

STYLE & DECORATING | FAIRS & AUCTIONS | EXPERT ADVICE | EXHIBITIONS

# HOMES & ANTIQUES

## EUROPEAN FAIRS SPECIAL

*Our guide to the  
most prestigious  
art & antiques  
fairs of 2024*

STYLISH & SUSTAINABLE

## What's **HOT**

**This year's most  
covetable antiques  
according to  
the experts**

### TRAVEL

## 48 HOURS IN VIENNA

**+ SIX OF THE  
BEST CAROL  
CONCERTS**

### PLUS

**A BUYER'S GUIDE  
TO DIAMONDS**

**MARVELLOUS  
MOQUETTE**

**LOOK TO  
THE STARS:  
PLANISPHERES**

**MEET THE  
TREASURE  
SEEKERS**

*Happy*  
**NEW YEAR!**

**All good gifts: brilliant last-minute finds**





# THE FAIREST FAIRS OF ALL

*Looking for a mini-break with a difference? Plan a trip around one of Europe's grandest fairs, says **Caroline Wheater**. From Old Masters to ancient artefacts, exquisite jewellery to fine porcelain, a voyage of discovery awaits...*

**A**s we usher in 2024, the prospect of a year's worth of art and antiques fairs stretches before us. Whether you're a collector or more of a browser, Europe's most prestigious fairs deserve a place in your diary for their sheer scale. And you can easily build a weekend away around any of these events, such is the quality and breadth of the items they sell.

Start your year of culture on the Continent, with a trip to Belgium for BRAFA (the Brussels Art Fair), which launches the year in elegant style this January. Close on its heels is TEFAF (the annual fair of The European Fine Art

Foundation), held in Maastricht in mid March and now in its 37th year.

From June, attention turns to London, where newcomer The Treasure House Fair sets up shop in the grounds of the Royal Hospital Chelsea. In September and October the spotlight falls on Berkeley Square for two glamorous back-to-back events: LAPADA and PAD London. For art lovers, Frieze Masters is key in October.

November provides the perfect excuse to return to the Continent for a final cultural foray of the year – as well as a little Christmas shopping – when the FAB Paris fine arts fair opens its doors at the newly renovated Grand Palais.



## BRAFA, BRUSSELS

**Brussels Expo, Belgium**  
**28th January to 4th February**

Later this month, the streets of Brussels will be decked out with colourful banners and posters declaring the opening of BRAFA, rated one of the top three art and antiques fairs in Europe. As more than 65,000 fair visitors descend on the city for the eight-day event, restaurants, bars and cultural venues gear up to receive them, with fringe events listed in the specially produced *BRAFA City Guide*. Already international in flavour, cosmopolitan and convivial Brussels becomes the capital of the arts – as well as Belgium – for the duration of this vibrant event.

‘One of the fair’s greatest strengths is its eclecticism,’ says Beatrix Bourdon, BRAFA’s managing director, who has helped organise the esteemed event for over three decades. Up to 15,000 works of art vie for visitors’ attention, from modern paintings and Dutch still lifes, to visceral tribal art, rare porcelain and opulent gold and silver wares. Every item is vetted by international experts during the two days before the fair opens, and checked against the Art Loss Register so authenticity is assured.

‘As people potter from one stand to the next, they discover works of art reflecting many different styles and periods. It’s also a fair that has kept its human scale and can be visited over just a few hours,’ says Beatrix. Belgian stalwarts include Antwerp’s textiles and carpets specialist, N Vrouy, which has taken part in every BRAFA fair since 1956. There’s also the stand of famed tastemaker Axel Vervoordt of Kanaal, whose family business offers contemporary art, ancient artefacts, oriental art and 20th-century design. History lovers will be drawn to De Wit Fine Tapestries from Tongerlo Abbey in Mechelen; the gallery is a leader in the acquisition and conservation of historic tapestries and counts the likes

of the V&A and the National Trust among its list of clients.

Some dealers really go to town with their displays, employing interior designers to achieve their opulent vision. The Munich dealer Röbbig München, for example, flamboyantly showcases early Meissen porcelain and decorative objects, while Brussels-based Galerie Bernard De Leye can be relied upon to celebrate European silver from the 16th to 18th centuries in spectacular style. Down another aisle, Parisian art dealer Hélène Bailly transforms her stand into an elegant boudoir to set off the chi-chi selection of Impressionist and modern paintings that are her specialism.

While many of the exhibitors at BRAFA are based on the Continent, a

smattering of UK dealers also attend. Look out for Finch & Co (antiquities, natural history), Whitford Fine Art (20th-century art), Willow Gallery (Impressionist and Post-Impressionist art), and fair newbie Richard Saltoun Gallery (women artists, especially for the fair). The Osborne Samuel Gallery in Mayfair focuses on British painting and sculpture by the likes of Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth, Lynn Chadwick and Sean Henry, and is a relative newcomer, having attended the fair since 2018. ‘BRAFA is extremely elegant, the fields of expertise are broad and the quality is consistently high,’ enthuses Tania Sutton, director of the gallery. ‘What’s also special about the fair is how knowledgeable the collectors are.’ ▶



**1** *Twin Sisters*, by Isaac Israels, *Studio 2000 Art Gallery*. **2** Porcelain specialists Röbbig München. **3** Fabulous frames at Galerie Montanari. **4** Exceptional jewellery on show at BRAFA. **FACING PAGE** The entrance to BRAFA’s 2022 edition.





**ABOVE** Last year, visitors to TEFAF were welcomed by a spectacular floral installation by Dutch florist Ten Kate. Fair goers can expect something equally fabulous this year.

There's always a particularly Belgian slant to explore too, as Beatrix explains: 'The Belgian tradition of collecting dates back to 15th-century Flanders, with numerous commissions for portraits and triptychs, then in the 16th and 17th centuries, the craze for cabinets of curiosities. Belgian collectors are still very curious and open to all forms of art.' This January they will be served by young gallery owner Thomas Deprez, who specialises in Belgian Fin de Siècle art and who will be bringing a monumental triptych, c1896, by Emile Fabry.

The fair's guest of honour – chosen to mark the centenary of the birth of Surrealism in 1924 and the Year of

Surrealism that is about to unfold – is the Paul Delvaux Foundation, which represents the work of the Belgian Surrealist artist Paul Delvaux. Works by Delvaux and other Surrealists will be shown by Opera Gallery, Francis Maere Fine Arts, Harold t'Kint de Roodenbeke, A&R Fleury and Galerie Oscar De Vos. Plus, Camille Brasseur, director of the Delvaux Foundation, will be giving a talk on Paul Delvaux on 30th January as part of the BRAFA Art Talks, held daily at 4pm on the stand of the King Baudouin Foundation. But if you miss it, don't worry – there are guided art tours on subjects across the board taking place throughout the fair.

*Tickets from €25. brafa.art*

## TEFAF, MAASTRICHT

**Maastricht Exhibition & Conference Centre (MECC), The Netherlands**  
9th to 14th March

Lying along the banks of the river Maas, the pretty cobbled streets of Maastricht swell with people and pride when around 70,000 visitors arrive to attend the exciting TEFAF fair. Among them are high-rolling private collectors, a smattering of European royals, and more than 400 museum curators and their top patrons from 250 institutions around the world headed up by the Met, the Getty, the Rijksmuseum and the British Museum. All are making this annual pilgrimage to see exceptional pieces in an elegant environment, located in this charming city. And, as with all unique things, the opportunity to buy can be narrow – curators have been known to sprint to stands as the doors open to secure a piece ahead of their rivals.

You know you've arrived at TEFAF when you see the spectacular floral installation created by leading Dutch florist Ten Kate. Situated in the entrance hall, the wall of flowers provokes gasps of wonder, and this year there will be moving elements among the all-white blooms. Fair director, Manon van den Beuken, has been with TEFAF for 23 years and likens putting on the event to doing a complex jigsaw, with the final pieces

## BRAFA '24 HIGHLIGHTS

**RIGHT** *Bouquet of flowers in a Wan-Li porcelain vase, late 1620s, Jan Brueghel the Younger, Galerie De Jonckheere.*



- **Dalton Somaré of Milan** – an early 20th-century statuette of a woman sculpted by Zlan of Belewale in Liberia, a great master and teacher among Dan sculptors.
- **Die Galerie of Frankfurt** – a monumental ensemble of three sculptures by Max Ernst.
- **Francis Janssens Van der Maelen of Brussels** – an Art Nouveau desk designed by Henry van de Velde in 1898.
- **Galerie De Jonckheere of Geneva** – a 1620 painting, *Bouquet of Flowers in a Wan-Li Porcelain Vase*, by Jan Brueghel the Younger.
- **Klaas Muller of Brussels** – a 17th-century portrait of the Virgin and Child by Daniël Seghers and Cornelis Schut.
- **Nicolás Cortés Gallery of Madrid** – a 17th-century still life by Francisco de Zurbarán.
- **Osborne Samuel Gallery of London** – *Maquette for Winged Figures II*, a 1956 sculpture by Lynn Chadwick.

placed in March. She says: 'The impact on the city is enormous. Even the stand builders know how important it is. Everyone is on a high and when the dealers arrive it feels like a family reunion. Full of like-minded people, the atmosphere is bubbling.' There's even a sprinkling of romance too, with around 15 TEFAF marriages having taken place over the years.

Back in 1988 when it started, TEFAF was primarily focused on Old Master paintings, but over the years it has expanded to include almost every conceivable collecting area. Now, the fair reaches the highest levels in art, antiques and dealers, and showcases the best in all fields across 7,000 years of history, from ancient artefacts to modern art. Here in Maastricht some of the top dealers in the world gather – Galerie Steinitz, Galerie Kugel and Galerie Léage from Paris; Richard Green, Adrian Sassoon and Colnaghi (which at one point was owned by Jacob Rothschild) from London; and Kunstammer Georg Lave and Röbbig München from Germany.

'In the old days, people would buy one kind of thing from a single dealer, such as clocks, but now they cross-collect; it's called 'butterfly collecting' in the trade,' says Manon. 'If something catches their eye, and they have a space in their home, they buy it. Whether that's a painting, a bronze sculpture, a silver casket, a rare piece of antique furniture or some one-of-a-kind *haute joaillerie*. Once people come to the fair they're hooked!'

Like BRAFA, everything has been vetted beforehand by a team of museum curators, conservators and academics, and checked against the Art Loss Register, which is just as well, given that there's little to buy under €1,000 and plenty that's way above. The Dutch oriental arts dealer Floris van der Ven is on the board of TEFAF, which is a not-for-profit foundation run by dealers for dealers, and his uncle was one of the founding members. Floris has been attending the fair for 35 years (he met his wife there 23 years ago) and prints a catalogue especially for the fair, detailing each of the 200–250 items he shows on his

stand each year. He says: 'At TEFAF it's about the passion for the art. People are buying for the beauty of the art, not the investment. As a dealer, it's the number one fair in the world, which can make or break my year.'

Mark Weiss, owner of The Weiss Gallery in St James's in London, which specialises in Tudor and Stuart portraits, describes TEFAF as a unique experience. 'Unlike a fair in a big city, there's almost a 'village' quality to it. You're very likely to bump into people you know when out to dinner or walking around Maastricht. Whilst the locale may be considered provincial, the fair itself is anything but; a truly

spectacular assemblage of the finest art and antiques dealers in the world, covering all disciplines.' It's nice to know, too, that TEFAF encourages younger dealers into the fold as they make their way in the business. The initiative is called Showcase and, every year, a group of dealers is selected to showcase their stock on a subsidised basis. For all these reasons and more, Manon is still in love with the fair two decades on from when he started, and her favourite moment is always the night before the fair opens. 'When the last things have been done and everything is quiet, I feel "She's mine!"'

[tefaf.com](http://tefaf.com), tickets from €45 ▶

**1** Kunsthandel Mehringer will bring fine art and antiques to this year's fair. **2** Matteo Salamon specialises in Old Master paintings. **3** Exceptional antiques at TEFAF 2023.







Last year's Treasure House Fair attracted dealers from around the world including Michele Beiny, a specialist in European porcelain and faience.

## THE TREASURE HOUSE FAIR, LONDON

**Royal Hospital, London, SW3**  
27th June to 2nd July

## LAPADA BERKELEY SQUARE FAIR

**Berkeley Square, London, W1J**  
**Autumn 2024,**  
**date to be confirmed**

Formerly the LAPADA Fair, now rebranded as LAPADA Berkeley Square Fair, it remains one of the premier events on the UK and European antiques scene, attracting top dealers from around the world.

In 2023, for the first time in the fair's history, LAPADA dealers were joined by non-member dealers, giving regular visitors access to new specialists across a range of fields, including jewellery, furniture, carpets, clocks, ceramics, silver and fine art. As with all the major European fairs, vetting is of paramount importance and is undertaken by a large specialist committee.

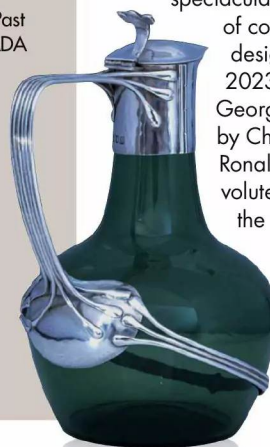
Stands are carefully curated and beautifully laid out; some involve particular ingenuity due to the location, which requires the pavilion to envelope the Square's plane trees. This quirk (shared by PAD London) often provides a wonderful foil to the antiques on display. [lapadalondon.com](http://lapadalondon.com)



### CLOCKWISE

**FROM LEFT** Past exhibits at LAPADA have included this miniature

by George Engleheart c1785 at Gould Antiques; regular exhibitor Lennox Cato's stand at the 2023 edition; a Charles Ashbee for the Guild of Handicraft silver claret jug on The Peartree Collection's stand at a past LAPADA Berkeley Square Fair.



The newest fair on the antiques calendar, Treasure House was the miraculous phoenix that rose from the ashes of Masterpiece, the prestigious summer fair founded in 2010. The late cancellation of this key event left many dealers with a hole in their schedules.

'It was extraordinary to go from desperate calls from disappointed dealers in January to mounting the root and branch new show in June,' says fair director and co-founder Thomas Woodham-Smith.

The event got off to a strong start in 2023, with many dealers being stalwarts of both Grosvenor House and Masterpiece, joined by exhibitors from America, Japan, Switzerland, France and Belgium. Among

spectacular antiques and works of contemporary art and design, highlights from 2023 included a splendid George III giltwood settee by Chippendale, c1780, at Ronald Phillips, and an Attic volute-krater attributed to the Syriskos Painter, c480 BC, at Galerie Cahn.

This year, Treasure House will take place a week later to better align with other summer events. [treasurehousefair.com](http://treasurehousefair.com)



## PAD LONDON

**Berkeley Square, London, W1J**  
8th to 13th October

This year will see the 16th edition of PAD London set up shop in Berkeley Square and it promises to be one of autumn's hot tickets: last year's event attracted 29,200 visitors over a five-day period, with over 6,000 attending the Collectors' Preview alone – a record for the fair.

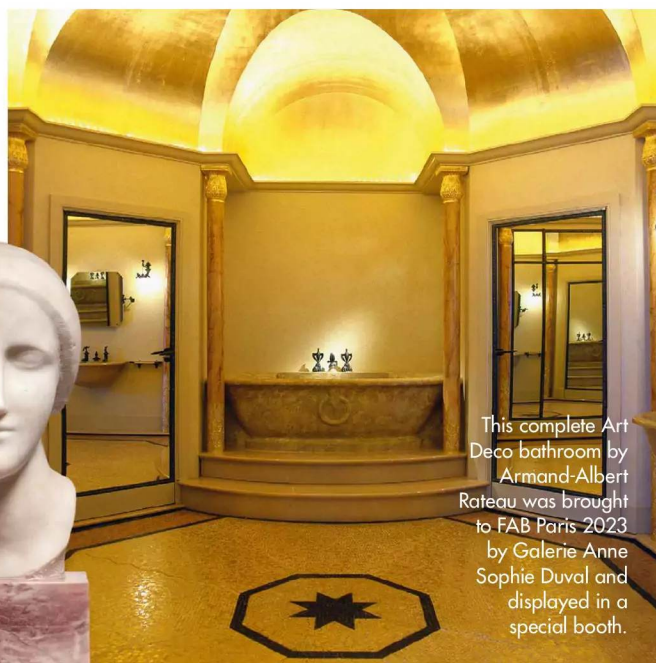
Founded in 2007 by fourth-generation Parisian antiques dealer Patrick Perrin, PAD London was conceived as a specialist fair focusing exclusively on 20th-century art and design. The London edition and its sister fair, PAD Paris (launched in 1998 and held in the Jardin des Tuileries each April), are known for the way in which they promote collecting across genres, truly championing the idea of eclecticism alongside connoisseurship.

Serious collectors are joined by visitors who are purely curious. And whether or not you have money to spend, there is much to inspire on all the stands, which are among some of the most elegant you will find. All fields of collecting are covered, from jewellery to glass, furniture to fine art. [padesignart.com](http://padesignart.com)



### CLOCKWISE FROM

**ABOVE** A Carrara marble bust, *Tête (Serenity)*, by Elie Nadelman (1882–1946), from the collection of Karl Lagerfeld, was a highlight of Benjamin Proust's stand at FAB Paris; *Sunset; Autumn*, 2020 vase by Joon Yong Kim at Adrian Sassoon, and *Vessel* by Sandra Davolio at Modernity, both of whom were at PAD London 2023.



This complete Art Deco bathroom by Armand-Albert Rateau was brought to FAB Paris 2023 by Galerie Anne Sophie Duval and displayed in a special booth.

## FAB PARIS

**Grand Palais, Champs-Élysées**  
21st to 27th November

A relative newcomer compared to its European rivals, BRAFA and TEFAF, FAB Paris has quickly established itself as France's premier antiques and fine art fair and an important event in the European calendar.

Formerly Fine Arts Paris & La Biennale, its rebranding as FAB Paris is apt, given the fabulous selection of art and antiques on offer. Spanning millennia, the antiques on display include treasures that once graced the palaces of the kings of France or came from collections amassed by collectors of note such as Hubert De Givenchy.

Full details of the 2024 fair are yet to be released, but highlights from 2023 included an exceptional Art Deco bathroom by Armand-Albert Rateau (one of only two in existence), a rare Ngombe stool from the collection of Yves Saint Laurent and a wonderful portrait of a dalmatian, thought to have belonged to the Medici family, by Pandolfo Reschi.

For the last few years the fair has been held at a temporary home, and this year sees its return to the newly renovated Grand Palais. [fabparis.com](http://fabparis.com)

