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BRAFA ART FAIR

GUEST OF HONOUR: THE KING BAUDOUIN FOUNDATION

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TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 11

STAND 118

PRESS RELEASE – BRAFA

The HELENE BAILLY MARCILHAC Gallery is delighted to take part in the 71st edition of BRAFA for the fourteenth consecutive year, held in Brussels from January 25 to February 2, 2025.

On this occasion, the gallery will present a selection of Post-Impressionist, Fauvist, and Modern works, bringing together some of the most significant names from these pivotal artistic periods.

Among the major works exhibited will be an exceptional painting by **Émile Othon Friesz**, dating from 1907, a vibrant testament to Fauvism at its height; an intimate Fauvist canvas by **Henri Manguin** from 1908, depicting a woman undressing; and a luminous work by **Théo Van Rysselberghe**, also from 1908, exemplifying the radiant Neo-Impressionist aesthetic of the time.

The presentation will also feature a compelling dialogue between **Francis Picabia** and **Victor Brauner**, two leading figures of Surrealism. The works, coming from a private collection held within the same family for over thirty years, reveal the deep friendship and artistic affinity between the two artists. Picabia's portrait of Brauner resonates with one of Brauner's own compositions, forming a coherent and profoundly engaging ensemble.

Completing this presentation is a poetic and monumental "*Arbre à Cocons*" by **Charles Macaire**. In this hand-crafted paper sculpture, the artist celebrates the beauty of gesture and the nobility of craftsmanship. Entirely shaped by hand, the piece embodies the meeting of artistic creation and artisanal savoir-faire, extending the dialogue between nature, material, and poetry.

EMILE OTHON FRIESZ (1879-1949)



Bord de Mer, circa 1907

Signed lower right: Othon Friesz

Oil on canvas

54 × 65 cm (21 1/4 × 25 1/2 in.)

This work will be included in the forthcoming edition of the Catalogue Raisonné of the Painted Work of Émile Othon Friesz, currently being prepared by the Galerie Aittouarès. Inclusion notice no. 25361, issued by Madame Odile Aittouarès on January 3, 2025.

PROVENANCE

Galerie Druet.

Private collection.

Philocalé Enchères sale, February 2025.

Originally from Le Havre, he trained at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris under Léon Bonnat. During this period, he met painters such as Henri Matisse.

Exhibited at the Salon d'Automne of 1905, in the room adjacent to the famous “cage aux fauves”, this moment marked a major turning point in his work. The following day, he moved into a studio near Matisse at the Couvent des Oiseaux on rue de Sèvres, where Matisse’s work had a strong and lasting influence on his use of color.

After an initial phase influenced by the Impressionists, Othon Friesz truly flourished within Fauvism, of which he is considered one of the leading figures. In the south of France, accompanied by Georges Braque, he renewed his inspiration by painting a series of views of La Ciotat and Le Bec de l'Aigle. **While this motif recurs throughout the period, this particular painting offers an unusual angle, proposing a fresh perspective and revealing a new vision of the artist toward this landscape.**

Here, perspective becomes freer, moving away from mimetic representation through a simplification of forms that borders on abstraction. The colors are flamboyant, dominated by warm tones that capture the brilliance and vitality of the Mediterranean summer light.

HENRI MANGUIN (1874-1949)



La Chemise Enlevée, 1908
Signed lower right: manguin
Oil on canvas
100 × 81 cm (39 3/8 × 31 7/8 in.)

PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the artist by Eugène Druet in 1911 (Galerie Druet).
Kritchvesky Collection.
Private collection, France.
Private collection, Brazil.

EXPOSITIONS

Paris, Galerie E. Druet, Manguin, 1913, no. 42 (Nu).
Paris, Galerie de Paris, Manguin, 1964, no. 3.
Nice, Palais de la Méditerranée, Henri Manguin. Over One Hundred and Fifty Works, 1969, no. 32.
Okayama, Hiroshima, Tokyo, Gustave Moreau and His Students, 1974.
Paris, Galerie de Paris, Centenary, Henri Manguin, 1976, no. 49.

BIBLIOGRAPHIE

Pierre Cabanne, Henri Manguin, Neuchâtel, 1964, illustrated under no. 117, p. 64.
Marie-Caroline Sainsaulieu, Lucille & Claude Manguin, Jean-Pierre Manguin, Pierre Cabanne, Jacques Lassaigue (preface), Henri Manguin: Catalogue Raisonné de l'Œuvre Peint, Neuchâtel, Switzerland, Ides et Calendes, 1980, illustrated under no. 298.

A Fauvist artist trained at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris under Gustave Moreau, Henri Manguin first explored the Impressionist movement.

Exhibited at the Galerie Berthe Weil and the Salon des Indépendants, it was at the 1905 Salon d'Automne that he received the label of Fauvist, after the room in which his works were displayed was famously described by Louis Vauxcelles as the “cage aux fauves” (“cage of wild beasts”).

Known for his numerous depictions of the female figure, this work presents a nude, a recurring theme in his oeuvre. The woman's posture is almost theatrical, recalling that of a model posing in an artist's studio. With her arms raised above her head as she removes her blouse, her body adopts a contrapposto stance that evokes the grace of a sculpture.

The artist also gives significant attention to the decorative setting, particularly the richly patterned fabrics spread across the floor. Through their pure and vibrant colors, these fabrics recall Matisse's decorative universe and affirm Manguin's belonging to Fauvism a movement defined by its chromatic vitality and expressive freedom.

THÉO VAN RYSSELBERGHE (1862-1926)



Pivoines Blanches, 1908

Signed with the monogram lower right.

Countersigned and titled on the stretcher at the back: van Rysselberghe; *Pivoines Blanches*.

Oil on original canvas

86.5 × 83 cm (34 × 32 5/8 in.)

CERTIFICATES

Certificate of authenticity issued by Madame Paule Cailac on October 16, 1969.

Certificate of authenticity issued by Mr. Olivier Bertrand on June 27, 2025.

PROVENANCE

Galerie Malingue.

Private collection.

Doutrebente sale, June 2025

Belgian Symbolist artist and leading figure of Neo-Impressionism, Théo Van Rysselberghe was one of the co-founders of the group Les XX in Brussels an avant-garde artistic circle and one of the principal representatives of Pointillism in Belgium.

Trained in Ghent, his numerous travels to Morocco allowed him to develop his style, gaining both recognition and great success. Close to many artists such as Georges Seurat and the poet Émile Verhaeren, he embodied the rich artistic exchanges between France and Belgium.

Although best known for his portraits, Van Rysselberghe here turns to a still life, through which he expresses both his artistic maturity and the evolution of his technique.

The post-Impressionist and Divisionist legacy gives way to a composition built from broad, elongated brushstrokes. The colors are vibrant the reds emphasizing the pearly whiteness of the peonies while the various textures, from the ceramic vase to the tabletop, are rendered with subtle precision.

This bouquet echoes his painting *Marthe aux Pivoines Blanches* (107 × 90 cm, Ronald Feltkamp No. 1914-007), in which we find the same blue-green vase and floral arrangement. The work belongs to a series exploring a recurring floral motif, both decorative and intimate in spirit.

FRANCIS PICABIA (1879-1953) AND VICTOR BRAUNER (1903-1966)

The dialogue between Francis Picabia and Victor Brauner stands out as one of the highlights of this presentation. Bound by a deep friendship, these two artists shared a common curiosity for pictorial languages and the avant-garde movements of the 20th century.

Like Brauner, Francis Picabia moved through several artistic currents: after his Impressionist beginnings, he turned to abstraction before joining Surrealism. A cosmopolitan figure, he made several stays in New York, where he helped to introduce modern art and Dadaism to the American continent.

Their intellectual and emotional closeness finds a special resonance in the portrait of Brauner painted by Picabia, shown here alongside a work by Brauner himself. In the face's enigmatic features, one can discern what appears to be an allusion to the Romanian artist: the form of the second eye, partially erased, evokes the injury Brauner suffered in 1938, when he lost the use of his left eye during an accident.

These two works, kept side by side for over thirty years within the same private collection, now bear witness to a rare and intimate dialogue. Their reunion in this exhibition celebrates not only an artistic friendship but also the profound coherence of their surrealist approaches, both nourished by inner visions and poetic correspondences.

FRANCIS PICABIA (1879-1953)



Untitled, 1947
Signed lower right: Francis Picabia
and dated lower left: 1.1.; 1947
Oil on cardboard
60.5 × 50 cm (23 7/8 × 19 5/8 in.)

This work will be included in the forthcoming Catalogue Raisonné of the Work of Francis Picabia, currently being prepared by the Comité Picabia. Inclusion notice dated October 20, 2025.

PROVENANCE
Galerie des 4 Mouvements.
Galerie Liliane François.
Private collection, France.

Created in 1947, in the aftermath of the war, this untitled work by Francis Picabia reflects a period of deep introspection for the artist. In this abstract composition of interlocking organic forms, one can discern the face of Victor Brauner, a close friend of Picabia and a key figure of Surrealism.

The interplay of lines and colored planes evokes both presence and disappearance, recalling Brauner's loss of his eye in 1938. Through its restrained palette and almost symbolic structure, the painting expresses an inner dialogue between the two artists and pays tribute to the fragile yet resilient humanity of the postwar era.

VICTOR BRAUNER (1903-1966)



La Mathématicienne, 1957

Monogrammed and dated lower right: VB; XII 1957

Oil on canvas

55 × 46 cm (21 5/8 × 18 1/8 in.)

PROVENANCE

Artist's studio.

Alexandre Iolas Collection.

Private collection, France.

Private collection, France.

Titled *La Mathématicienne* and dated 1957, this work by Victor Brauner illustrates the synthesis of geometric precision and symbolic poetry characteristic of the artist. The interlocking forms and flat color planes construct a multifaceted face at once human and conceptual where reason and intuition merge.

The gaze, fixed and introspective, seems to probe the mysteries of thought. Through this structured yet vibrant composition, Brauner evokes the logic of dreams, where mathematics becomes a language of the soul, extending his exploration of the connections between science, spirit, and imagination.

CONTACTS

HELENE BAILLY MARCILHAC
FOUNDER & DIRECTOR
T. +33 (0)6 60 82 45 03
HELENE@BAILLYMARCILHAC.COM

JOSEPHINE FERRAND
SALES & LOANS
T. +33 (0)6 71 86 31 66
JOSEPHINE@BAILLYMARCILHAC.COM

SALOME DE BRYAS
SALES & FAIRS
T. +33 (0)6 82 60 39 58
SALOME@BAILLYMARCILHAC.COM

AURELIE FRANCIN
ACQUISITIONS
T. +33 (0)1 44 51 51 53
AURELIE@BAILLYMARCILHAC.COM

CLOTILDE GRENIER DE LA SAUZAY
COMMUNICATIONS
T. +33 (0)6 78 33 31 53
CLOTILDE@BAILLYMARCILHAC.COM

MARION NGUYEN
DESIGN
T. +33 (0)6 47 71 71 71
MARION@BAILLYMARCILHAC.COM

HELENE BAILLY MARCILHAC

From Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Saturday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Sunday by appointment

71, rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré
75008 Paris
T. +33 (0)1 44 51 51 51