

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 media 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 distinctive artists in the history of art. Bringing together paintings, sculptures, drawings, masks, and works on paper, this exhibition 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 her exile in Mexico, Carrington nevertheless defies any strictly biographical interpretation. Neither muse, nor disciple, nor mere heir to Surrealism, she created a body of work that is profoundly free, unbound by aesthetic categories or assigned identities. Her world never seeks to represent reality: it transforms its very laws, opening pathways between the visible and the invisible, the human and the animal, nature and culture, dream and matter.

This 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, boundaries become porous, and realms intermingle. Dragons, horses, birds, hyenas, hybrid creatures, and androgynous figures make up a cosmology in which every form seems to be in a state of perpetual becoming. The metamorphoses that run through her work do not belong to the realm of fantasy in the sense of an escapist imagination; they constitute an alternative way of thinking about the living world, based on continuities rather than on divisions.

This vision is rooted in a culture of rare breadth. Fascinated by alchemy, mythology—particularly Celtic mythology—Mesoamerican traditions, tarot, and Eastern spiritualities, Carrington constructs an iconography where ancient knowledge and modern intuitions converge. The exhibition features, among other works, the paintings *The Lovers* (1987)1, *Laberinto* (1991), and *La Naguala* (1975), which reference these major themes. Thus, her work invites us not so much to solve riddles as to accept the existence of multiple, sometimes contradictory, yet always open-ended realities. The fantastical is not an escape, but a way of inhabiting the world differently.

After settling in Mexico in 1942, Carrington came to regard the country as her chosen home. Indigenous cosmologies, the richness of popular traditions, and the idea of a world animated by invisible forces and other forms of agency deeply nourished her imagination. Without ever renouncing her British roots, she developed a body of work in which cultures and temporalities engage in a free and fluid dialogue. In her universe, historical time gives way to mythical time, where past, present, and future coexist within the same symbolic space.

The exhibition 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 creative 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 unique imagination, 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 offered by three-dimensional form. Bronze occupies a unique place in this regard. Created using wax or plasticine models up until her final days, these sculptures encapsulate the figures that have always populated her world: horses, birds, fantastical creatures, protective deities, and guides between worlds. They appear as the culmination of a philosophy of metamorphosis, in which the material itself becomes the site of constant transformation.

The exhibition also highlights Carrington's profound relevance to the present day. Long before ecological, feminist, or posthumanist issues came to the forefront in contemporary debates, her work was already challenging the major dualisms inherited from Western thought. The distinctions between human and non-human, female and male, nature and culture dissolve in her work, giving way to a relational view of living beings. This insight, which is strikingly relevant today, undoubtedly explains why her work continues to inspire artists, philosophers, writers, and fashion designers.

Through this exceptional collection, Almine Rech aims to convey the richness of an artist whose creative vision remains inexhaustible. More than a historical figure of Surrealism, Leonora Carrington emerges as one of the great visual thinkers on the theme of transmutation. Her work invites us to reconsider our relationship with the world, with other living beings, and with the imagination itself. At a time when certainties are wavering and new narratives are needed, Carrington's works remind us that transformation is not merely an iconographic theme: it constitutes a way of being in the world. Between myth and matter, magic and knowledge, memory and becoming, they open up a space where boundaries cease to be limitations and become passages. It is perhaps here that the undiminished power of her work still lies today.

— Dr. Mylène Ferrand, art historian and curator

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