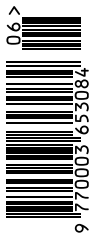


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# APOLLO

THE INTERNATIONAL ART MAGAZINE



The side of Mondrian  
you've never seen

## How El Greco rocked Picasso's world

Is the market  
failing new talent?

## Around the Galleries

# BRAFA

Despite its position in this summer's packed calendar, the Belgian art fair is confident in its unique offering, writes *Samuel Reilly*



1. *Saint George Killing the Dragon*, late 16th century, Spain, painted wood, ht 135cm. Chiale Fine Art at BRAFA

Brussels is not London or New York,' says Beatrix Bourdon, managing director of BRAFA. This month, as the art world prepares for an almighty heave to clear the logjam of cancelled and postponed events that built up over the course of the pandemic, the veteran Belgian art fair – usually held in January – finds itself in the unusual position of jostling for attention with TEFAF Maastricht and Art Basel. Bourdon acknowledges that the situation is far from ideal: 'For the galleries especially it has been difficult. No fairs for two years and suddenly they're having to choose between them!'

Yet in the face of new competition, Bourdon is confident about BRAFA's prospects – 115 dealers have signed up this year, 34 of which are exhibiting at two fairs at once. 'We are grateful to all our galleries for remaining faithful to BRAFA,' says Bourdon. 'We have an advantage over other fairs in focusing on the European market: we're not depending on money from Russia, or Asia, or America. And Belgium is a nation of art collectors – they will keep the faith, too.'

While the fair moves to a new home this year, at the Brussels Expo – a more spacious prospect than Tour & Taxis, where it had taken place since 2002 – the quality of the work on show remains refreshingly familiar. A particular highlight comes courtesy of Chiale Fine Art – a remarkable polychrome wooden sculpture of Saint George, made by a 16th-century Spanish artist as a tribute to the might of Philip II (Fig. 1). Depicting his horse rearing up over the dragon, as the saint readies his arm to strike the fatal blow with his javelin, this wonderfully dramatic piece was once a part of the Rothschild collection. Fine Flemish Old Masters come courtesy of Galerie Florence de Voldère, which provides a 17th-century roundel by Abel Grimmer depicting Jesus and the Samaritan women, while Douwes Fine Art offers a typically jocular interior by David Teniers the Younger.

But the selling point of BRAFA has always been its eclecticism, with work from five continents spanning some 5,000 years not divided into sections, as other fairs do, but jumbled all together. Galerie Günter Puhze brings the

marble head of a Cycladic idol, dating back to c. 2,700–2,300 BC, and Kevorkian presents a remarkable Luristan bronze finial, dating to the first millennium BC and taking the form of two winged ibexes. Highlights of the modern and contemporary work on show include an illuminated manuscript adorned with symmetrical abstract gouache paintings by the Surrealist poet Paul Éluard. Achieved by folding the paper in half, they illustrate a collection of his Resistance poems, published under a pseudonym in 1943.

'We don't want to imitate what other fairs do,' Bourdon says. 'BRAFA is BRAFA – it's quality, it's conviviality, it's eclecticism.' The new premises at the Brussels Expo offer a welcome chance for growth – 'Perhaps we will have 140, 150 dealers next year' – but Bourdon also makes it clear that the fair's strengths lie in its 'human side' and 'local image', which keep the faithful returning year after year. **A**

**BRAFA takes place at Brussels Expo from 19–26 May. For more details, go to [www.brafa.art](http://www.brafa.art).**

## Gallery highlights

### Giorgio Morandi: Il Tempo sospeso

Until 2 July

Galleria Mattia De Luca, Rome

Drawing on recent research into unpublished documents, the curator and Morandi expert Marilena Pasquali has compiled a survey of around 40 paintings and works on paper, retracing the career of the Italian master of quiet, contemplative still lifes. Highlights of the show – an expanded version of which travels to New York in the autumn – include one of his late Apennine landscapes, which draw heavily on Cézanne's many depictions of Aix-en-Provence.

### Tom Friedman: Many Things All at Once

Until 25 June

Lehmann Maupin, Seoul

Tom Friedman sets out to tease and trick with his conceptual sculptures, videos, drawings and installations, which combine *trompe l'oeil* effects with meticulous craftsmanship. His first solo show in South Korea includes a gigantic Styrofoam *Poppyseed* (2022), a hyper-realistic jumbo *Bee* (2022) and *Hazmat Love* (2017), which brings together two of his signature chromed figures, clothed in protective suits and locked in an awkward dance.

### The Female Voice in Modern Design: 1950–2000

Until 3 July

Carpenters Workshop Gallery

This expansive show brings together innovations in furniture and lighting design by 50 women who flew in the face of the dominant opinion that women's role in this field should be confined to needlework and other 'feminine' pursuits and left a lasting mark on the design aesthetics of the late 20th century. Among them are Louise Nevelson, Charlotte Perriand and Lisa Johansson-Pape.

### Katherine Bernhardt: Why is a mushroom growing in my shower?

8 June–30 July 2022

David Zwirner, London

This Missourian artist packs her paintings with motifs drawn from everyday life and pop culture – everything from toilet paper and cigarettes to the Pink Panther (Fig. 2). The works are brashly cartoonish, but characterised by a slick painterly finish, achieved with thinned-out acrylics and a palette by turns sober and lurid. This is her first show at Zwirner and her first in the UK for seven years.

## Fairs in focus

### Civilisations – Art in Brussels

16–19 June

Place du Grand Sablon, Brussels

The dealers of the Sablon have banded together for this new fair, which sees previous events devoted to ethnographic art, Asian art and ancient art – once loosely known together as 'Cultures' – strengthen their ties by becoming a single organisation. Highlights include an 18th-century suit of samurai armour at Kitsune Japanese Art Gallery, and a 12th-century silver buddha at Carlo Cristi.

### Olympia Art & Antiques Fair

23–26 June

Olympia London

The UK's largest art and antiques fair returns after a two-year break, with more than 120 specialist dealers catering for all tastes.

### Asian Art in London: Summer Event

29 June–2 July

Olympia London

The dealer-led event kicks off its 25th anniversary with an extra summer edition, featuring a programme of exhibitions, tours and talks.



2. *Panther Crocs Iguanas*, 2021, Katherine Bernhardt (b. 1947), oil on canvas, 243.8 x 304.8cm. David Zwirner, London