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# The 38<sup>th</sup> edition of Art Brussels shifts the artistic and cultural scene in Europe

Art Brussels, the Belgian capital’s annual art fair, brings together 157 galleries from 26 countries, spanning over 1000 artists with artistic projects and initiatives.

by [STIRworld](#) | Published on : Apr 14, 2022

Since the **pandemic** has taken a backseat in our lives, everything seems to go back from online to on-ground. Yes, the news still mention several **COVID-19** cases, but the mask mandate has been lifted in several cities across the globe and civilians have learned to live with it, treating it like a regular flu. Meanwhile, the **art fairs** are making a stellar comeback. At the end of April, the 38<sup>th</sup> edition of Art Brussels, taking place in **Belgium**, will enrich the artistic and cultural scene of **Europe**. Retaining its youthful profile as a discovery fair since 1968, Art Brussels is one of Europe’s most original and most established art fairs. This year, it will present 157 participants from 26 countries. With works from established artists and emerging new talents as well as **artists** to rediscover, Art Brussels remains more pioneering and innovative than ever. The fair offers a vibrant programme bringing together the best of the **contemporary art** gallery scene and spanning almost 1,000 artists.

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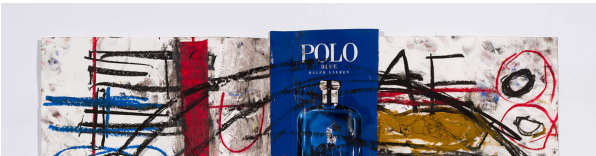
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*HOW MUCH WORTH*(working title), 2020, pencil, charcoal, pastel, and collaged magazine, pages on paper, Paul McCarthy  
*Image: Fredrik Nilsen, Courtesy of Art Brussels*

The participating galleries are divided into different sections according to the artists on the show: PRIME (for mid-career and established artists), DISCOVERY (emerging artists), REDISCOVERY (artists where recognition is long overdue), INVITED (emerging galleries that are transcending the typical gallery format) and SOLO (solo artist presentations). Going beyond the different sections outlined in the fair, many of the galleries and artists participating in this year's edition of Art Brussels reflect a preoccupation with similar themes, ideas, and concepts, including but not limited to: gender, identity, and the body, climate and environment, and internet and technology. The key SOLO presentations will include Wanda Koop, Pétrel, Tuukka Tammisaari; Paul McCarthy, Dankyi Mensah, Jacques André, Natsuko Uchino, Philip Aguirre y Otegui, Noel W Anderson, and Nazanin Pouyandeh.

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*Les deux amis*, 2020, oil on canvas, Nazanin Pouyandeh  
*Image: Lise Traino, Courtesy of Art Brussels*

We had the opportunity for a conversation with the director of Art Brussels, Anne Vierstraete.

**STIR: How is Art Brussels working to expand the net wider to have more people engage with the arts?**

**Anne Vierstraete:** Art Brussels is permanently working on expanding its network through different approaches. On the one hand, we aim to attract a diversified group of participating galleries; this year we count on the participation of galleries from four continents and representing 26 countries. Our fair is also accessible online on the Artsy platform ensuring that people from everywhere in the world can view the art for sale. On the other hand, we connect 365 days a year with our art lovers community in Belgium and globally. **Social media**, our website, and our dedicated newsletters are used to this end. On top of that, the Art Brussels team is promoting the fair on the occasion of major events such as biennials, and international fairs abroad, but also private dinners we organise with smaller collectors groups in cities such as **Paris**, **London**, **Copenhagen** , etc. Since the pandemic, we focus first on collectors from Belgium and Europe. It's however encouraging to see that for Art Brussels 2022, we have collectors from **Asia** and the **US** who specially come to Belgium to visit Art Brussels and enjoy the very special artistic vibe in Brussels. Last but not least, we always address the latest trends in the art market in the fair's programme; in this regard, we believe that the interest in **NFTs**, which will be represented by several galleries at Art Brussels, might attract younger collectors and we hope to introduce them also to the more classical forms of **contemporary art**. We spend a lot of effort educating people concerning contemporary art, giving them the keys to address the huge diversity encountered in this field.

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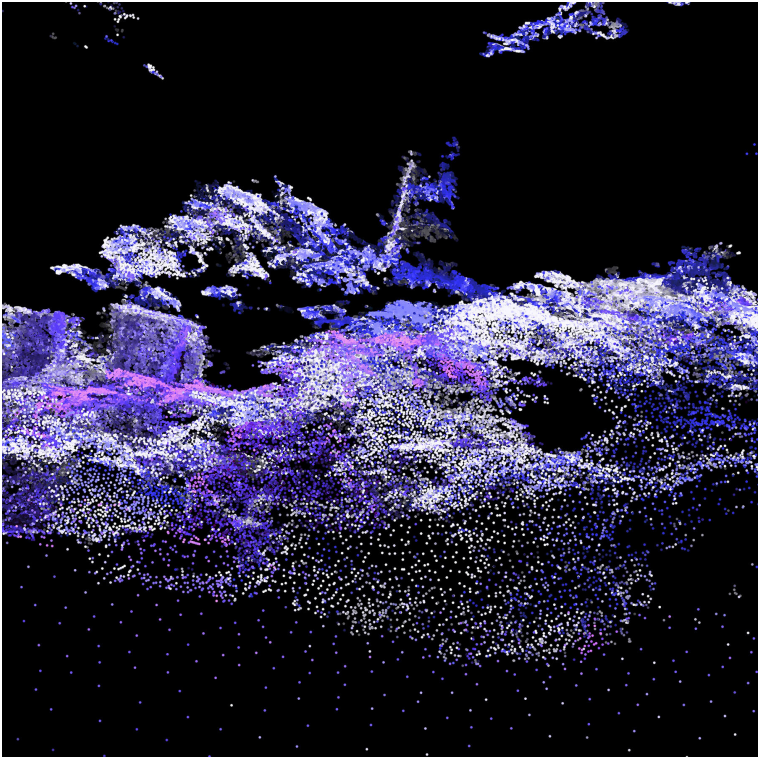


Portrait of the director, Anne Vierstraete  
*Image: Greetje Van Buggenhout, Courtesy of Art Brussels*

**STIR: Please tell us about the significant technology and NFT focused works to be showcased at the upcoming edition of Art Brussels.**

**Anne:** For the first time, Art Brussels has a web3 partner PARALLEL. Art Brussels will be showcasing works from at least six galleries that have started presenting NFTs. In partnership with both PARALLEL and JPG.space, the first NFT Curatorial protocol, the fair will be presenting a curated selection of key works by contemporary artists who are making forays into the NFT realm. This selection of works will be accessible during and after the fair. PARALLEL will also be organising guided tours during the fair to the respective galleries' booths, helping the Art Brussels' audience put the works in context.

The works presented at JPG.space are seminal examples of how artists have been engaging with the blockchain and NFTs. From Jonas Lund, who has explored the conceptually disruptive potential of NFTs on an artist's career and practice, to Sarah Friend, who's experiments with smart contracts have pushed the notion of "ownership" to its limits. It is important to us to explore the role of NFTs in the art world not just as a tool for speculation, but more as a new ground for exploration and discovery, where original practices can emerge, and new energies are deployed to create, present, and sell art.



*AGNOSIA-18* from Agnosia Audiovisual Installation series, 2021, unique edition  
*Image: Courtesy of Art Brussels*

Other initiatives and artistic projects at the fair include Romanian artist and peace activist Dan Perjovschi's series of five pins that will be on sale at the fair, inviting visitors to show their support for [Ukraine](#). The entire purchase price of the pins will be donated to the charity Ukraine 12-12. The exhibition L'Oeuvre et son Double, curated by Sam Steverlynck in the Stibbe Lounge at Art Brussels, unites the work of various artists participating at this year's [Venice Biennale](#).

Art Brussels will be the first contemporary art fair to feature Carte Blanche in the Ruinart Lounge with artist Jeppe Hein, the project that will be launched in March. The *My, Our, Yours* by artist Valérian Goalec is designed for Art Brussels and takes into account the often clinical and standardised dimensions of art fairs, their ephemeral and modular

aspect; the transit places, the spaces of speech, and the standardised places of the conviviality of the big shows. First laureate and prize-winner of the Art Contest 2020, Myrthe van der Mark, will be presenting L'Air performance every two hours during the fair.



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Super Bowl Sunday, Flashe and acrylic on canvas, 2021, Matt Bollinger  
*Image: Courtesy of Art Brussels*

Art Brussels is scheduled to take place from April 28- May 1, 2022, in Belgium.