré d'art — Musée d'art contemporain, Nîmes (2010); Centre d'art Passerelle, Brest (2008); Musée du Louvre, Paris (2005); Jeu de Paume, Paris (2005); CCA Kitakyushu (2004); Centre d'Art Contemporain, Geneva (2003); Le Confort Moderne, Poitiers (1994).

He also participated in the 58th Venice International Contemporary Art Biennale (2019); the Taipei Biennale (2016); the International Design Biennale, Saint-Etienne (2015); the Sharjah Biennale (2011), and the São Paulo Biennale (2002).

Numerous other institutions have shown his work as part of collective exhibitions: Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2023); BY ART MATTERS, Hangzhou (2022); Drawing Room, London (2021); Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon (2020); MAC VAL, Vitry-sur-Seine (2020); MoMA PS1, New York (2019); MAXXI, Rome (2019); S.M.A.K., Ghent (2018); Museo Tamayo Arte Contemporaneo, Mexico (2018); Museo Guggenheim Bilbao, Bilbao (2017); CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco (2017); Wiels, Brussels (2017); Jeu de Paume, Paris (2016); Punta della Dogana, Venice (2016); Aspen Art Museum, Aspen (2015); Sharjah Art Foundation, Sharjah (2013); Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (2012); CREDAC, Ivry-sur-Seine (2010); MARTa Herford Museum, Herford (2005); Museum Ludwig, Cologne (2005), to name a few.

His works also form part of the collections of the Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; MoMA, New York; Tate Modern, London; Dia Art Foundation, New York; MOCA, Los Angeles; Carré d'art, Nîmes; MACVAL, Vitry-sur-Seine; Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris; Sharjah Art Foundation, Sharjah; Centre National des Arts Plastiques (CNAP), Paris; FRAC Ile de France — Le Plateau, Paris; Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis.



Jean-Luc Moulène
***Bleu Gauloises Bleues 210***,
Fleury les Aubrais, Lille, 2000

210 monochrome packets
14 x 42 x 25 cm
Courtesy of the Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris
Photo: Dia:Beacon / Bill Jacobson

# *ERRATA*

By Erik Verhagen, Curator of the edition 2026

The *Errata* adventure began in 1991. To be more precise, it began, or is said to have begun, on 16 January of that year. The actual date was officially established exactly one year later, on 16 January 1992, following a retrospective decision made jointly by Jean-Luc Moulène and his collaborator, Vincent Labaume. This decision coincided with the printing of a manifesto in the form of a brochure outlining the activities of a group calling themselves the *Groupe de Recherche Publique et Plastique Errata* (*Errata* Public and Plastic Research Group). The name resonates with the history of collectives that have left their mark on contemporary art. One may be tempted to think of the *Groupe de Recherche d'art visuel* (Visual Art Research Group or GRAV), which united European and Latin American artists between 1961 and 1968, or the *Dziga Vertov Group*, founded in 1968 by Jean-Luc Godard and Jean-Pierre Gorin. The birth of *Errata* had political connotations from the outset, the date chosen retrospectively coincides with the start of the Desert Storm "military operation", which triggered the first Gulf War, a war that according to Jean Baudrillard, "did not take place". This asymmetrical conflict was the subject of unprecedented "real-time" media coverage at the time, synonymous with a new "virtual" era where everyone, no matter where they were, could follow through the images broadcast on television, the famous "surgical strikes" carried out by the US military on Iraqi territory. In response to these attacks, Moulène and Labaume decided to target a supermarket, clandestinely pasting blank price labels to its shelves and paralyzing an economy dependent on price identification and comparison. Through these "surgical counterstrikes", the "supermarket" was thus disrupted or deregulated, leaving products "orphaned" in unlikely places and consumers "illiterate", as both were now surreptitiously stripped of any "legends" or inscriptions. Indeed, like a photograph, the label is, to paraphrase Walter Benjamin, "the most essential element" of the product. This 1991 performance was titled *Prix blancs* (Blank/White Prices) and, like many *Errata*, exists today only in photographic records. Its objective was to "symbolically denounce the numerical values attributed to industrial consumer products" and sought to "verify a working hypothesis on the effect of a non-coloured dot on coloured volumes in a shiny environment". The white colour also refers to the confusion of both the product and the consumer, and surprisingly, unlike most *Errata*, this occurs without the products themselves having been modified or contaminated by a specific operation or action. Confronting this whiteness is undoubtedly anxiety-inducing for the consumer in a transactional context where precision is key. As Vincent Labaume reminds us: "one of the principal constituents of the Errata research object" is "the fear of whiteness or the blank space".

This fear generated by blank labels can in some way be compared to that generated by the "unbranding" of products which has determined almost all the *Errata* actions carried out before and after the 1991 "attack". Before getting to the "unbranding" in question, we should mention that the collective had previously found an alternative but equally confusing modus operandi, which consisted of moving certain supermarket products from their original location to compose improbable pairings, as for example a pack of beer topped with a package of sixteen bifidus yoghurts positioned on a shelf devoted to laundry detergent. This incongruous assemblage, which is at once a facetious and anarchistic gesture, demonstrating a schoolboy sense of humour, and a desire to put in place a form of "deterritorialization" of products which, in a Deleuzian perspective, acknowledges the need to break out of a routine and escape




Jean-Luc Moulène
***Bio Heineken***, 1990

Photograph
15 x 10 cm
© Jean-Luc Moulène / ADAGP, 2026

alienation, provides a solid example of the state of mind that underlies the *Errata* produced in the past, and especially after this work known as *Bio Heineken*, in 1990. It also testifies to the extensive repertoire established by Moulène, who revisits and intertwines, in his own way, different categories, techniques, genres, and artistic notions. In their broad spectrum of applications, the *Errata* combine, in a seemingly random fashion, a ready-made *détournement* and appropriation and the group prefers to speak of a "disappropriation"—with assemblage, collage, still life, painting, drawing, photography, sculpture, and installation, as well as a performative dimension firmly rooted in the history of this family of works. As Nathalie Delbard aptly points out, what ultimately defines them is the "incessant passage from object to image and from image to object." This back-and-forth between two- and three-dimensionality, if only through photographic relays and extensions, is one of the primary characteristics of Moulène's work.

Let us now turn to the essence of the *Errata* project and look at the introductory text of the 1992 brochure, which outlines some of its key objectives. It states that "for the past year, the *Groupe de recherche publique Errata* (Errata Public Research Group) has been working on removing perceptual regularities in industrial products. By taking away the linguistic and economic references that characterize them (names, brands, prices), the industrial product undergoes an eclipse in favour of its sculptural, or thing-like, content—an eclipse or visual slip that frees up its auratic load. This correction applied to the product does not follow a predetermined rule or proceed systematically but instead consists of constant adjustments and types of interventions that run parallel to and compete with those implemented in its design and the study of its launch. In correcting, the main aim is to produce the 'fault' that reveals the by-product obscured by the obligatory legal notices and visible instructions." As for the research, it is "initiated by a series of gestures and plastic actions, more or less hypnotic-hypothetical, carried out one by one and most often together by the two founding members on various common products and packaging, in public shopping situations or domestic spaces."

It is important here to stress the function of language and the anxiety its absence can generate. Roland Barthes perfectly analysed the apprehension that an image, whether advertising or a product image, can engender without text. Given its polysemy, the image "alone" is necessarily dysfunctional. Its nudity brings the "terror of uncertain signs", whereas the linguistic message "helps to identify" and offers an "anchorage of all the possible meanings". This anchorage, as Barthes specifies, can be ideological; "it is even, undoubtedly, its primary function; the text directs the reader through the signifieds of the image, (...); by means of an often subtle dispatching, it remote-controls him towards a meaning chosen in advance. (...): anchorage is a control; bearing a responsibility, in the face of the projective power of images, for the use of the message. With respect to the liberty of the signifieds of the image, the text has thus a repressive value, and we can see that it is at this level that the morality and ideology of a society are above all invested."

Moulène's ambition is to restore the "freedom of meaning of the image" to the product, as he demonstrated, for example, with "his" monochrome produced in 216 units, namely *Bleu Gauloises bleues* (2000), created in collaboration with the Altadis group. This represents a paradigm shift in the *Errata* project, given that the artist had the approval of the brand of the product he "rectified" and

is also the case with The Laughing Cow® in the sense that it can be read in relation to certain readymades by Marcel Duchamp. Stripped of all written inscriptions and reduced to emblematic colours, the stacked packages evoke numerous references, ranging from Klein blue to minimalist modular sculptures. Several years later, and in a similar vein, the artist repeated a similar action in Mexico, appropriating Jumex juice cans—*Errata* (*Ecatepec, Mexico*), 2002-2013—stripped of any linguistic markers and arranged in the form of polychrome palettes containing thousands of units. The shift in these two works is all the more subtle as it generates a collision between the reified products and a minimalist presentation system that cannot be reduced to a supposed "objectivity" conveyed through a refined, geometric syntax. Indeed, it is worth recalling that in 1984, artist Peter Halley diagnosed a "crisis in geometry", which, in his view, no longer allowed minimalist works to be considered mere "autonomous" formalist exercises.

In his opinion, the "strange arguments" offered by some of his colleagues, who sought to reduce their works to "neutral" forms when they were in fact imbued with ideological considerations, were no longer tenable. This parameter has also been explored by Moulène, both in his deceptively ascetic packaging and in numerous *Errata* where geometric perfection and "purity" were, on the contrary, undermined by cuts, dismantling, flattening, erasures, coverings, scribbles, and other processes aimed at extracting the (art) object from the product. The same can be said of The Laughing Cow® *Collector's Edition Box* invented by the artist, which, in terms of his *Errata*, also falls into the category of "by-product" since it is obtained "through correction during manufacturing". In negotiations with the brand, the artist gradually succeeded in removing all written inscriptions from the product, except for those required by law. He ultimately requested that these be printed not on the box itself, but on the insert, and that the mandatory inscriptions be affixed to the back of a label that could, potentially, be removed. It goes without saying that in this specific case, the *Errata*-like essence stems as much from the artist's conceived subtractions and the resulting "decomposition" as from the subterranean, almost invisible discussions he had with the Bel Group. The result, however, remains identical to all previous operations: it enables the emergence of a work with a "high auratic quality", all the more welcome, given that just as in the late 1980s, when faced with the production and promotion of cheese, "the art and poetry of the moment" seemed "seriously out of whack".



Jean-Luc Moulène
***Errata,*** Ecatepec, Mexico, 2002-2013

9 pallets of 500 ml cans in 9 different colours,
3,240 cans per pallet
181 x 112 x 141 cm (each one)
Fondation Serralves Collection, Porto, Portugal
Exhibition view: Jean-Luc Moulène and Teams,
MONA, Hobart, Tasmania (2023-2024)
Photo: Mona / Jesse Hunniford



## WHERE TO FIND JEAN-LUC MOULÈNE'S THE LAUGHING COW® *COLLECTOR'S EDITION BOX*?

**The *Collector's Edition Box* will be premiered by Lab'Bel at the Paris Internationale art fair (October 21-25, 2026).**




**And, while stocks last:**

- online at
www.boutique.lavachequirit.com

- at La Grande Épicerie de Paris
(38 rue de Sèvres, Paris VII)
www.lagrandeepicerie.com

- at the bookshop of the Jeu de Paume
(1 place de la Concorde, Paris VIII)
www.jeudepaume.org/a-propos/librairie/

- at the bookshop of the Palais de Tokyo
(13 avenue du Président Wilson, Paris XVI)
www.palaisdetokyo.com

- at La Maison de La Vache qui rit
(2 rue Richebourg, Lons-le-Saunier)
www.lamaisondelavachequirit.com




LA MAISON DE LA VACHE QUI RIT

Please see the updated list of retailers and outlets online at **www.lab-bel.com/en**.

## THE FILM MADE FOR THE EDITION

Discover it by activating the QR code here:

Director: Nathalie Delbard
Image and editing: Clio Simon
Sound: Lucien Santerre
Color grading: Baptiste Evrard
Mixing: Christian Cartier
Translation: Amanda Crabtree

Executive production: BlueBird - Marie-Laure Gilles

With Jean-Luc Moulène



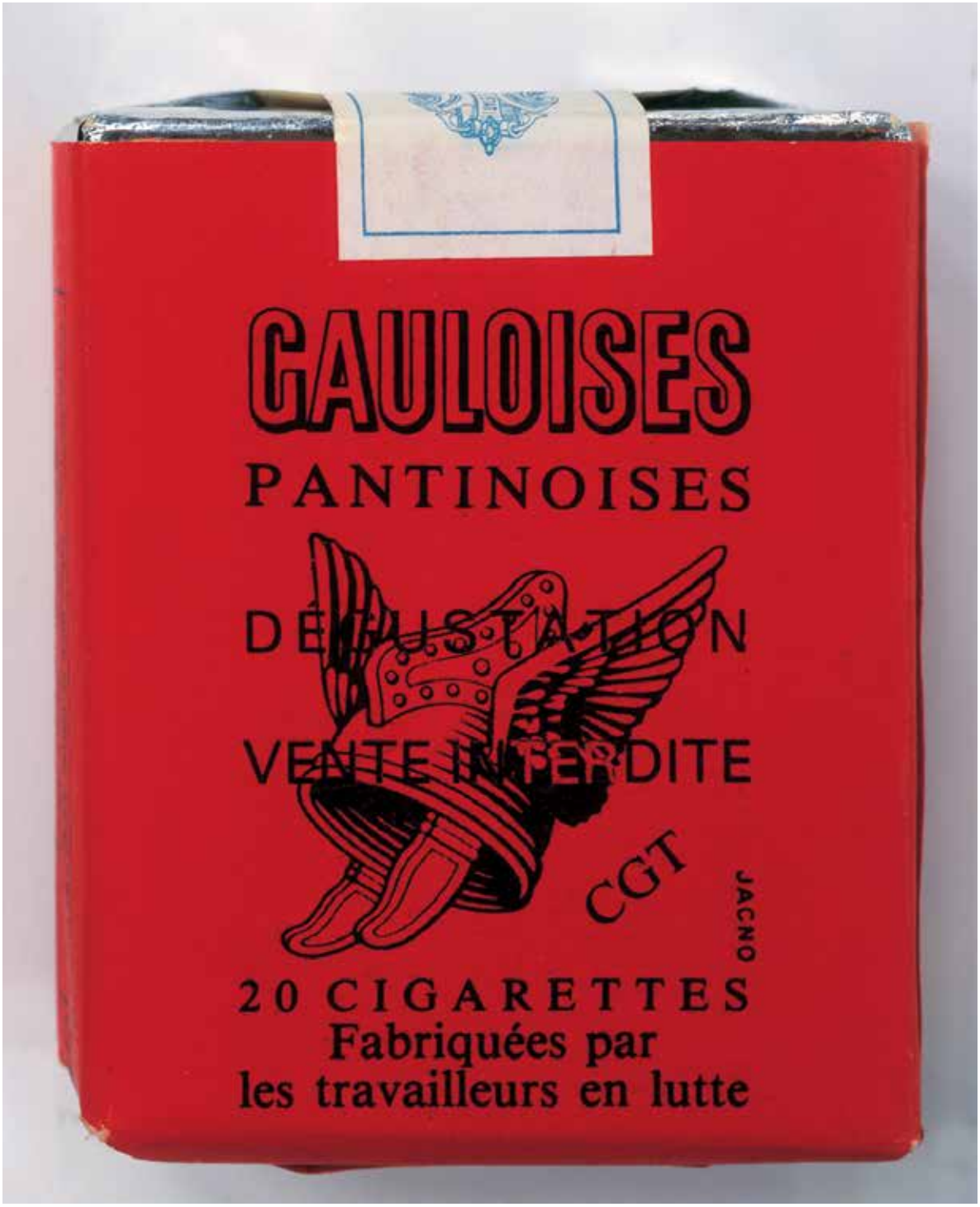
Jean-Luc Moulène
***Vase (Destop - entretien canalisations)***,
Le Buisson, 2024

Plastic, sand, resin, paint, varnish
49 x 15 x 7.8 cm
Courtesy of Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York
Photo: Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York



Jean-Luc Moulène
***Articulation (humérus - clavicule)***, 2023

Patinated bronze (Coubertin Foundry)
65 x 49 x 93 cm
Courtesy of the Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris
Photo: Jiayun Deng/Galerie Chantal Crousel




Jean-Luc Moulène
***La Pantoise***, 1999-2000

Cibachrome under Diasec, stuck on aluminium
47 x 36 cm
Edition 5 + 2AP

## *COLLECTOR'S EDITION BOXES*: CONTEMPORARY ART TO BE SHARED

By Laurent Fiévet, Director of Lab'Bel

The Laughing Cow® *Collector's Edition Boxes* project was born out of a desire to upend, thanks to a very affordable art edition, the ways in which contemporary art is perceived and understood, promoted and circulated, bought and sold. It is yet another step in the exceptional relationship that our famous brand has established with artists since the beginning of its centenarian history, in line with the values that its umbrella company, the Bel group, has always championed: enjoyment, sharing, innovation and excellence.




Since 2014, thirteen artists have risen to the often-arduous challenge of confronting their artistic practice with The Laughing Cow's® identity and storied heritage, integrating them in their work to displace and renew the ways in which the brand is perceived. Commissioned by the Bel group and its artistic laboratory, Lab'Bel, to create artworks that would thoughtfully address the long-established iconic status of the 24-portion box and its smiling cow figure, each and every artist has brilliantly answered the call.




The first artist in the series was **Hans-Peter Feldmann**: he emphasized the facetiousness of the cow figure by giving her a red clown nose, bringing to the fore the very essence of her singular character. Second in line was **Thomas Bayrle**: while the artist highlighted the rural origins of the cow, he also turned its head into a motif, using it to compose a complex graphic pattern that resonated astutely with the popularity and virality of the brand in our society. The third artist, **Jonathan Monk**, played with the cow's smile, giving it a new orientation to reinforce the contrast with its origins and celebrate its uniqueness. For the fourth artist, **Wim Delvoye**, the brand's approach to advertising was both an inspiration and something that he contributed to: he designed a new collection of triangular tags. The fifth artist in the series,



**Karin Sander**, deliberately blurred the cow's representation to point out how much the brand's visual identity has become part of our daily lives. The sixth artist could have been the first, since Lab'Bel's team had approached **Daniel Buren** at the inception of the project: the artist produced four different versions of the 24-portion box—a first in the series—that functioned as modular elements, ready to be freely assembled in versatile installations all the way up to the skies. The seventh artist, **Mel Bochner**, amplified the laugh of The Laughing Cow® thanks to multiple onomatopoeias, whose presence not only heightened and problematized the laugh but also granted it a certain autonomy. A dimension that the eight artist, **Rosemarie Trockel**, did not hesitate to do away with: she playfully, boldly and disconcertingly eclipsed the cow altogether, thus prompting collectors to summon it even more clearly in their mind's eye; the following year, the ninth artist, **Franz Erhard Walther**, adopted a similar approach in using a simple design that challenged and relied on the collectors' deductive abilities. The tenth artist, **Martha Wilson**, applied a blonde wig and red and blue make-up to the cow, freeing it from the constraints of public prejudice and normative femininity; in deconstructing beauty standards and so-called "ideals," Wilson successfully underlined the undeniable charm and the strong personality of a centenarian figure who, like the artist, has claimed the social recognition that it deserves. The eleventh artist, **Cildo Meireles**, questioned these ideals further with his *Monavache*, a "Giocondaphiliac" (or maybe rather "Giocondaclastic"?) homage to the iconic figure that Marcel Duchamp would probably have liked. The twelfth artist, **Henrik Olesen**, on the other hand, taking inspiration from the writings and ideas of Donna Haraway, transformed the iconic bovine into an ambassador of diversity, equality, and inclusion. As for the thirteenth,









**Jean-Luc Moulène**, he clearly renders his edition a transitory object by doing away with any written or commercial references or marks on the upper and side labels of the box.

Some artists in this list had already developed a close bond with The Laughing Cow® and its figure had found its way into some of their previous works (Thomas Bayrle, Wim Delvoye), whether as a topical subject or as multiple and significative occurrences throughout the years. Others easily established a connection between the cow and their own formal vocabulary (Daniel Buren) or their aesthetic approach (Mel Bochner, Martha Wilson). Others still seized the opportunity offered by the commission to further their anthropological (Henrik Olesen) and conceptual investigations (Hans-Peter Feldmann, Jonathan Monk, Karin Sander, Rosemarie Trockel, Franz Erhard Walther, Cildo Meireles, Jean-Luc Moulène), thus emphasizing the coherence between the task at hand and their own practice. Remarkably, some of the participating artist even satisfied their collector's instinct by appropriating the brand's history and offering a highly personal take on it, to the point of celebrating their own glory (Wim Delvoye). Surely, such a temptation was only logical given the very nature of this project!

The artists followed very different paths, committing to sometimes dizzying trajectories that broke new ground, all the more so because of the electrifying perspective of following suit in a series of remarkable artworks. Each artist emulated their brilliant predecessors in turn, taking to heart the challenge at hand: they are now part of the history of The Laughing Cow®, a brand that is anchored in history and tradition but also timeless and always contemporary, as proved by this kind of endeavour. It is safe to say that the Bel group, from its employees to its executive board – as








well as the family that has been at the helm for five generations already – are extremely grateful to the artists for their work, and moreover, are very proud of bearing witness to these consecutive partnerships. Allow me, on behalf of a great many collaborators, to extend our warmest thanks to all the artists on this occasion.

Soon after its inception, the series became a well-known and highly anticipated rendezvous for the contemporary art world. From 2016 to 2021, each edition was launched within the prestigious walls of the Grand Palais at the FIAC, the Foire Internationale d'Art Contemporain de Paris, on the invitation of its director Jennifer Flay; and from 2023 to 2026, the reveal takes place at the Paris Internationale Art Fair, on the invitation of Alix Dionot-Morani. Knowledgeable amateurs of art and fans of the brand alike seek out the box: it has proven to be an enticing first piece for new collectors, and at the same time, a logical purchase for more experienced connoisseurs. The 24-portion box can be displayed on kitchen tables and bookcase shelves as well as preserved in the utmost secrecy of warehouses, protected from light and moisture, as an investment to be carefully guarded once the expiration date has passed. The first editions in the series have sold out and are now highly sought-after; speculation is booming, mirroring the trends of the art market.

The *Collector's Edition Boxes* used to be sold in supermarkets and they are now made available to all online: through the internet, the project has been able to reach new aficionados. There is no doubt whatsoever that The Laughing Cow® has become an ambassador of sorts for all the artists who have been involved in the project, which has undeniably fostered easier and broader








interactions with the general public, all the while championing lesser-known conceptual practices.

For the Bel group, these series quickly became a source of pride and an integral part of its culture; for people studying business and marketing, in France and abroad, it has been presented and taught as an important case study. Indeed, it can be used to show how to successfully develop a distinctive, differentiating strategy to establish a meaningful and engaging relationship between a brand and its customers – one of the secrets of The Laughing Cow's® success as of the 1920s.

Furthermore, edition after edition, the contemporary art world has also largely acknowledged the relevance and the quality of the different proposals, recognizing the series as a fruitful and virtuous collaboration between the art world and that of business. The fact that the *Collector's Edition Boxes* have joined the collections of the MUCEM, the FRAC Picardie and Frankfurt's MMK, thanks to the formidable enthusiasm of Édouard de Laubrie, Pascal Neveux, and Susanne Pfeffer, is ample proof of this, as is the 2025 publication of the book *Rires en Boîtes* (Boxed Laughter) entirely devoted to the subject

Today, you are welcome to follow the example of satisfied gourmands or that of enlightened collectors, or both. We gladly and joyfully invite you to partake in these editions yourself, whether to preserve them as precious treasures or to share them – and your passion for art – with all your loved ones.



To access all the *Collector's Edition Boxes*, please visit: **www.lab-bel.com/en/box**


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*des apports quotidiens de référence.
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À conserver au froid après achat
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SI LS SUR LE FOND
FR

# THE LAUGHING COW® AND THE ARTS

By Laurent Fiévet, Director of Lab'Bel

When Léon Bel created The Laughing Cow® in 1921, he had yet to entrust the brand's visual identity to Benjamin Rabier. It was not until 1923, following a competition intended to give the brand more visibility and attractiveness, that Rabier's famous image began to appear on The Laughing Cow® labels.

From that point forward, the two men engaged in a collaboration that would continue until long after the artist's death in 1939, as evidenced by the publication, in the 1950s, of albums filled with his joyous images of animals.

Although this partnership remains the most famous of The Laughing Cow® collaborations, the creative advertising management of the Bel group has also called upon other illustrators. At various times, Luc-Marie Bayle, Corinne Baille, Hervé Baille, Paul Grimault and Albert Dubout have each brought their creativity to the conception of different gifts destined for young consumers. In 1954, Alain Saint-Ogan took The Laughing Cow® to an *animal's paradise – au Paradis des Animaux* – through both his famous illustrated albums and an eponymous radio show. This promotional tradition continued to evolve, taking on many different forms, as in the 1970s when Jacques Parnel infamously created a version of the cow who wore clothes and walked on her two hind legs. At the same time, the brand's image has been a continuous source of creative inspiration for numerous artists: already in 1929, painter Marcel Lenoir placed a box of The Laughing Cow® at the centre of his *Still Life*.

Perhaps the most notable representation of The Laughing Cow® is that of Bernard Rancillac, who in his 1966 painting *Our Holy Mother the Cow* depicted the brand's famous icon as the sun in the sky. In his own words, this emblematic artist of the Narrative Figuration movement had wanted to portray an image that was at once a symbol of Western consumerism and a reminder of the restrictions of Hinduism. In 2005, Belgian artist Wim Delvoye returned to this theme with his impressive collection of The Laughing Cow® labels, which he submitted to the Lyon Biennale. The reference to Darwin in the title of Delvoye's submission – *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or The Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life* – is an audacious comment on the association between art history and marketing strategies.

In keeping with this two-directional movement of collaboration and appropriation, it is only natural that the brand's image should continue to be revisited and reinterpreted by artists. And this is exactly what The Laughing Cow® proposes in its series of *Collector's Edition Boxes*: year after year, leading artists are given complete creative freedom to transform the look of the classic 24-portion box – an homage to the brand's playful, offbeat image.



# TIMELINE

By Laurent Fiévet, Director of Lab'Bel

**1921**
Léon Bel founds The Laughing Cow® brand.

**1923**
The illustrator Benjamin Rabier shows his new take on The Laughing Cow® design to Léon Bel, which is featured on all the brand's boxes as of the following year. The label includes the same characteristics that still ensure the brand's success to this day: the famous laughing smile, certainly, but also the cow's earrings, the colour red, and the animal's mischievous gaze. The design is chosen over that by Francisque Poulbot, whose work has also been solicited by Léon Bel. Both artists continue to work with the Bel group in the following years, and their designs can be found on numerous newsletters and advertisements from the era.

**C. 1929**
*Still Life*, a painting by Marcel Lenoir, features a Laughing Cow® box at its centre, an early example of the brand's recognition among artists. The painting later joins the collections of La Maison de la Vache qui rit in Lons-le-Saunier.

**1950**
The Bel group begins its collaboration with Alain Saint-Ogan. The artist creates numerous advertisements in partnership with the brand, from notebook covers to blotting paper, and even a series of ten comic books for children, under the title *La Vache qui rit au Paradis des Animaux*.

**1966**
Bernard Rancillac, a leading figure of the Narrative Figuration movement, creates *Our Holy Mother the Cow*, a painting featuring a woman, child, and donkey carrying jars in a parched desert beneath a burning sun, represented as a box of The Laughing Cow®.

**1967**
Thomas Bayrle creates several "superforms" based on The Laughing Cow® logo. The first of these, *Mädchen [Girl]*, inspires the 2015 *Collector's Edition Box*, more than half a century later.

**1968**
The Belgian artist Marcel Broodthaers includes The Laughing Cow® in one of the series of art objects and prints that he creates with the Wide White Space gallery in Antwerp. Broodthaers' *The Laughing Cow®* is composed of eight boxes that bear inscriptions by the artist's hand: "I love you, a little, a lot, passionately, madly, not at all."

**1971**
For its new advertising campaign, the Bel group calls upon Jacques Parnel, who accepts the challenge of creating a more down-to-earth Laughing Cow® and depicts her wearing a dress, blue jeans, or regional costumes.

**1975**
The graphic designer and typographer Albert Hollenstein creates a round-shaped greeting card that is directly inspired by The Laughing Cow®, although it features a Laughing Lady. The card echoes the shape of the box and features the brand's iconic blue background and white stars in addition to a red face and white horns.

**1985**
To promote the brand, the Bel group asks André Franquin to create a promotional album. The album's cover features Franquin's famous character, Gaston Lagaffe, wearing two earrings identical to those worn by The Laughing Cow®.

A reproduction of *Our Holy Mother the Cow* by Bernard Rancillac is stuck onto a box of Laughing Cow® cheese by the artist.

**2005**
Belgian artist Wim Delvoye, a long-time collector of Laughing Cow®-themed objects, presents his installation *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or The Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life* at the International Biennale of Contemporary Art in Lyon. The work comprises more than 4,000 Laughing Cow® labels.

**2009**
At the initiative of Catherine Sauvin, Léon Bel's granddaughter, La Maison de la Vache qui rit is founded in Lons-le-Saunier, at the very same location where the brand was created in 1921. The House preserves and showcases both the history and heritage of the brand.

**2010**
Lab'Bel, the artistic laboratory of the Bel group, is created, at the initiative of Laurent Fiévet, Léon Bel's great-grandson. *REWIND*, Lab'Bel's first exhibition, opens in the spring of 2010 at La Maison de la Vache qui rit.

**2014**
Lab'Bel and the Bel group launch the series of *Collector's Edition Boxes*. The German artist Hans-Peter Feldmann is entrusted with designing the very first edition.

**2015**
The second *Collector's Edition Box* is designed by Thomas Bayrle, drawing inspiration from *Mädchen [Girl]*, his 1967 "superform" that prominently featured The Laughing Cow® logo.

**2016**
The British artist Jonathan Monk is entrusted with designing the third *Collector's Edition Box*. For the first time, the *Collector's Edition Box* is presented at a booth specially dedicated to the project, at the Parisian' international contemporary art fair, the FIAC.

**2017**
The Belgian artist Wim Delvoye designs the fourth *Collector's Edition Box*.

In her first solo exhibition at Galerie Almine Rech in Paris, the artist Chloe Wise presents The Laughing Cow® using various forms and mediums, including sculptures, installations, and figurative paintings.

Artist Sophie Calle is invited to submit a proposal for the *Collector's Edition Box* project. However, her proposal is not selected.

**2018**
Belgian Moroccan photographer Mous Lamrabat introduces The Laughing Cow® into his Surrealist photographs fusing North African tradition with the codes of the food and fashion industries.

The German artist Karin Sander designs the fifth *Collector's Edition Box*.

Jonathan Monk creates *A Mirrored Carpet Reversal With Segmented Cheese And Underside Reveal*, an installation directly drawing on his edition of the *Collector's Edition Box* project. The work is presented for the first time as part of his *Chinese Whispers* exhibition in Brussels at the Galerie Meessen de Clercq.

**2019**
After having been scrapped in 2012 due to technical difficulties related to its production, the project that Daniel Buren had conceived for the inaugural edition of the *Collector's Edition Box* project finally becomes a reality. For the first time in its history, the *Collector's Edition Box* is produced in four different colours (blue, yellow, red, green), which are simultaneously made available to collectors. Collectors can preview them at the FIAC in an installation that is specially designed by Buren.

**2020**
Mel Bochner is the seventh artist to create a *Collector's Edition Box*. Two versions are available, playing on an alternating colour effect.

The *Collector's Edition Boxes* enter the MUCEM Collection.

**2021**
A pop-up gallery opens in the Marais district of Paris to sell Mel Bochner's *Collector's Edition Boxes*.

Presentation of the first seven *Collector's Edition Boxes* at the Ljubljana Municipal Museum, as part of the *When in Doubt, Go to a Museum* exhibition.

For the one hundredth anniversary of the brand, the German artist Rosemarie Trockel creates three versions of the Boxes, including one without the iconic cow's head that is exclusively offered to collectors. She also produces a film associated with her edition.

At Paris's Palais de Tokyo, the *Elle rit* ! [She Laughs!] exhibition presents the collected works of the first eight artists who have taken part in the *Collector's Edition Box* series, on the occasion of The Laughing Cow's® centenary.

**2022**
The German artist Franz Erhard Walther creates two versions for his 2022 *Collector's Edition Box*. They are premiered as part of an exhibition that brings together other productions by the artist and is held in rue du Marché Saint-Honoré, in Paris.

**2023**
In the Middle East, some people boycott The Laughing Cow® following public comments by the French President Emmanuel Macron about cartoons caricaturing Mohammed that are reprinted in *Charlie Hebdo*: the affair shines through in the work of the Iranian visual artists Ramin Haerizadeh, Rokni Haerizadeh, and Hesam Rahmanian. The trio use and reframe bits and pieces of news media in their compositionist sculptures, which feature myriads of printed discs attached to aluminium rods.

The first nine editions of the *Collector's Edition Boxes* join the collections of the MMK Museum für Moderne Kunst in Frankfurt.

The Bel group buys one of thr two versions of Bernard Rancillac's *Our Holy Mother the Cow*. The painting can be seen in the collections of La Maison de la Vache qui rit in Lons-le-Saunier.

The US artist Martha Wilson creates the tenth edition of The Laughing Cow® *Collector's Edition Box*. It is launched at the Paris Internationale Art Fair, an event that also marks the beginning of a collaboration between the fair, the Bel group, and Lab'Bel.

At the initiative of Pascal Neveux, the *Collector's Edition Box* series join the collections of the FRAC Picardie.

Sophie Calle includes her 2017 rejected proposal for a *Collector's Edition Box* in *À toi de faire ma Mignonne* [It's up to you, cutie], her retrospective exhibition at the Musée Picasso in Paris. On the accompanying label, the artist wonders about the possibility of having faced a form of censorship.

The Bel group purchase a tapestry work by Thomas Bayrle, *Artistinnen* (2022), in which he uses motifs and patterns inspired by The Laughing Cow® to represent three Chinese gymnasts performing acrobatics on a bicycle. Nearly three meters tall and

wide, this is Bayrle's first attempt at working with a Jacquard loom – a turning point in his approach.

**2024**
The Laughing Cow® finds its way into Bertille Bak's exhibition, *Abus de souffle* [Out of Breath] at the Jeu de Paume in Paris, showing its face in the artist's collection of templates for bellows.

The Laughing Cow® is featured alongside Mickey Mouse on a poster that aims to bring attention to all the treasures in the collections of the MUCEM in Marseille.

Bernard Rancillac's *Our Holy Mother the Cow* enters the collections of La Maison de la Vache qui rit.

The Brazilian artist Cildo Meireles is chosen for the 11th edition of the *Collector's Edition Box*. By naming his offering *Monavache*, he is the first artist to give a name to his edition.

**2025**
The *Collector's Edition Boxes* engage in a fruitful dialogue with the paper used to wrap citrus fruits as part of the *Superbemarché* exhibition at the Musée International des Arts Modestes in Sète.

The film devoted to Marta Wilson for the tenth *Collector's Edition Box* is screened at the Gallery 360 in Tokyo as part of an exhibition of the artist's work at the Franklin Furnace Foundation.

Danish artist Henrik Olesen creates the twelfth *Collector's Edition Box*. After Rosemarie Trockel, he is the second artist to produce a film to coincide with his creation.

Following his collaboration with the brand, Bel acquires Crocodile (*post-war Art Brut landscape*, 2025) by Henrik Olesen.

Cildo Meireles' *Collector's Edition Box* makes a spectacular entry on the Chinese market.

An edition of *Moïse (Moses)* and *La Vache qui rit – Censuré (The Laughing Cow – Censured)* by Sophie Calle join the collections of the Bel Group.

With a launch party at the Jeu de Paume in Paris, the publication *Rire en Boîtes (Boxed Laughter)* celebrates the twelve first editions of the *Collector's Edition Box* project.

**2026**

French artist Jean-Luc Moulène is chosen to create the thirteenth edition of the *Collector's* Edition Box. He is the first artist of the collection to sign his edition with his name.

Like other well-known products of the Bel Group such as Babybel®, Kiri®, and Boursin®, The Laughing Cow® joins the Fromages *(Cheeses)* series by artist Jochen Gerner. The Bel group acquires forty drawings from the series.

# THE LAUGHING COW® KEY FIGURES

The Laughing Cow® is sold in 136 countries across five continents.

6 billion portions of The Laughing Cow® are made around the world every year.

In 1921, Fromageries Bel produced 12,000 portions per day. The Bel group now produces 20 million on a daily basis.

2,000 portions of The Laughing Cow® are consumed in the world every 10 seconds.

In June 2024, The Laughing Cow® had more than 1,5M fans on Facebook.

The highest summit of the Himalayas, Mount Everest, culminates at 8,848m. In 1962, it took two days for workers of the Bel factories to make enough boxes to reach this height. Today, thanks to technological advances, the same process only takes six hours.

**Why does The Laughing Cow® wear earrings?**

In the world of art and design, The Laughing Cow® is a true icon. One detail is particularly amusing: its earrings. Upon closer inspection, you'll notice they're actually The Laughing Cow® boxes, each featuring the cow on it, again and again. This technique has since become a reference for explaining the concept of mise en abyme. Did you know that this iconic detail was added at the request of Léon Bel's wife to make the cow appear more feminine? A small idea can become a design classic.

## BOXED LAUGHTER

Released every autumn since 2014, and available on supermarket shelves, in contemporary art fairs, and online, The Laughing Cow® *Collector's Edition Boxes* constitute a collection of conceptual artworks, designed by leading contemporary artists, which question the idea of an artwork in terms of use, distribution, valorisation, and preservation.

A book-object featuring around a hundred illustrations and sealed with a film like that found on the famous round boxes, the publication looks back on all twelve of the first collaborations, and invites readers, through texts from various contributors (editors, curators, economists, art historians, collectors) to better understand the issues of a project now widely acclaimed by collectors.

The book also exists in an French-language version: *Rires en Boîtes*.

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**Editorial direction:** Laurent Fiévet
**ISBN:** 9791097841508
**Number of pages:** 342
**Dimensions:** 21 x 21 cm
**RRP:** 36 euros TTC
**Publishing date:** December 2025.

For further information, see:
https://www.lab-bel.com/edition/

## **ERIK VERHAGEN**,
Curator of the edition

Erik Verhagen is a professor of contemporary art history at the Université de Lille, an art critic, and independent curator. He has published numerous works, essays, and articles on art from the 1960s to the present day. This year, he has been invited to curate the following exhibitions: *Jan Dibbets 1966 – 1976. Toward another photography* at the H'Art Museum (Amsterdam) and *Dan Flavin. Des simples tubes fluorescents* at the Fondation Venet (Le Muy). He is also overseeing a catalogue raisonné devoted to François Morellet, the first volume of which is due to be published in 2028.

## LAB'BEL

Created in the spring of 2010, Lab'Bel is an endowment fund that aims to support artistic creation and contribute to its development. The activities of this laboratory of ideas and impertinent innovation are two-fold: developing a contemporary art collection—now on long-term loan at the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Dole—and organizing exhibitions and artistic events throughout France and Europe. Lab'Bel also supports a series of performative multidisciplinary projects ranging from Modernist architecture to poetry or music.

LABORATOIRE
ARTISTIQUE
DU GROUPE BEL

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https://www.lab-bel.com

## LAB'BEL'S PROGRAMMING

**• Until 31 December 2026**
**Five Radio Stations – Second season**
A curatorial project composed of sonic contributions by Claude Closky, Jenny Odell, Yuri Suzuki, Isa Toledo, and Nico Vascellari, available online at www.fiveradiostations.com.
Curators: Silvia Guerra and Seb Emina

**• From 21 to 25 October 2026**
**Exclusive launch of Jean-Luc Moulène's *Collector's Edition Box***

**• From 6 February to 19 September 2027**
***Moving Perspectives***
***10 ans d'acquisitions des Collections d'art contemporain Lab'Bel et Bel SA***
at La Maison de La Vache qui rit,
at Lons-le-Saunier
(from 6 February to 19 September),
with Les Scènes du Jura
(from 6 February to 11 May)
and at Musée des Beaux-Arts de Dole,
at Dole (from 2 March to 19 September).
Curators: Laurent Fiévet and Silvia Guerra

Informations complémentaires :
**www.lab-bel.com**

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