

"Laugh or implode"



"Rire ou imploser"

**The Collector's Edition Boxes
of The Laughing Cow®**

Press kit - August 2023

Edition #10: Martha Wilson

MARTHA WILSON, THE ARTIST BEHIND THE 2023 EDITION OF THE LAUGHING COW® COLLECTOR'S EDITION BOX

Since 2014, Lab'Bel –the artistic Laboratory of the Bel Group– has endeavored a series of special projects **in collaboration with outstanding contemporary artists**, resulting in the creation of The Laughing Cow® *Collector's Edition Boxes*. These yearly editions represent as many opportunities to renew and update the connections that the brand has established with artists since its inception in 1921.

The *Collector's Edition Boxes* are designed as artworks in their own right by their creators. Each fall, anyone can purchase such artworks at the normal price listed for a 24-portion box, before deciding whether its contents should be eaten or kept intact as collectibles.

Making contemporary art available to a larger audience has been the main mission of Lab'Bel since its creation in 2010, through original ideas and out-of-the-box approaches. After Hans-Peter Feldmann, Thomas Bayrle, Jonathan Monk, Wim Delvoye, Karin Sander, Daniel Buren, Mel Bochner, Rosemarie Trockel and Franz Erhard Walther, **Lab'Bel is entrusting Martha Wilson with designing the tenth *Collector's Edition Box*.**

Martha Wilson's *Collector's Edition Box* is curated by Sylvie Boulanger.

Martha Wilson's *Collector's Edition Boxes* will be **premiered on the occasion of the Paris Internationale art fair, October 18-22, 2023 in Paris.**



TABLE OF CONTENTS

MARTHA WILSON	5
SYLVIE BOULANGER, CURATOR FOR THE TENTH EDITION OF THE <i>COLLECTOR'S EDITION BOX</i>	8
WHERE TO FIND MARTHA WILSON'S THE LAUGHING COW® <i>COLLECTOR'S EDITION BOX</i>?	10
<i>MARTHA WILSON IN NEW YORK</i>	11
<i>COLLECTOR'S EDITION BOXES: CONTEMPORARY ART TO BE SHARED</i>	13
<i>THE LAUGHING COW® AND THE ARTS</i>	18
TIMELINE	19
<i>THE LAUGHING COW®</i> KEY FIGURES	22

MARTHA WILSON



Collector's Edition Box #10 by Martha Wilson



Martha Wilson © Sara Kaplan

Martha Wilson was born in 1947 in Philadelphia (Pennsylvania, USA). The work of the artist was recently shown in Paris (Centre Pompidou), Basel (Art Basel Unlimited), Stockholm (Moderna Museet), New York (Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum) and Vienna (Kunstraum Niederösterreich).

A major retrospective exhibition of her works, *Invisible - Works On Aging (1972-2022)*, is currently on view at the FRAC Sud in Marseille, France.

She is represented by the P•P•O•W Gallery (New York) and the Galerie michèle didier (Paris and Brussels).

**« My woman's body is my instrument. »
– Martha Wilson**

Martha Wilson is undeniably one of the most important and socially conscious US-born artists of today, and a lifelong advocate for democratizing and using art as a path to freedom. Through her work, Wilson has been leading a true “culture war” since the 1970s, aiming to reach and move a large audience and especially those who do not have easy access to art—an effort that resonates with Lab’Bel’s approach to distributing the *Collector’s Edition Boxes*. In that regard, Wilson’s early work can be seen as visionary.

In the early 1970s, Martha Wilson began performing in front of cameras, by herself, mainly using video art, photography and writing. At the time, she was teaching English literature at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design in Halifax, Canada. She quickly gained recognition for her photo-texts and video pieces that explored her subjectivity as a woman through the use of roleplay, costumes, make-up and staging. Her ideas coalesced in the following statement: “My woman’s body is my instrument.” This claim led to her creating auto-fictional narratives that addressed the various gender roles that men project on women and that women project on themselves. Martha Wilson’s work remind us that beauty standards are first and foremost imposed on women, potentially scarring them for life, while men virtually escape them altogether.

For more than half a century, Martha Wilson has been putting to question the injunction that women often hear: “Be an image!”, inspiring and dialoguing with other feminist artists such as Eleanor Antin, Martha Rosler and Cindy Sherman. As a case in point, Wilson’s series of self-portraits,

A Portfolio of Models, depicted her as a goddess and a homemaker, alternatively. Subjecting herself to different identities, Wilson encouraged others—everybody!—to strive for creativity and freedom. What’s more, she impersonated various celebrities, including First Ladies Nancy Reagan and Barbara Bush, and appropriated speeches made by politicians in public performances of her own. As she pushed for women to emancipate from social roles that are imposed on them, the artist willingly portrayed herself as ridiculous, ugly, old and vulgar. Radical humor became Wilson’s medium of choice, all the more so because it enabled her to go beyond boundaries: “If you don’t want to destroy everything, you have to use humor.”

For The Laughing Cow® *Collector’s Edition Box*, Martha Wilson has created an artwork that has been edited and printed similarly to an artist’ book; furthermore, it can be offered beyond the confines of the art world, unexpectedly catching the eye of buyers in the aisles of grocery stores and supermarkets. Wilson absolutely loves the idea that her work for the 2023 *Collector’s Edition Box* will be looked at, read and collected by the broadest audience possible.

In line with her lifelong artistic approach, humor is the force that Wilson has harnessed for her reinterpretation of The Laughing Cow® and the accompanying tagline—a joyful, good-natured kind of humor that allows for both authenticity and creativity. Indeed, the artwork’s message is addressed to everybody, as evinced by the cheeky slogan that Wilson has added to her drawing of The Laughing Cow®, beautified by make-up: “Laugh or implode.”

**« We are all performing all the time. »
– Martha Wilson**

In 1976, Martha Wilson turned the loft apartment where she lived into an artist-run space for performances and exhibitions, the Franklin Furnace. Its focus has been to explore and promote artworks whose non-dogmatic and cheap counterparts are widely distributed, such as artists’ books, installations, video and performance art. In the eyes of Wilson, artists’ publications, performances and films absolutely constitute artistic mediums in their own right, and they can be used to produce “democratic” artworks that are easily circulated outside of the art sector. Moreover, objects that are printed and published on the model of books (or that of a box of cheese) question the very definition of art, since they are industrial in the sense that several people contributed to producing them, breaking with the tradition of idolizing artists. As the international art market undergoes accelerated growth, Wilson more largely addresses—lucidly and uncompromisingly—the ways in which it manufactures artistic identity and worth, with an emphasis on the precarious condition of women artists. For Wilson, performance is “the place of intersection between image and text.”

The list of the exhibitions and projects that the Franklin Furnace has made possible is extremely impressive, as it virtually includes all the US artists of importance of the last forty years. From 1976 to the present day, the Franklin Furnace has held exhibitions on Franklin Street in Manhattan but also in public spaces in popular neighborhoods to reach more passersby. Today, Franklin Furnace also grants fellowships to artists, while centering artistic education and publishing rarely-shown artworks online for the broader public to enjoy.

Martha Wilson has been an agent of change in the art world throughout her life, ad-

vocating a greater and more democratic attention to individual artistic sensibilities. She has striven to freely cross if not completely abolish the boundaries between elitist and popular culture at each stage of the creative process. A pioneer of “self-staging,” she has dared to embrace social networks and their potential as exhibition spaces, since their boundless scope might make tangible art spaces obsolete. As Wilson puts it: “the social media environment has made equals of artists and ordinary people.”

Sylvie Boulanger,
Curator for the 2023
Collector’s Edition Box



Martha Wilson, *The legs are the last to go*, 2009 © Courtesy Martha Wilson and P.P.O.W., New York

**SYLVIE BOULANGER,
CURATOR FOR THE TENTH EDITION OF
THE COLLECTOR'S EDITION BOX**



Sylvie Boulanger © Eric Darmon, 2023

Sylvie Boulanger is a curator, an editor and a researcher.

She has curated more than 150 exhibitions in many different countries, featuring artists such as Hans-Peter Feldmann, Jef Geys, Tatiana Trouvé, Claude Closky, Lola González, Claude Rutault, Kinsley Ng, Yann Sérandour, Wade Guyton, Seth Price, Jagna Ciuchta, Peter Downsbrough, Vera Molnar, Continuous Project, John Giorno, Théodora Barat, Allen Ruppersberg, Cameron Jamie, Ben Kinmont and Michel Journiac, among others. She has edited more than a hundred publications, with or about Jean-Michel Basquiat, Robert Rauschenberg, Thomas Hirschhorn, Guy de Cointet, Antoni Muntadas and Kyoichi Tsuzuki, to cite only a few.

Trained in philosophy, contemporary literature and political science, Boulanger joined the French ministry of Culture after completing her studies at Sciences-Po Paris, as deputy director in charge of fun-

ding and support to exhibitions and artists, and public-funded commissions. She then founded a production agency named Art Public Contemporain, which encouraged many commissions and artistic programs for public spaces, in collaboration with artists such as François Morellet, Jacqueline Dauriac, Alighiero Boetti, Matt Mullican, Daniel Buren, Joseph Kosuth, Allan Charlton, Gottfried Honegger, Dominique Bailly and Giuseppe Penone, among others.

Later on, Sylvie Boulanger became the director of a newly-created center for contemporary art, the cneai= (www.cneai.com), a position that she held up until 2022. A pioneer of transdisciplinary approaches and cultural rights, Boulanger combined, as of 1997, exhibitions with the programming of performances, publications, research opportunities (residencies, workshops, seminars...). Through this model, she developed cultural programming that enabled artists and their projects to touch upon new forms, spaces and audiences.

In 2007, in her capacity as director of the cneai=, Boulanger overviewed a commission to the designers Erwan and Roman Bouroullec for a boat conceived as a space for residencies, the "Floating House." She has created three collections at the cneai=: the "FMRA" collection (several thousands of documents about artistic editorial practices, ranging from sonic art to dance, film, photography, architecture, digital art, graphic art and poetry); the "Collection of Multiples" (multiples and editions by the artists who are invited to the cneai=); the "Yona Friedman Donation" (a hundred drawings, collages, architectural models, books and archives). Throughout her 15-year collaboration with the visionary architect, Boulanger curated many exhibitions and "Museums Without Buildings," also

producing several films and books about Friedman's work.

After having founded the "Salon Light," which gathered about a hundred independent publishers annually, Boulanger has co-founded and directed the "M.A.D Multiple Art Days" (www.multipleartdays.com) with Michael Woolworth.

Since 2022, she has run, with Mary-Anne de la Palme, the new residency program and festival "F'A'A" (Filming Art and Architecture, www.filmerlart.com).

Acting as a consultant and expert in the art sector, Boulanger has worked with several foundations and private collections, including the Fiminco Foundation, the Copy-Art Collection and Lab'Bel.

Sylvie Boulanger writes and lectures on the subject of transdisciplinary artistic practices, multimedia work and new artistic forms. She is a member of several academic organizations and editorial committees, such as the Labex ICCA_Paris13, the UFR ape Paris8, the journal *Multitudes* and the research program PSL-SACRe.



Martha Wilson, *Beauty Pass*, 2017 © Courtesy Martha Wilson and P.P.O.W., New York

WHERE TO FIND MARTHA WILSON'S THE LAUGHING COW® COLLECTOR'S EDITION BOX?

The box will be premiered on Lab'Bel's stand at the **Paris Internationale art fair, October 18-22, 2023** (15 rue du Faubourg poissonnière, 75009 Paris, France).

And:

- At La Maison de la Vache qui rit (www.lamaisondelavachequirit.com),
- At the Walther König & Cahiers d'Art bookstore at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris,
- At the bookstore/giftshop of the Frac SUD in Marseilles,
- At the bookstore/giftshop of the Frac Picardie in Amiens,
- On the Galerie michèle didier's website

As usual, the *Collector's Edition Boxes* can also be bought online in the fall, at www.boutique.lavachequirit.com, until supplies last.

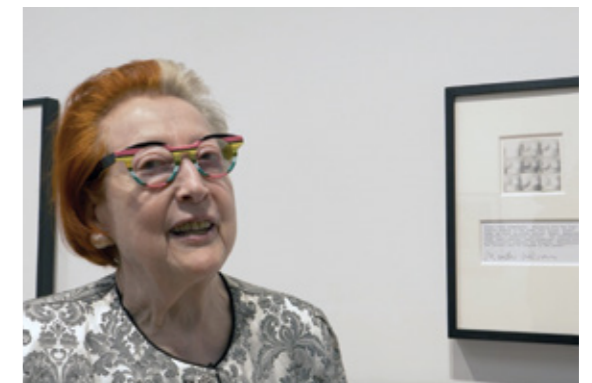
For the complete list of other retail outlets, please visit www.lab-bel.com.



MARTHA WILSON IN NEW YORK A film portrait of the artist, directed by Eric Darmon



Watch the short documentary film about the project:



Martha Wilson in New York,
2023, Eric Darmon

COLLECTOR'S EDITION BOXES: CONTEMPORARY ART TO BE SHARED



Martha Wilson, *Self-Portrait with Felt Hat*, 1887-88, *Self-Portrait with Felt Hat*, 2014
 © Courtesy Martha Wilson and P.P.O.W., New York

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, ten 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 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 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 eighth 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 in the series, **Franz Erhard Walther**, played a similar trick on art lovers, putting to the test their sagacity and deductive skills. Finally, 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.

Some artists in this list had already developed a close bond with The Laughing Cow® and its figure had found its way in some of their previous works (Thomas Bayrle, Wim Delvoye), whether as a topical subject or as multiple and significant occurrences throughout the years. Others easily established a connection between the cow and their own formal vocabulary (Daniel Buren)

or their aesthetical approach (Mel Bochner, Martha Wilson). Others still seized the opportunity offered by the commission to further their conceptual investigations (Hans-Peter Feldmann, Jonathan Monk, Karin Sander, Rosemarie Trockel, Franz Erhard Walther), 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)—but such a temptation was only logical given the very nature of this project, wasn't it?

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-already contemporary, as evinced by this kind of endeavor. And it is safe for me 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, 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; in 2023, it will take 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 the most 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 collected 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, 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 a crucial 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 genial enthusiasm of Édouard de Laubrie, Pascal Neveux and Susanne Pfeffer, is ample proof of this.

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 love of art—with all your loved ones.

Laurent Fiévet,
Director of Lab'Bel

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



Martha Wilson, *Beauty + Beastly*, 1974 and 2009
© Courtesy Martha Wilson and P.P.O.W., New York

THE LAUGHING COW® AND THE ARTS

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 center 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.

Laurent Fiévet
Director of Lab'Bel

TIMELINE

1921

Léon Bel founded the Laughing Cow® brand.

1923

The illustrator Benjamin Rabier showed his new take on The Laughing Cow® design to Léon Bel, which was featured on all of the brand's boxes as of the following year. The label included 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 color red, and the animal's mischievous gaze. The design was chosen over that of Francisque Poulbot, whose work had also been solicited by Léon Bel. Still, both artists continued 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, featured a Laughing Cow® box at its center, an early example of the brand's recognition among artists. The painting later joined the collections of La Maison de la Vache qui rit in Lons-le-Saunier.

1950

The Bel Group began its collaboration with Alain Saint-Ogan. The artist created 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, created *Our Holy Mother the Cow*, a painting that featured a woman, a child and a donkey carrying jars in a parched desert beneath a burning sun, which features, at its center,

a box of The Laughing Cow®. In 1985, Rancillac designed a version of this work that was meant to be glued directly onto the box.

1967

Thomas Bayrle created several "superforms" based on The Laughing Cow® logo. The first of these, *Mädchen/Fille/Girl*, inspired the 2015 *Collector's Edition Box*, more than half a century later.

1968

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

1971

For its new advertising campaign, Bel Group called upon Jacques Parnel, who accepted the challenge of creating a more down-to-earth Laughing Cow® and depicted her wearing a dress, blue jeans, or regional costumes.

1975

The graphic designer and typographer Albert Hollenstein created a round-shaped greetings card that was directly inspired by The Laughing Cow®, although it featured a Laughing Lady. The card echoed the shape of the box, and featured 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 asked André Franquin to create a promotional album. The album's cover featured Fran-

quin's famous character, Gaston Lagaffe, wearing two earrings identical to those worn by The Laughing Cow®.

2005

Belgian artist Wim Delvoye, a long-time collector of Laughing Cow®-themed objects, presented 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 comprised 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 was 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 the heritage of the brand.

2010

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

2014

At the initiative of Lab'Bel, the Bel Group launched its series of *Collector's Edition Boxes*. The German artist Hans-Peter Feldmann was entrusted with designing the very first edition.

2015

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

2016

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

2017

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

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

2018

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

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 Boxes* project finally became a reality. For the first time in its history, the *Collector's Edition Box* was produced in four different colors (blue, yellow, red, green), which were simultaneously made available to collectors. Collectors were able to preview them at the FIAC in an installation that was specially designed by Buren.

2020

Mel Bochner was the seventh artist to create a *Collector's Edition Box*. Two versions were available, playing on an alternating color effect.

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

2021

A pop-up gallery opened 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 created three versions of the Boxes, including one without the iconic cow's head that was exclusively offered to collectors.

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

2022

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

2023

In the Middle East, some people boycotted The Laughing Cow® following public comments by the French President Emmanuel Macron about cartoons caricaturing Mohammed that were reprinted in *Charlie Hebdo*: the affair shone through in the work of the Iranian visual artists Ramin Haerizadeh, Rokni Haerizadeh and Hesam Rahmanian. The trio used and reframed 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* joined the collections of the MMK Museum für Moderne Kunst in Frankfurt.

The Bel Group bought one of two existing 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 created the tenth edition of The Laughing Cow® *Collector's Edition Boxes*.

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



Exposition *Elle Rit!*, 2021. © Martin Argyroglo

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 2023, 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.



LAB'BEL

Created in the spring of 2010, Lab'Bel is an endowment fund aiming at supporting artistic creation and contributing 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.

LAB'BEL'S FALL 2023 PROGRAM OF EVENTS

> **Early October**

Five Radio Stations

A curatorial project featuring sound pieces by Keren Cytter, Benedick H. Hermannsson, Daniel Jones, Emeka Ogboh and Himali Singh Soin, made available to listeners at www.lab-bel.com and at several listening stations throughout the world.

The list of these havens can be found at www.lab-bel.com

Curators: Silvia Guerra and Seb Emina

> **October 18-22, 2023**

at the Paris Internationale art fair

The new *Collector's Edition Box*, presented by Martha Wilson, will be available at the fair
Curator: Sylvie Boulanger

 @Lab'Bel

 @laboratoire_artistique_bel

 <https://www.lab-bel.com>

For media enquiries please contact :

Agence Béatrice Martini RP

beatrice@beatricemartini.com

Tel. +33 9 81 04 45 59 / +33 6 24 29 68 24



ARTISTIC
LABORATORY OF
THE BEL GROUP

