

BRAFA ART FAIR



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A word from the Chairman of
BRAFA, Harold t'Kint de Roodenbeke

It has been almost 70 years since the Foire des Antiquaires de Belgique, subsequently renamed BRAFA, was founded. How is the Fair doing nowadays in an increasingly competitive environment?

BRAFA must constantly try to adapt in a world in perpetual evolution, whereas our dealer DNA does not like the idea of a too-rapid evolution. The current context, including the upheavals linked to digital technology and the proliferation of events and fairs, has made the art market much more competitive. Mirroring this evolution, BRAFA must refine its concept. There is a strong desire to remain varied and diverse, but there is also a market trend that is increasingly focused on modern and contemporary art. We are very attentive to all these elements and we want to maintain a balance.

What's new for January 2023?

We are always asked what is new, but in truth, for 70 years now we have been trying to improve and even perfect a concept that has stood the test of time so far. Working in the long-term means working by small touches rather than big upheavals. This year, we will be focusing on the theme of Art Nouveau, a movement that was very important for Brussels at the turn of the last century.

Full interview available here: [Press Releases](#) | [Brafa Art Fair](#)

BRAFA 2023

BRAFA will be the 1st major European art fair to visit in 2023, positioning it, as per tradition, as a true barometer of the art market. The 68th edition of the BRAFA will take place from Sunday, January 29th to Sunday, February 5th, 2023, at Brussels Expo in Halls 3 and 4, where 130 exhibitors will be taking over the entire space.

- Date of its **creation**: 1956. It is the oldest fair in the world.
- 2023 will mark its **68th edition**.
- BRAFA ranks among the **top 5 art and antiques fairs in the world**.
- In 2022, BRAFA moved to Brussels Expo (Heysel), a prestigious site emblematic of the World's Fairs in 1935 and 1958, which went on to host a number of events over the years. The venue offers easy access both from Brussels airport and from train stations, whether by metro or car. Brussels Expo is located 20 minutes from the lively centre of Brussels, the Grand Place, and the Antoine Dansaert fashion district.
- 130 renowned galleries from **15 countries**: Germany, Austria, Belgium, United Arab Emirates, Spain, United States, France, Great Britain, Greece, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Switzerland.
- 35% Belgian exhibitors and 65% based abroad.
- **10,000 to 15,000** objects in display over **21,200 m2**.
- Specialities: furniture and art objects from the Middle Ages to the present day, ancient and modern painting, contemporary art, design, sculpture, tribal art, pre-Columbian art, Asian art, porcelain, silverware, ceramics, glassware, jewellery, textiles and carpets, drawings, original comic strips, engravings, rare books, photography, etc.
- 80 to 100 **experts** from all over the world check the authenticity, quality and state of preservation of the different pieces over a two-day period.
- Theme of BRAFA 2023: **Art Nouveau** in its different forms.

BRAFA 2023

For this 68th edition, 11 new galleries will be joining BRAFA for the first time.

1. **Franck Anelli Fine Art** (FR): antique paintings from the 16th to the 18th centuries (Flemish, Dutch and French), as well as rare inlaid furniture from the 18th century Parisian golden age
2. **Ars Antiqua** (IT): antique paintings, furniture and sculptures
3. **Galerie Nicolas Bourriaud** (FR): 19th- and early 20th-century French sculpture
4. **Van den Bruinhorst Gallery** (NL): 20th-century historical design and art objects
5. **Galerie Pascal Cuisinier** (FR): French design between 1951 and 1961
6. **Gallery Delaive** (NL): modern and contemporary art
7. **Galerie Nicolas Lenté** (FR): antique paintings and furniture from the 17th to the 18th century
8. **New Hope Gallery** (BE): furniture from the second half of the 20th century, including works by American and Danish designers
9. **Librairie Amélie Sourget** (FR): rare and precious books, original editions
10. **Van der Meij Fine Arts** (NL): 19th-century European art, from Northern European Romanticism to Scandinavian Symbolism and Dutch painting
11. **VKD Jewels** (NL): fine and rare jewellery from the world's greatest designers from the late 19th and 20th centuries

See the list of participating galleries here: [Exhibitors | Brafa Art Fair](#)

The theme of BRAFA 2023: Art Nouveau

Art Nouveau was born in the late nineteenth century from certain artists' and bourgeois aesthetes' desire to live in a new and refined setting, in reaction to the coldness of a booming industrial world and the classicism of the past.

In 1893, Victor Horta's iconic building, the Hotel Tassel, was inaugurated in Brussels. Perceived as the founding act of Art Nouveau in the Belgian capital, this first "Art Nouveau" building soon became an example to follow. In January 1893, Paul Hankar (1859-1901), a colleague of Victor Horta (1861-1947), filed the blueprints for his personal residence, often considered to be the first "Art Nouveau" house, in a more geometric style, far removed from the curves propagated by Horta.

In 1894, Henry Van de Velde, another leading figure from this period, published "Le déblaiement d'Art," an inculpatory manifesto against the classicism which reigned unchallenged over the arts at the time. He argued that an "Art Nouveau" must be born and inscribed in its time, creating its own style, no longer content to imitate the past. The quest for harmony and comfort must prevail, and the decorative arts must finally be recognised for their true worth.

Beyond its architectural and decorative aspect, Art Nouveau was foremost an ideological current. The artists, architects and craftsmen of the time, alarmed by increasing industrialisation, advocated a return to nature, to the quality and durability of manufactured objects and to beauty as an ideal of life. This ideal had previously been defended by the English "Arts and Crafts" movement, a revival of the decorative arts through craftsmanship.

Although Art Nouveau found its origins in the romantic feeling towards nature, and in the scientific work of the nineteenth century (botany, entomology, etc.), it was also strongly inspired by the discovery of Japanese art. Until early 1850, Japan had remained closed to all outside contact. Japanese art, and Oriental art more broadly, revolutionised Western artistic conceptions. It offered a new form of representation of natural phenomena and of the plant and animal worlds.

Art Nouveau facades are very visual and decorative, in order to guarantee their own identity. The interiors rely on decoration, warm colours and glass windows which let in as much natural light as possible. The house being a new construction, it was equipped with the latest technologies. In addition, many Art Nouveau architects created all of the house's equipment themselves, from the furniture to the cutlery and door handles, which is why it is referred to as a "total work of art."



The theme of BRAFA 2023: Art Nouveau

- Art Nouveau, the theme of the 68th edition of the BRAFA, will be explored in several forms.
- Some galleries at BRAFA will offer exceptional objects from this movement, including Epoque Fine Jewels, Thomas Deprez Fine Arts, Florian Kolhammer, Galerie Cento Anni, Dr. Lennart Booij Fine Art & Rare Items, Victor Werner, Galerie Mathivet, Galerie Montanari, Marc Heiremans, Galerie Bernard De Leye.
- Two BRAFA Art Talks will be devoted to this theme, one presented by Benjamin Zurstrassen, curator at the Musée Horta: *“Brussels 1893, the birth of Art Nouveau”* and the other by Professor Werner Adriaenssens, curator of 20th-century collections at the Royal Museums of Art and History: *“The King Baudouin Foundation’s Art Nouveau collection.”*
- Following a meeting with Benjamin Zurstrassen, curator at the Musée Horta, Beatrix Bourdon, the Managing Director of BRAFA and Nicolas de Liedekerke – Daniel Culot (Volume Architecture) drew inspiration from Victor Horta’s original drawings for the creation of the carpet, produced for the second consecutive year by the Danish company EGE, the world’s first sustainable carpet manufacturer. These drawings can be found on the BRAFA 2023 invitation cards and on the cover of the catalogue.

Nicolas de Liedekerke explained: *“From our position as architects, Victor Horta is an icon. When you look at his drawings, you realise that he drew extremely well. Even if it is not all to your liking, there is such quality and creativity that you can’t help but be impressed.”*

Full interview available here: [Press Releases | Brafa Art Fair](#)

BRAFA 2023: a selection of works



GALERIE ARY JAN
Pierre-Auguste Renoir (Limoges 1841-1919 Cagnes-sur-Mer)
Study of bathing girl, 1896



EPOQUE FINE JEWELS
Philippe Wolfers (Brussels, 1858-1929)
Art Nouveau peacock tiara/brooch
Gold, silver, diamond, enamel and opal



DALTON SOMARE
Mask, Mukudj
Punu, Gabon, late 19th-early 20th century
Wood, pigments, kaolin, H 30 cm



GALERIE BERNARD DE LEYE
Silver wine cooler
Vienna, 1782
Master Silversmith Ignaz Joseph Würth

More information about the works here: [Images](#) | [Brafa Art Fair](#)

BRAFA 2023 : a selection of works



DE JONCKHEERE
Pieter Huys (Antwerp, 1519-1584)
The Temptation of St. Anthony

BRAFA 2023: selection of works



SAMUEL VANHOEGAERDEN GALLERY
Pierre Alechinsky (Brussels, 1927)
L'or du rien, 1967-1968
Acrylic on paper mounted on canvas, with an Indian ink predella



GALLERY DESMET
Bartolomeo Cavaceppi (1716-1799) (Attributed to)
The Young Emperor Commodus
White marble, marble de Saint Anne
Rome, late 18th century
H 72 x W 54 x D 25 cm

More information about the works here: [Images](#) | [Brafa Art Fair](#)

BRAFA 2023: a selection of works



AXEL VERVOORDT
José Zanine Caldas (Brazil, Belmonte 1918-2001 Vitória)
Table, 1978
Pequi wood, 80 x 120 cm



OSBORNE SAMUEL GALLERY
Lynn Chadwick (London 1914-2003 Lypiatt Park)
Sitting Couple, 1990
Stainless Steel H 65 x W 69 x D 61 cm



GALERIE TAMÉNAGA
Odilon Redon (Bordeaux 1840-1916 Paris)
Vase de fleurs
Pastel



BERNIER/ELIADES GALLERY
Marisa Merz (Turin, 1926-2019)
Untitled, 2009
Mixed media on paper mounted on plywood



OPERA GALLERY
Nicolas de Staël (Saint-Petersburg 1914-1955 Antibes)
Marine, 1954

BRAFA 2023: a selection of works



HAROLD T'KINT DE ROODENBEKE
Charles-Edouard Jeanneret dit Le Corbusier (La Chaux-de-Fonds 1887-1965 Roquebrune-Cap-Martin)
La pyrénéenne, 1940



GALERIE BERTRAND DE LAVERGNE
Figure of a golden pheasant on a rock
Polychrome porcelain
China, Qianlong period (1736-1795), circa 1750-1770
H 35.5 cm

BRAFA ART FAIR



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Interview with Beatrix Bourdon,
Managing Director

This has been a special year for you. It has been 30 years since you started working at the Fair. What was your first contact at the time with the Foire des Antiquaires de Belgique, since renamed BRAFA?

During a dinner, I learned that they were looking for a manager to organise the Fair as a whole. I sent my CV and that's how the adventure started. I was 27 years old. At the start, I had no idea about the behind-the-scenes and the different aspects of the organisation of such an event.

Were you aware of the enormous responsibility you were taking on?

Not really, and that was a good thing, because I arrived full of enthusiasm and a willingness to learn. I had never compiled a catalogue in my life, never drawn the floor plan for a fair or held a press conference. It was thanks to the president at the time, Christian de Bruyn, that I learned everything. He gave me time and all his energy to explain the inner workings of the Fair. Ultimately, putting together a fair is like putting together a puzzle: all 20,000 pieces have to fit perfectly. You always have to find a balance between venues, exhibitors, the works on display and the collectors.

Do you remember your first BRAFA?

It was at the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels. Since I had no specific location at the Fair at the time, I had no choice but to set up between two stands, with a very small desk made of a stool on the stairs. I remember that what impressed me the most during this first Fair was the discovery of the beauty of so many works.

Full interview available here: [Press Releases](#) | [Brafa Art Fair](#)

BRAFA Art Talks 2023

The **BRAFA Art Talks** will be taking place from Sunday, January 29th to Sunday, February 5th, 2023, at 4 pm, at the stand of the King Baudouin Foundation, every day, except Monday, January 30th. Quick overview:

Sunday, January 29th, 2023: **Theodoor Rombouts. A virtuoso of Flemish Caravaggism** by Dr Frederica Van Dam, Curator at the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Ghent. In partnership with CODART, Dutch and Flemish art in museums worldwide

On the occasion of its 225th anniversary, the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Ghent will be organising the very first monographic exhibition devoted to the Flemish Caravaggist painter Theodoor Rombouts (1597-1637). Rombouts was an established figure in the Antwerp artistic community. But although his painting was appreciated during his short life, his artistic heritage was soon forgotten after his death. Curator Dr Frederica Van Dam will shed new light on Rombouts' artistic personality and discuss the specificities of his work.

Tuesday, January 31st, 2023: **Brussels 1893, the birth of Art Nouveau** by Benjamin Zurstrassen, conservator at the Musée Horta

The talk will analyse the reasons for the birth of an unprecedented form of artistic and architectural expression in Brussels around 1893: its identity, its contradictions and how it differed from the Arts and Crafts movement in Britain.

Wednesday, February 1st, 2023: **Art and money.** Panel discussion led by Amid Faljaoui, Director of the economic magazine Trends Tendances and Guy van Wassenhove, curator of the Fonds Baillet-Latour

The panel will address the financial aspects of the art world by focusing on new technologies such as the Web or NFTs, the internationalisation of the market, the contemporary boom, wealth management, tax, expertise, insurance and claims and public heritage and museum management.

BRAFA Art Talks 2023

Thursday, February 2nd, 2023: **The King Baudouin Foundation's Art Nouveau collection** by Prof. Dr. Werner Adriaenssens, curator of 20th-century collections at the Royal Museums of Art and History

In over 20 years, the King Baudouin Foundation has built up an important collection of Belgian Art Nouveau masterpieces. Each artwork has a fascinating history that will be explained in the historical context.

Friday, February 3rd, 2023: **Harper's Bazaar** talk presented by Miluska van t'Lam, editor-in-chief of the magazine

More information coming soon.

Saturday, February 4th, 2023: **Eeckman Art & Insurance** panel. Speaker: Ellen Joncheere, CEO of HRD Antwerp - Insurer : Cédric van den Abeele, Partner and Key Account Manager at Anglo Belge - Moderator: Eric Hemeleers, CEO of Eeckman Art & Insurance

More information coming soon.

Sunday, February 5th, 2023: **Building a digital collection: risks and opportunities for the collector** by François Toussaint, CEO ARTTS, with Sari Depreeuw, IP lawyer and partner in Crowell & Moring's Brussels office and Elie Auvray, co-founder of logion blockchain network

Following in the footsteps of 'La dame au Pantin,' a major work by Félicien ROPS, we propose an educational discovery of the potential of NFTs (non-fungible tokens) in the creation of a digital collection. What benefits can be expected? What are the risks? Subjects under discussion will include certification issues, market dynamics and intellectual property aspects. There will be a question-and-answer period on this new subject which has inspired much curiosity.

King Baudouin Foundation press release

This year, at the King Baudouin Foundation's BRAFA stand, you can discover key works of Belgian heritage that have been acquired to display in our public collections. And, as a nod to the 2023 Year of Art Nouveau, several previously-acquired Art Nouveau pieces by Philippe Wolfers and Paul Hankar will also be exhibited.

This year, the King Baudouin Foundation's stand will also feature an important 20th century masterpiece of Belgian heritage, namely the three volumes of Théâtre (1902-1903), the collected plays of **Maurice Maeterlinck**, illustrated with the original drawings by **Léon Spilliaert**. Listed as a major Flemish work, the volumes were part of a private collection for many years before being purchased by the KBF, thanks to a legacy from the philanthropist Eliane Vercaempt, on behalf of the KMSKB (the Belgian Royal Museums of Fine Arts). Through this financial support and the intervention of the King Baudouin Foundation, Théâtre is now accessible to everyone. This rescue operation of a valuable part of Belgium's heritage succeeded thanks to the unique collaboration of the KMSKB, the Flemish Community and the KBF.

The King Baudouin Foundation United States (KBFUS) has recently facilitated the donation of a painting by **Hans Memling** to the Saint John's Hospital in Bruges. The purchase has meant that the portrait of Francisco de Rojas has returned home from the United States, to the city where Memling painted it in the 15th century. This masterpiece, by one of the most important Flemish Primitive painters, will exceptionally be on display at this year's BRAFA.

The King Baudouin Foundation is also exhibiting a number of drawings by the internationally renowned Belgian artist **Pierre Alechinsky**, created for his book 'Extrait pour traits'. The maquette was purchased by the Marie-Jeanne Dauchy Fund. There are 88 drawings that engage in dialogue with texts by authors including Pol Bury, Hugo Claus, Christian Dotremont and Luc de Heusch.

You may recognise the Art Nouveau jewellery designed by the renowned painter **George Morren**. The King Baudouin Foundation purchased the pieces at last year's BRAFA, thanks to the Christian Bauwens Fund. The silver coat hook and six ladies' buttons are unique Art Nouveau pieces, coming from the artist's estate.

At the start of 2023 – the Year of Art Nouveau in Brussels – the King Baudouin Foundation invites you to come and discover some of the other exceptional Art Nouveau pieces from its collection. Folding screens created by **Paul Hankar**, a leading figure in modern architecture, will be presented, alongside drawings from the famous Wolfers collection and a special silver table service that Philippe Wolfers designed for Victor Horta, Art Nouveau architect par excellence.

The King Baudouin Foundation has been committed to protecting and preserving Belgium's heritage for more than 30 years. Every year, they present a selection of their most recent acquisitions (purchases and donations) to the general public at the BRAFA.

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Contacts and acknowledgements

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