

BRAFA ART FAIR

BRAFA 2023: The 68th edition closes after a steady week of sales for the fair's 130 participating galleries.



BRAFA 2023 - General view © Jean-Michel Clajot

Captivated audiences

BRAFA, which took place at Brussels Expo for the second time, made a big impression. 130 exhibitors, including 13 new galleries, displayed their most beautiful treasures in two Halls which had been entirely refurbished in the spirit of Art Nouveau, the theme chosen for this 68th edition. Thanks to the perfectly-curated juxtaposition of eras and styles, the interest of the audience browsing the aisles was sustained over the course of these 8 days.

65,000 visitors, including collectors, museum curators, decorators and art lovers, came from all over Europe, Japan, Mexico and the United States to discover the Fair, which featured 35% of Belgian galleries and 65% of foreign galleries.

"This 68th edition was a great success. From the very first hours, collectors flocked to the Fair in search of rare works. Many young people were in attendance this year, as well as families, which proves that art is of interest to all generations. We received many compliments about the quality and beauty of the Fair. It was a great achievement," explained Harold t'Kint de Roodenbeke, Chairman of BRAFA.

Design and monumental works at BRAFA 2023

Design was a significant presence at the Fair this year, thanks a dozen of the galleries. Art lovers could not fail to notice the red polyester staircase by Georges Ferran, created for Axe, in polyester foam, steel and lacquer (France, 1971), which was presented by the **MORENTZ** gallery (NL) or a pair of wall lamps in white lacquered metal and brass from Gio Ponti *Finestra* made by Arredoluce in 1957 presented by **Robertaebasta** (IT).



BRAFA 2023 - MORENTZ © Olivier Pirard



BRAFA 2023 - Jean-François Cazeau © Olivier Pirard

Visitors were also captivated by a number of monumental works such as the immense Sam Francis from 1978, *Untitled*, measuring nearly 4m by 5m, which was on display on the stand of **Guy Pieters Gallery** (BE), and a set of six panels, *Eau de Robot*, 1981-4, by James Rosenquist, 274,3 x 731.5 cm, which could be admired on the stand of the **Galerie Jean-François Cazeau** (FR).

Great sales

The works on display, ranging from antiquity to contemporary and tribal art and design, were quick to attract collectors, with sales multiplying from the very first hours. This last weekend also enabled the galleries, who expressed their satisfaction with this edition, to conclude a number of additional sales.

Dei Bardi Art (BE), a gallery specialised in the “haute époque” – sculptures and objects from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance – sold among others a Renaissance marble tondo by the artist Domenico Gagini for approximately 40,000 euros.

Klaas Muller (BE), specialised in old paintings, drawings and sculptures from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, sold a painting by the Dutch painter Hieronymus Van Diest (The Hague, 1631-1673), entitled *Zicht op Den Briel*, to the Scheepvaartmuseum in Amsterdam.

Galerie Bernard De Leye (BE), specialised in European gold and silverware from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, concluded a number of sales including one of his highlights, a wine cooler, from Vienna, dating from 1782. **D'Arschot & Cie** (BE), also specialised in antique gold and silverware, sold a lady's stein in engraved and partially gilded silver, Ravensburg, dating from the late sixteenth century, as well as a series of four chiselled and engraved basins in embossed silver, Bruges, circa 1721-23.

One collector bought a very beautiful Parisian flat desk in ebony veneer from the Regency period, circa 1725-1730, from the stand of **Galerie Theunissen & de Ghellinck**, specialised in French furniture and art objects from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The **Lemaire** gallery (BE) parted with 15 Chinese porcelain plates bearing the coats of arms of European families for 1,000 to 15,000 euros each, and a Paris porcelain piece, by the Manufacture de Dihl, with bronzes attributed to Thomire, circa 1805, for approximately 35,000 euros.

La Pendulerie (FR), which presented chimney clocks, decorative clocks, regulators and art objects, sold an important eight-light bronze chandelier, very finely engraved and gilded with matte gold and embellished with moulded and cut crystal elements, attributed to Pierre-Philippe Thomire, Empire era, circa 1805-10 and a rare very finely chased bronze mantel clock with antique patina and burnished gold gilding, Paris, Empire-Restoration period, signed 'Breguet Neveu et Cie N°2833', figure of the putto in patinated bronze by Pierre-Philippe Thomire.

In the field of tribal art, **Serge Schoffel – Art Premier** (BE) sold the *Nyamusa* figurative pole, Bahr el-Ghazal, Republic of South Sudan, nineteenth century, made of wood and metal (H 162 cm). At the **Galerie Claes** (BE), the bronze *Edo* panther from Benin, late nineteenth century, found a buyer on the first evening, and a dozen other sales were concluded, ranging from 12,000 to 40,000 euros. The gallery also sold seven photographs by Fabrice Monteiro, a Belgian artist of Beninese descent.

On the Art Nouveau side, at **Florian Kolhammer** (AT), a buyer chose the black and white vase created by Josef Hoffmann, circa 1911, for the Johann Loetz Witwe glassworks. The requested price was 16,000 euros. **Dr. Lennart Booij Fine Art & Rare Items** (NL) which sold several vases, found a buyer for its 'highlight' ceramic artwork by Emile Gallé, circa 1889, for approximately 6,500 euros.

Galerie Oscar De Vos was particularly pleased with this 68th edition. The gallery concluded numerous sales, including that of the *Couple devant la porte*, 1923, by Gustave De Smet, and other works by artists of the Latem school such as Emile Claus, César de Cock and Albert Saverys. **A&R Fleury** (FR) sold several bronze sculptures by Alicia Penalba from the 1950s and 60s for amounts ranging from 50,000 to 75,000 euros. **Samuelis Baumgarte** (DE), who was present at BRAFA for the first time and devoted his stand to Miró and Calder, sold one of the latter's mobiles, *Twisted tail*, from 1968, for more than 1 million euros. **Harold t'Kint de Roodenbeke**, for his part, sold a Hans Hartung painting, *Abstract T1982-R7i*, from 1982, and a bronze sculpture by Georges Minne, *L'agenouillé de la fontaine*, circa 1938. **Samuel Vanhoegaerden Gallery** (BE), which devoted its entire stand to the Belgian artist Pierre Alechinsky, concluded a number of sales.

Boon Gallery (BE) sold the work entitled *Aggregation* by the Korean artist CHUN Kwang Young, 2007, for approximately 120,000 euros. **Galerie Taménaga** (FR, JPN) sold several works by contemporary artists he represents, including one by Japanese artist Takehiko Sugawara, *Miharu*, for 30,000 euros. **La Patinoire Royale | Galerie Valérie Bach** (BE) parted with *Pacific Blue*, 1978, by Jo Delahaut, for approximately 35,000 euros. **Guy Pieters Gallery** sold a work by Christo, *The Mastaba* (Project for Au Shabi, United Arab Emirates), from 2012. The gallery also sold the monumental sculpture *Three hearts on the rocks*, 2002, by Jim Dine for approximately 750,000 euros. **Rodolphe Janssen** (BE) attracted new collectors and sold around thirty works, including *Untitled*, engraved wood on canvas,

2021, by Gert & Uwe Tobias for approximately 50,000 euros, as well as paintings by Marcel Berlinger and works by Thomas Lerooy, each worth between 20,000 and 30,000 euros.

In terms of design furniture of the twentieth century, **Maison Rapin** (FR) sold a unique piece to a collector: *Orione sideboard*, by Roberto G. Rida, made in 2017. The requested price was 120,000 euros. **Gokelaere & Robinson** (BE) sold a lamp by Gino Sarfatti, 1946-48, a unique desk by Ico Parisi from 1952, a table in resin with incrustated hematites by Ado Chale from the 1970s, exceptional for its size and quality, as well as a series of bronze sculptures by Anton Prinner.

The **Collectors Gallery** (BE), which displayed jewellery and objects by artists and designers from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, parted with a ring by Ettore Sottsass, *Mane*, in 18ct gold and lapis lazuli, from the exhibition entitled “La Seduzione” which was held in 2002 in Verona.

The King Baudouin Foundation

The **King Baudouin Foundation**, which hosted the daily BRAFA Art Talks on its stand, made two superb acquisitions. A Meissen porcelain bowl from Charles Alexandre de Lorraine’s armorial service at his castle of Tervueren, between 1720 and 1730, was chosen for a Brussels museum from **Art et Patrimoine - Laurence Lenne** (BE), and a set of chairs by Victor Horta was acquired from **Thomas Deprez Fine Arts** (BE) for the Art & History Museum in Brussels.



BRAFA 2023 – General view © Olivier Pirard

Revisit BRAFA 2023

The BRAFA website offers a virtual tour of the Fair: <https://www.brafa.art/en/fair-virtual-tour>

The catalogue is also online: <https://www.brafa.art/en/online-catalogue>

High-definition photos can be downloaded here: <https://www.brafa.art/en/images-categories>

See you at the 69th edition of BRAFA, which will take place from Sunday, January 28th to Sunday, February 4th, 2024.

Foire des Antiquaires de Belgique asbl

Bureaux – Royal Depot

Avenue du Port 86 C boîte 2A | BE-1000 Brussels

t. +32 (0)2 513 48 31

✉ info@brafa.be | www.brafa.art

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