

STYLE & DECORATING | FAIRS & AUCTIONS | EXPERT ADVICE | EXHIBITIONS

# HOMES & ANTIQUES

*Antiques  
fairs special:*

BRAFA, TEFAF,  
Fine Arts Paris &  
Masterpiece

STYLISH & SUSTAINABLE

**Miniature  
marvels:**  
the magical world  
of dolls' house  
furniture

**INSPIRATION**

AT HOME  
WITH EDWARD  
BULMER +  
BEAUTIFUL  
AND UNIQUE  
INTERIORS

**PLUS**

DELIGHTFUL  
DAMASK  
COLLECTING  
MIDWINTER POTTERY  
CARING FOR  
ANTIQUE RUGS  
& CARPETS

*New Year's*  
**WELCOME**

Cocktail rings, carriage clocks  
and wassailing

# TRAVEL

*INTERNATIONAL FAIRS from BRAFA to Masterpiece, six of the best WINTER GARDENS, plus FAIRS AND AUCTIONS near you*



With bright blooms superseded by sculptural seedheads and ghostlier tones, gardens can have just as much magic in winter as they do in summer. We've highlighted six botanical attractions that keep their showstopping charm in the cooler months, from Bodnant Garden, in Conwy, to Gordon Castle Walled Garden, in Morayshire (pictured) – p114.

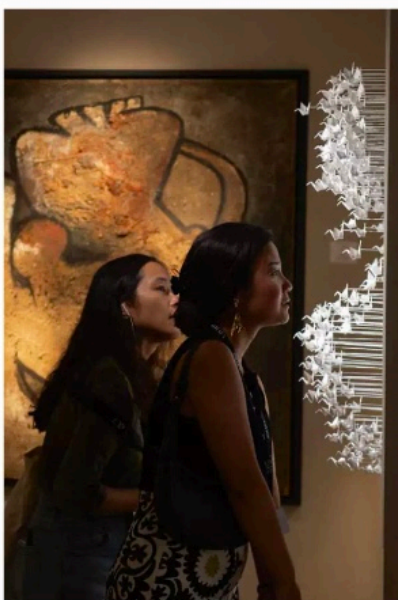
# EURO STARS

*With world-class experts gathered under one roof, international art and antiques fairs offer culture vultures the perfect excuse for a European city break. **Huon Mallalieu** rounds up the key events to have on your radar for 2023*

## BRAFA, BRUSSELS

BRAFA (The Brussels Art Fair) is the first event on the international fairs calendar and, for aficionados, it's a keenly anticipated annual favourite. 'It remains one of the most enjoyable and important fairs of the year,' says Alick Forrester of Willow Gallery, specialists in Impressionist and Post Impressionist art. 'We're committed to supporting the BRAFA team, and are very much looking forward to the 2023 edition.'

Beatrix Bourdon, the fair's long-serving managing director, explains that as a non-profit organisation they are there primarily for the exhibitors. 'We could do mini BRAFAs in Paris, London or Amsterdam and see BRAFA as a brand, but that's not our vision.'



**CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT** Visitors to BRAFA 2022 admire works on show at Galerie Hurtebize; La Grand-Place is one of the city's many architectural gems; sculpture on display at Chiale Fine Art; the fair is a work of art itself, featuring carpets designed by conceptual artist Arne Quinze.





## BRUSSELS celebrates 130 years of Art Nouveau

Although associated with Eurocrats and bureaucracy, Brussels is a refreshingly varied and quirky city – not least in its architecture, which ranges from the Brabantine Gothic masterpiece that is the Hôtel de Ville, which stands in the Grand-Place – itself a UNESCO World Heritage Site – through to the curious steel and glass façade of Parliament. Art Nouveau, however, is the city’s architectural leitmotif and its sinuous presence is being celebrated throughout 2023 – Art Nouveau Year in Brussels.

Inspired by the discovery of Japanese culture and as a reaction to the prevalent classicism, Art Nouveau emerged almost simultaneously across Europe in the 1890s. For Belgium the key date was 1893 with the completion of the **Hôtel Tassel**, a townhouse by the style’s greatest architect, Victor Horta. Art Nouveau was short-lived – a casualty of the First World War, ousted by modernist austerity – and it was only in the 1970s that Horta’s surviving buildings began to be cherished again. **Magasins Waucquez**, his 1905 department store, was saved from demolition in 1975 and is now the Belgian Comic Strip Centre, with the bonus of an excellent, reasonably priced restaurant. Of nearly 400 Art Nouveau buildings, the **Solvay House**, the **Autrique House**, the **Cauchie House** and the **Musical Instruments Museum** are not to be missed.

For information about Art Nouveau Brussels 2023 visit [artnouveau.urban.brussels](http://artnouveau.urban.brussels) – here you can buy an Art Nouveau pass allowing access to many of the city’s architectural gems as well as discounted rates on tours by Brussels Chatterguides ([bruxellesbavard.be](http://bruxellesbavard.be))



**ABOVE** The Autrique House (left) and Hôtel Tassel are not to be missed this year.

Their vision is firmly focused on improving ‘the one fair’, she says. Crucially, ongoing ‘improvement’ has not been at the expense of this event’s main strength: its appeal to collectors in many different areas. From antiquities to tribal arts, medieval sculpture and works of art to *bandes dessinées*, 18th-century furniture to 20th-century design – as the fair’s chairman Harold t’Kint de Roodenbeke says, ‘We must remain varied and diverse, and always retain the balance between the Old Masters and modern and contemporary art.’

Known by the acronym BRAFA since 2009, the fair was founded in 1956 and held annually at the Palais des Beaux-Arts in central Brussels from 1967. After welcoming international exhibitors in 1995, the space became too small, and in 2004 a move was made to the Tour & Taxis industrial site around the old Gare Maritime. Last year, for its first post-Covid edition, BRAFA moved once again, this time to a hall in the Brussels Expo in the north

of the city, which is where the fair will open its doors this month.

Brussels has declared 2023 Art Nouveau Year in the city, and the city’s rich Art Nouveau heritage will be reflected at BRAFA: the fair’s designers, Nicolas de Liedekerke and Daniel Culot of Volume Architecture, together with Beatrix Bourdon and Benjamin Zurstrassen, curator of the Horta Museum, have selected original Horta drawings to use in their carpet design for the aisles. It won’t be at the detriment of that vital ‘balance’, however. ‘We’re not going to make the fair a whole Art Nouveau ensemble; that would be too much,’ say Nicolas and Daniel. ‘The goal is to show Victor Horta’s work in a different way.’

In a crowded field for excellence, look out for carpet and textile specialist Christian Vrouyr, Old Masters at Jan Muller, and Francis Maere for interesting Belgian artists.

**BRAFA, 29th January – 5th February**  
[brafa.art](http://brafa.art) ▶