

COUNTRY LIFE

EVERY WEEK

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Set in stone:

Hadrian's epic vision lives on

Dog stars: how Olive and Mabel became celebrities

Hearts of glass: gardeners and their greenhouses

The world's most exclusive book club

Art market

BRAFA (June 19–26)

THIS will be the 67th BRAFA, but in a new home, the Brussels Expo, which was built for the 1935 Brussels International Exposition and housed the 1958 World's Fair. When BRAFA last moved 19 years ago, no contemporary art, tribal arts or comics were shown; they will all be well represented among the 115 exhibitors this time. However, the balance of disciplines represented at the fair has not been allowed to tilt too far against older art and it is hoped that the charm and friendliness of the fair will not suffer by the move. As Beatrix Bourdon, director since 1999, says: 'The most important thing is to preserve the values of the fair, the quality and authenticity of the artworks, the diversity of styles and eras, an elegant and refined atmosphere—and, of course, an impeccable organisation' (www.brafa.art).



▲ Chiale from Racconigi in Piedmont, Italy, has a 53in-high painted wooden figure of St George and the Dragon from late-16th-century Spain. It has added interest in that the saint is a portrait of Philip II of Spain, making the group a symbol for the Christian victory over the Turks at Lepanto.



▲ The Ghent picture dealer Jan Muller has two elements from a carved wooden Crucifixion, one of the swooning Virgin and disciples, the other of horsemen. Carved in Brussels, each measures 34¼in high and dates from the last quarter of the 15th century.



▲ Among the principal exhibits with Brussels tribal-arts dealer Didier Claes is a Nkisi figure from the Kongo Yombe people of the DRC. At 11½in high, it is made of wood, mirror and metal with traces of pigment. Such figures were used in oath-taking, much like Bibles in court. It was collected during the first decade of the 20th century by a Belgian administrator. →



▲ Desmet, the Brussels sculpture dealer, has a 21¼in Roman 1st-century AD marble torso of the drunken Silenus clapping a wineskin, which manages to convey its meaning clearly despite considerable losses.



▲ De Jonckheere was founded in Brussels in 1976 and moved to Paris before settling in Geneva, Switzerland, but the gallery continues to specialise in Flemish and Belgian paintings. It is showing a typically eerie Paul Delvaux, the 42½in by 59in *The Storm*, 1962, which was once in the distinguished Nellens Collection at Knokke.