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## BRAFA 2025: a 70<sup>th</sup> edition brimming with quality and eclecticism



BRAFA 2025 - *Valkyrie Seondeok* by Joana Vasconcelos © Olivier Pirard © Atelier Joana Vasconcelos

BRAFA is getting ready to unveil its 70<sup>th</sup> instalment. This anniversary edition promises to be a milestone, celebrating seven decades of quality, excellence and eclecticism.

Since its beginnings in 1956, the Fair, which was previously known as the *Foire des Antiquaires*, has grown to offer some twenty specialities ranging from Antiquity to contemporary art, by way of Old Masters paintings, classical African art, antique and designer furniture, goldsmithery, carpets and textiles, rare books and jewellery, and more.

### BRAFA, a brand in its own right

From Sunday, January 26<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, the Fair will be welcoming 130 exhibitors from 16 countries to Brussels Expo (Halls 3 and 4), consolidating its international scope. 16 new galleries will also be joining the various sections ([click here for the full list](#)).

Each year, BRAFA seeks to offer an exceptional panorama of art history in a convivial atmosphere enhanced by a sumptuous setting, which is eagerly anticipated by numerous visitors.

Klaas Muller, the Chairman of BRAFA, explains: *“BRAFA has become a brand in its own right. We have managed to avoid the lure of passing trends and fashions. What matters is the quality of the featured works and galleries. Our move to Brussels Expo in 2022 has increased accessibility to the Fair, for visitors from outside Brussels and abroad. The general atmosphere amongst participants is positive and friendly, the exhibitors are welcoming and always ready to share their passion with visitors, and our audience is very varied, from art lovers to discerning collectors, by way of interior designers and museum curators. BRAFA is the first major event on the artistic calendar, and everyone is looking forward to discovering our Fair, which has become an unmissable event.”*

#### An exceptional guest of honour

BRAFA has chosen a prestigious guest of honour for this 70<sup>th</sup> edition: the Portuguese artist Joana Vasconcelos. Her monumental sculptures and immersive installations are imbued with humour, exploring universal themes such as the status of women, consumer society and collective identity. Her colourful creations will instil a vibrant energy into the Fair.

*“I am very honoured to be the guest of honour at the next BRAFA, especially since it is a festive edition linked to the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Fair, a milestone that highlights both its historical importance and the impact that the Fair has had on the international art world for so many years. BRAFA’s longevity is testament to its leading role for art connoisseurs and collectors, fostering an environment where the past, present and future of art overlap. Taking part in this celebration is not only a privilege, but also a great opportunity to get involved in an event that has become synonymous with cultural preservation and artistic exchange,”* says Joana Vasconcelos.

#### Promoting our heritage, a mission for the Fair

As a space of meeting and transmission, BRAFA also makes a point of promoting Belgian heritage. With this in mind, a new collaboration has been set up with the Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage (IRPA). The full range of IRPA’s conservation and restoration activities will be on display on its stand (n°136). Interactive workshops will also be held every day at 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. (with the exception of Monday, January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025).

On the stand of the King Baudouin Foundation (n°135), visitors will be able to discover a selection of its most recent acquisitions. The Foundation’s participation at BRAFA contributes to making these treasures accessible to the general public, showcasing its mission to protect Belgium’s heritage for future generations. A series of lectures, the BRAFA Art Talks, will also be hosted on the stand of the Foundation, every day at 4 p.m. (with the exception of Monday, January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025).

#### A selection of works at BRAFA 2025

Over the course of two days, one hundred international experts examined the works to be exhibited. Some of these works are particularly remarkable for their rarity, their quality, or their exceptional provenance.

### **1. Archaeology**

**Axel Vervoordt Gallery (BE - stand 29)** will be presenting a bronze sculpture of a right arm (56 x 72 cm) dating from circa the fourth century BC. It is an exceptional piece, not only for its state of preservation but also for the anatomical precision of the hand and fingers. For the first time, BRAFA 2025 will be welcoming the Italian gallery **Valerio Turchi (IT - stand 5)**, whose refined

stand will be showcasing superb Greek and Roman marble heads, torsos and statues. **Gallery Desmet (BE - stand 31)** will be presenting an archaic head of a *Kore* in white marble. This sophisticated piece, created during the Roman period, is thought to date from the late first century BC or the early first century AD.

The collection of minerals, meteorites and fossils presented by Stone Gallery (**NL - stand 7**) will be sure to attract the attention of BRAFA visitors. These include the front leg of a woolly mammoth ("*Mammuthus primigenius*") over two metres high, found in the North Sea, and an Ichthyosaur from Holzmaden in Germany, carrying two embryos and dating back 180 million years.

## **2. Asian art and classical African art**

Visitors won't want to miss the collection of Ngon masks presented by **Montagut Gallery (SP - stand 103)**. Often sculpted to a remarkable level of detail, they are emblematic of the cultural and spiritual practices of the Grassfields region. The gallery will also be exhibiting an Italian collection of gold ornaments from the Baule culture in Côte d'Ivoire. These pieces highlight the symbolic use of gold in Baule rituals and adornments, which celebrate themes such as beauty, prestige and spiritual power. The stand of **Dalton Somaré (IT - stand 8)** has been designed around the decorative silhouettes of the facades of the *Cà Brùta*, literally the *Ugly House*, a building in Milan. It was designed by Giovanni Muzio, the great-grandfather of the two gallery owners, and is recognised as the Manifesto of the Novecento movement. The gallery will be presenting a fine pair of Bamana antelope headdresses from Mali (H 85.5 cm and H 74 cm), which illustrate the astonishing modernity and dynamism of Bamana sculpture at the beginning of the twentieth century. **Claes Gallery (BE - stand 35)** will be displaying a large ceremonial spoon from the Dan culture in Côte d'Ivoire, from the late nineteenth-early twentieth century (H 40 cm) and a Yoruba cup bearer (Nigeria, Igbomina region) from the same period (H 24.5 cm).

**Galerie Hioco (FR - stand 39)** will be exhibiting a piece from northern India which was very well received by our experts: a *Laksmīnarayana* sculpture in black stone dating from the tenth-eleventh centuries, which was built up between 1950 and 1970. The same stand will also feature a selection of contemporary Japanese ceramics created by internationally-renowned artists, including Yukiya Izumita. His fascinating creations, composed of layers of clay reminiscent of geological marine formations, are captivating in their power and singularity.

## **3. Ancient art**

The London gallery **DYS44 Lampronti Gallery (IT - stand 64)**, a new participant at BRAFA, is sure to dazzle visitors with a self-portrait by the seventeenth-century female artist Lavinia Fontana (Bologna 1552-Rome 1614). Other new exhibitors include **Galerie Lowet de Wotrenge (BE - stand 127)**, which will be presenting *Deux hommes qui chantent* by David II Teniers (Antwerp 1610-1690 Brussels). **Klaas Muller (BE - stand 4)** will be exhibiting the very fine *Triumphant Christ* by Jan Boeckhorst (Münster 1604-1668 Antwerp), dating from the seventeenth century. *The Apothecary* by David Teniers the Younger (Antwerp 1610-1690 Brussels), circa 1660, will be on display on the stand of **De Jonckheere (CH - stand 30)**, as will a spectacular work by Sebastiaen Vrancx (Antwerp 1573-1647) entitled *Intérieur de la Cathédrale Notre-Dame de Paris*, dating from 1621. **Stéphane Renard Fine Art (FR - stand 112)** will be exhibiting a piece by Carlo Francesco Nuvolone (Milan, 1609-1662) entitled *Christ Falling on the Way of Calvary*.

In the field of ancient drawings, engravings and prints, **Douwes Fine Art b.v. (NL - stand 61)** will be exhibiting a very rare copper engraving plate (H 21 x W 16 cm, 3 mm thick) by Rembrandt van Rijn (Leiden 1606-1669 Amsterdam), entitled *A Scholar in His Study ("Faust")*, circa 1652. The drawing from Jacob Jordaens (Antwerp, 1593-1678), *A rostrum of musicians in a loggia*, circa 1635, at COLNAGHI (UK/BE/SP/USA – stand 34) was unanimously admired.

#### **4. Antique furniture**

A must-see piece on the stand of **Galerie Bernard De Leye (BE - stand 50)**: a superb large console table in limewood and marble from the Regency period, with a brace engraved with a hunting scene after Alexandre-François Desportes (Champigneulle 1661-1743 Paris). This piece is part of the production of the King's architect and ornamentalist Pierre Constant d'Ivry (Ivry-sur-Seine 1698-1777 Paris). **Galerie Marc Maison (FR - stand 94)** is sure to attract attention with its stand devoted to *Egyptomania*, featuring a monumental bed designed by the nineteenth-century carpenter Louis Malard which was presented at the World's Fair in 1889. A delightful pedestal table will also be on display, with a marquetry top resting on three sacred ibises (H 83 x Ø 77 cm), circa 1874-1876, signed Pierre-Ferdinand Duvinage (France, 1823-1876).

#### **5. Silver and Gold ware**

Two remarkable pieces will be showcased on the stand of the **Galerie Bernard De Leye (BE - stand 50)**: a rare oblong vermeil cup, chased with a decoration of sea monsters in relief, circa 1600, as well as a very precious processional cross in silver and vermeil with enamelled tracings (H 43.5 cm) bearing the hallmark of Puy-en-Velay, circa 1500, and the hallmark of the goldsmith Claude Borie. The Portuguese gallery **J. Baptista (PT - stand 117)**, a first-time participant at BRAFA, will be exhibiting a concave silver display stand, a remarkable example of late sixteenth-century Portuguese silversmithery that features in the collections of prestigious museums such as the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga in Lisbon, the Lázaro Galdiano Foundation in Madrid and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

#### **6. Clockmaking**

Not to be missed on the stand of **Artimo Fine Arts (BE - stand 134)**: an automaton book made of gold, enamel and tortoiseshell, produced by MEUSSEL & FILS in Geneva in March 1823. This extremely rare question-and-answer mechanism is one of only six in existence and contains an animated scene in gold and enamel. This book belonged to the collection of Dr. Maurice Sandoz (1892-1958) and he used it as a guest book for his prestigious guests.

#### **7. Porcelain and earthenware**

At **Jean Lemaire (BE - stand 44)**, porcelain enthusiasts will be able to discover a pair of seventeenth-century Kutani porcelain statuettes of birds of prey, as well as a Japanese porcelain statuette representing a *Bijin* (beautiful lady) with Imari decoration of cherry blossoms (late seventeenth century) and gilded bronze (eighteenth century). This piece is a fine example of the poetic fusion between Eastern and Western cultures.

**Art et Patrimoine - Laurence Lenne (BE - stand 77)** will be exhibiting a very rare large jar (75 cm high) in Montelupo majolica, circa 1560-1580.

It was probably one of the diplomatic gifts offered by the de' Medici family to the Habsburg family as part of the marriage celebrations between Joanna of Austria and Francesco de' Medici.

## **8. Art Nouveau and Art Deco**

**Thomas Deprez Fine Arts (BE - stand 99)**, which specialises in Belgian Fin-de-Siècle art, will be dazzling visitors with a museum-quality historical piece by Pieter Jan Braecke (Nieuwpoort 1858-1938 Nossegem). *L'Humanité*, a marble sculpture over 2 metres high dating from 1906, was exhibited in the entrance hall of the Hôtel Aubecq, a masterpiece by Victor Horta (Ghent 1861-1947 Brussels) which was destroyed in 1949. The sculpture has now returned to its country of origin after 50 years in the United States.

For its first participation at BRAFA, **Galerie BG Arts (FR - stand 110)** will be exhibiting two mould blown glass vases with bronze handles, *Cluny* and *Senlis*, circa 1925, as well as a brooch with engraved decoration on ivory, *Femmes de profil parmi les feuillages*, circa 1903-1905, by René Lalique (Ay 1860-1945 Paris).

In the field of Art Deco, **Galerie Mathivet (FR - stand 3)** will be presenting an elegant two-door cabinet in shagreen (H 164 x W 105 x D 40 cm) by Jean Pascaud (Rouen 1903-1996 Fourqueux), circa 1940. Jean Pascaud was renowned for the quality and luxuriousness of his work.

## **9. Modern sculptures and paintings**

**Boon Gallery (BE - stand 26)** will be presenting a highly representative work by Henri Le Sidaner (Port-Louis 1862-1939 Paris) entitled *Paysage d'Hiver*, 1924. On the stand of **Galerie Berès (FR - stand 65)**, collectors will be able to discover *Les fées* by Maurice Denis (Granville 1870-1943 Paris), circa 1891. The artist was a member of the Nabis group, an avant-garde post-Impressionist movement. **Sylvia Kovacek - Vienna (AT - stand 78)** will be exhibiting a remarkable and colourful watercolour by the Viennese architect and painter Friedensreich Hundertwasser (Vienna 1928-2000 Pacific) entitled *Arcade house with yellow tower*, dating from 1953. Influenced by Abstraction and Surrealism, Hundertwasser's work bears close affinities to that of Paul Klee and Vasily Kandinsky.

On view at **Artimo Fine Arts (BE - stand 134)** is an exceptional piece by the British artist Joseph Gott (Calverley 1785-1860 Rome), *Ulysses and his dog*, in white Carrara marble (H 185.5 cm). The sculpture depicts Ulysses, wearing a loincloth and a bonnet, reuniting with his faithful dog Arg after a 20-year absence. **A&R Fleury (FR/BE - stand 45)** will be exhibiting a very fine alabaster sculpture of a head by Ossip Zadkine (1890-1967) from 1924. Another delicately crafted head, *Jewish Child*, ca. 1923, this time in wax on plaster, by the Italian Impressionist sculptor Medardo Rosso (Turin 1858-1928 Milan), will be presented by **Francis Maere Fine Arts (BE - stand 40)**. The stand of **Victor Werner (BE - stand 56)** will be showcasing the rare beauty of a pre-casting plaster from 1929, entitled *Walking Panther*, by Thierry Van Ryswyck (Antwerp 1911-1958 Vallauris).

## **10. Design**

Not to be missed on the stand of **New Hope Gallery (BE - stand 82)** is a totem chair by Philippe Druillet, the 80-year-old comic strip artist whose futuristic, phantasmagorical work has influenced several generations. This astonishing piece from 2015 is made of stainless steel which has been polished, hammered, and set with rock crystals and engraved glass.

The same stand will be presenting an iconic *Chieftain* armchair designed in 1949 by the architect and designer Finn Juhl (Frederiksberg 1912-1989 Copenhagen). This particular example dates from 1970.

### **11. Contemporary art**

**Galerie Nathalie Obadia (FR/BE - stand 88)**, which joined the list of participants this year, will be exhibiting a very fine tapestry by Laure Provost (Croix, 1978), *We Will Keep Cool (Tour Eben Ezer)*, 2023 (H 260 x W 180.5 cm). The stand of **De Brock (BE - stand 33)** will feature *Etcetera V*, 2023 by Imi Knoebel (Dessau, 1940), and **Rodolphe Janssen (BE - stand 36)** will be presenting a piece by Sanam Khatibi (Tehran, 1979) entitled *A few more crimes*, 2018.

### **12. Tapestries**

**Dei Bardi Art (BE - stand 9)** will be presenting a Flemish tapestry in wool and silk depicting *The Martyrdom of Saint Barbara*, Bruges, circa 1525-1550 (H 270 x W 198 cm). It is a fine example of sixteenth-century craftsmanship, distinguished by its exceptionally well-preserved colour palette. **Galerie Hadjer (FR - stand 124)** will be exhibiting a tapestry entitled *La Femme et le Moineau (The Woman and the Sparrow)*, designed in 1957 by the famous architect and artist Le Corbusier (La Chaux-de-Fonds 1887-1965 Roquebrune-Cap-Martin). This piece (225 x 225 cm) bears witness to the meeting of modern art and the centuries-old expertise of the Aubusson workshops.

### **13. Jewellery**

Galerie **Barbara Bassi (IT - stand 55)** will be showcasing a sumptuous 18-carat gold and diamond bracelet by Franco Canilla (Caltagirone 1911-1985 Rome), circa 1950. At the **Cabinet of Curiosities - Honourable Silver Objects (BE - stand 81)**, collectors will be able to discover an 18-carat gold and diamond brooch, circa 2000, by the Maison Hemmerle. Founded in Munich in 1893, the Maison is renowned for its unique creations and its dedication to craftsmanship and quality.

### **14. Comic strips**

At BRAFA 2025, the **Huberty & Breyne Gallery (BE - stand 54)** will be exhibiting a comic strip from the original 1932 version of *Tintin in America*, the first adventure by the famous reporter to be published by Casterman. The unique strip was donated by Hergé on the occasion of the publisher's bicentenary to celebrate this historic collaboration.

#### Practical information

Sunday, January 26<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Monday, January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025, by invitation only

Late-night opening on Thursday, January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, until 10 p.m.

Brussels Expo – Halls 3 & 4

Place de Belgique 1, 1020 Brussels

**HD photos available for download at:** <https://www.brafa.art/fr/stands>

**2025 highlights:** <https://www.brafa.art/fr/selected-works>

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