

# THE FRIENDS' BOOKLET SPRING > SUMMER 2024



 Royal Museums  
of Fine Arts of Belgium

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## **musée modernmuseum**

The curators' choice



## **musée magritte museum**

From the ordinary to the extraordinary



## **musée oldmastersmuseum**

A stroke of genius



## **musée wiertz museum**

Exhilaration and glorification



## **musée meunier museum**

The art of labour & the labour of art

## **Become a Friend**

Visit our website [www.becomeafriend.be](http://www.becomeafriend.be) to be kept informed of the latest activities and events of the Friends and take full benefit of the advantages offered to you!

### **Editor**

Frédéric Renoy

Rue du Musée 9, 1000 Brussels

### **Contact**

Friends of the RMFAB

Rue du Musée 9, 1000 Brussels

T +32 (0)2 511 4116

[friends@fine-arts-museum.be](mailto:friends@fine-arts-museum.be) | [www.becomeafriend.be](http://www.becomeafriend.be)

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### **Design**

[www.indekeuken.org](http://www.indekeuken.org)

### **Cover photo**

Eline Ubaghs

## DEAR FRIENDS,

Best wishes for 2024! A year which honours Ensor on the 75th anniversary of his death and celebrates the 100th anniversary of the birth of Surrealism!

We invite you to our February 27 Nocturne, on the occasion of the major international exhibition “IMAGINE! 100 years of international surrealism” at the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium <sup>[p. 5]</sup>. Bozar’s sister exhibition “Histoire de ne pas rire. Surrealism in Belgium” is the subject of a More for Friends invitation, as is the focus exhibition “Folon x Magritte. La fabrique poétique” <sup>[p. 16-17]</sup>.

The Royal Library exhibits “James Ensor. Inspired by Brussels” in collaboration with the RMFAB <sup>[p. 25]</sup>. You are invited to visit this exhibition as part of More for Friends.

Despite planned renovations, the Museums will remain open and you will still be able to view a large part of their collections. A More for Friends invitation will guide you through these collections around the theme of the “Five Senses”.

Masterpieces from the Fin-de-Siècle museum – closed as of 8 January 2024 – will be displayed in exhibitions or when the collections are redeployed. Wait and see...

The Contemporary Art tour of galleries in Brussels will resume this spring with Laurent Courtens taking over from Jean-Philippe Theyskens, whom we thank for all his brilliantly shared discoveries! <sup>[p. 18]</sup>

Our travel-loving Friends will be delighted to set off this spring to destinations ranging from Tenerife to Dublin, Jordan, Naples and Campania, Basilicata, or Bavaria and Kandinsky’s Blue Country. Day trips will take them to Rodin in Mons and the Hennuyer art in Charleroi <sup>[p. 7 to 13]</sup>.

We look forward to welcoming you in our museums and on our trips!

THE TEAM OF BECOME A FRIEND



**Friends'  
Private Evening  
27.02 2024**

Tuesday **27.02** 2024 at **17:30 & 19:00**

# IMAGINE! 100 YEARS OF INTERNATIONAL SURREALISM

**The Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium immerse us in Surrealist poetry, led by Max Ernst, Giorgio de Chirico, Salvador Dalí, Joan Miró... with a Symbolist perspective embodied by Rops, Spilliaert, Khnopff, Delville and others.**

**GUIDED TOURS FOLLOWED  
BY A COCKTAIL**

Registration via payment of 10€/person (15€ for non-members) on the account BE46 3100 4042 4636/BBRUBEBB mentioning your name, address, membership card number, the date, hour and language chosen (French or Dutch). No registration or payment on the spot.

Please pay before **16 February 2024**  
(no refunding in case of absence).



**Entry through the Magritte Museum,  
Place Royale 1 – 1000 Brussels**



**TRIPS AND OUTINGS FOR  
THE FRIENDS OF THE RMFAB  
MARCH 2024 > DECEMBER 2024**





### **19-24.03 2024 > TENERIFE BETWEEN ART AND NATURE**

**Ref. 3735 – 1975 €** [plane, coach, half-board accommodation, entrance fees and guidance]

An endless spring illuminates the island's grandiose landscapes, sometimes volcanic with strange lava flows in the Teide Park listed as a Unesco World Heritage site, sometimes tropical with exuberant vegetation and golden dunes. Superb colonial towns like La Laguna offer palaces and historic homes with Baroque facades. Contemporary art is highlighted in Santa Cruz, with the TEA, designed by Herzog and de Meuron, featuring surrealism, and the Auditorio, a large white sail designed by Calatrava. The Musée des Beaux-Arts, with its 16th-century Flemish paintings, recalls the golden age of trade between Antwerp and Tenerife.

### **04.04 2024 > THE NEW MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS IN CHARLEROI**

**Ref. 3781 – Price to be confirmed** [coach, lunch, entrance fees and guidance]

After three years of renovation, the Museum of Fine Arts is moving into a brand new setting: the former Defeld stables in the Ville-Haute, next to the Jean Nouvel-designed Tour Bleue. With a vast array of paintings, sculptures, drawings, photographs and ceramics, the collection bears witness not only to the great movements of the 19th and 20th centuries, but also to the artistic present of the region, with works by René Magritte and Pierre Paulus, both having a connection with the area. In the exhibition "Le sport tout un art!", Jef Lambeaux, Anto Carte, Van Rysselbergh, Arman, Pol Bury and others take up the challenge of representing the subject of sport. A visit to the Industry Museum and the Glass Museum, located in the Bois du Cazier, a Unesco World Heritage site, will complete the day.

## **11-18.04 2024 > JORDAN, CRADLE OF CIVILIZATIONS**

**Ref. 3736 – 3 475 €** [plane, coach, full-board accommodation, entrance fees and guidance]

Jordan boasts splendid vestiges of numerous civilizations in extraordinary and varied sites: the Roman city of Jerash, the Crusader fortresses, the Umayyad desert castles, the site of Bethany where the first Christians were baptised, and the marvellous Petra, the rose city carved into the rock by the Nabataeans. Amman, the white city, is best discovered from the citadel with its gigantic Roman theatre and prestigious Jordan Museum, which traces the country's history through an exceptional collection in a fascinating scenography.

## **29.04-04.05 2024 > NAPLES AND CAMPANIA [2nd trip]**

**Ref. 3737 – 2 875 €** [plane, coach, half-board accommodation, entrance fees and guidance]

With many Renaissance and Baroque palaces and churches, and a maze of picturesque alleyways, the old Naples and its beautiful bay will not fail to seduce you. The Archaeological Museum recounts the ancient history of Campania through mosaics, statues and frescoes, while the Capodimonte Gallery devotes entire rooms to Titian, Masaccio, El Greco and Flemish painting. Pompeii, Herculaneum, Anacapri, Villa Poppea in Oplontis and the temples of Paestum, are all opportunities to marvel at the luxuriance of Greco-Roman civilization in an idyllic setting.

## **16.05 2024 > AUGUSTE RODIN IN MONS – A MODERN RENAISSANCE**

**Ref. 3776 – Price to be confirmed** [coach, lunch, entrance fees and guidance]

The Musée des Beaux-Arts in Mons is devoting a brand new exhibition to the sculptor Auguste Rodin (1840-1917).



Two hundred works will offer a rereading of his artistic career, of which Belgium is the high point. The exceptional collaboration with Berlinde De Bruyckere will present Rodin as an essential milestone on the road to contemporary art. A guided tour of the city of Mons will take in the new railway station designed by Calatrava.

**21-25.05 2024 ► MUNICH AND THE BLUE COUNTRY**  
[with guide Laurence Dehlinger]

Ref. 3738 – 2520 € [plane, coach, half-board accommodation, entrance fees and guidance]

The reopening of the Kandinsky and Gabriele Münter House in Murnau invites us to discover the magical landscapes of Bavaria, with museums dedicated to the artists of the Blaue Reiter and castles built by Ludwig II, such as Herrenchiemsee and Linderhof. In Munich, we will visit the Residence museum, the Marienkirche, the Town Hall Square, the marvellous rococo chapel of the Asam brothers and superb museums: the Lenbachhaus, the Pinakothek der Moderne and the Nymphenburg Palace with its delightful park.

**07-12.06 2024 ► THE LITTLE-KNOWN TREASURES OF BASILICATA**

Ref. 3739 – 2845 € [plane, coach, half-board accommodation, entrance fees and guidance]

Nestled in southern Italy, Basilicata remains a peaceful region with majestic mountains, dense forests and jagged cliffs. There are charming villages clinging to rock faces, home to a historical heritage that is all too often overlooked. Ancient Lucania, which was in turn in the hands of the Greeks, the Romans, Byzantines and Normans, offers a fascinating glimpse of the country's history in its archaeological vestiges, castles, churches and museums. The major troglodyte site of Matera, listed as a Unesco World Heritage Site, is particularly impressive.

## **17-21.06 2024 > DUBLIN AND SOUTH-EAST IRELAND**

**Ref. 3740 – 2520 €** [plane, coach, half-board accommodation, entrance fees and guidance]

Celtic under a classical exterior, Dublin is brimming with treasures: the Book of Kells at Trinity College, Celtic jewels at the National Museum of Archaeology, the great masters at the National Gallery, the exceptional collections of the Chester Beatty Library, and the Impressionists at the Dublin City Gallery. The surrounding area boasts superb examples of Palladian architecture such as Castletown House and Russborough House, castles with sumptuous gardens such as Malahide Castle and Powerscourt Estate, monastic ensembles in enchanting settings such as Glendalough at the foot of the Wicklow Mountains, and spectacular megalithic tombs in the Boyne Valley.

## **11-14.09 2024 > THE VENICE BIENNALE**

**Ref. 3741 – Price to be confirmed** [plane, coach, half-board accommodation, entrance fees and guidance]

The Venice Biennale 2024 aims to define the art of today. Artists Denicolai and Provoost represent Belgium with their “Petticoat Government” project, which hijacks the folkloric vision, symbolic and political weight of our giants, while the entanglements of our globalised existence will be explored at the the Swiss Pavilion by Guerreiro do Divino Amor. French artist Pierre Huyghe will mount a major new exhibition on the construction of new realities at Punta della Dogana, while Ethiopian-American Julie Mehretu will take over Palazzo Grassi. The Galleria dell’Accademia will exhibit Willem De Kooning. Ocean Space reintegrates the restored historic church of San Lorenzo with the Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary Foundation. The Palazzi Grimani, Querini Stampalia and Fortuny also take part in what promises to be an exceptional Biennale.

## **07-11.10 2024 ➤ THE ART CITIES IN EMILIA-ROMAGNA**

**Ref. 3742 – Price to be confirmed** [plane, coach, half-board accommodation, entrance fees and guidance]

The gentle hills of Emilia-Romagna bathe Bologna, its lively capital with a thousand arcades, the Torri pendenti and red brick churches, the Carracci at the Pinacoteca and the Morandi museum. The River Po surrounds Ferrara, a jewel of art and urban development forged by the Princes of Este. Ravenna, capital of the Western Roman Empire from 402 to 476, fascinates visitors with the exquisite Byzantine mosaics of its churches listed as Unesco World Heritage, as does Parma with its frescoes by Correggio, Stendhal's favourite painter.

## **14-19.10 2024 ➤ VALENCIA AND CASTILLA-LA MANCHA – in the footsteps of Don Quixote [with guide Javier Diaz]**

**Ref. 3743 – Price to be confirmed** [plane, coach, half-board accommodation, entrance fees and guidance]

Futuristic with Calatrava's City of Arts and Sciences, Valencia has not forgotten its past. An important Roman city, ephemeral capital of the Cid, Muslim then Christian, the town's golden age came in the 15th century with beautiful stately homes, the cathedral, the wheat warehouse, the merchant's exchange... The Patriarch Museum and the Museum of Fine Arts house sumptuous collections featuring Bouts, El Greco, Velasquez, Goya... A tour of Castilla-La Mancha will take us to the beautiful Cuenca with its famous hanging houses and Spanish abstract art Museum, the monastery and castle of Uclés, the eleven windmills of Consuegra, the Casa de Dulcinea del Toboso, the magnificent 15th-century castle of Belmonte and accommodation in the parador set in the castle of the fortified village of Alárcon.

## **07.11 2024 > ENSOR IN ANTWERP**

**Ref. 3782 – Price to be confirmed** [coach, lunch, entrance fees and guidance]

As part of Ensor Year, the Antwerp Museum of Fine Arts presents “Ensor’s wildest dreams. Beyond Impressionism”. The exhibition confronts Ensor with his inspirers, artists of his time and international successors. No other Belgian artist played such an important role in the advent of modernism. With “Ensor’s quest for light. Experiments on paper”, the Plantin-Moretus Museum rediscovers his creativity through a unique selection of prints, copper plates and drawings.

## **November 2024 > THE NEW CAIRO MUSEUM**

**Ref. 3783 – Price to be confirmed** [plane, coach, full-board accommodation, entrance fees and guidance]

The GEM is located on the edge of the Giza plateau. From the top floor, you can admire the three pyramids built in the middle of the 3rd millennium BC. The pyramid motif is omnipresent on the facades, where it is applied in alabaster panels. Nearly 22,000 m<sup>2</sup> are devoted to the presentation of the permanent collections, including Tutankhamun’s funerary furniture and its 4,500 items. This long-awaited opening will be the perfect opportunity for a city trip through Coptic and Islamic Cairo.

## **December 2024 > VAN GOGH IN LONDON**

**Ref. 3784 – Price to be confirmed** [Eurostar, coach, half-board accommodation, entrance fees and guidance]

To mark its 200th anniversary, the National Gallery will stage “Van Gogh: Poets and Lovers”, an exhibition that focuses on the two years he spent in Arles and Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, exploring the artist’s creative process and his sources of inspiration. With “Michelangelo, Leonardo, Raphael, Florence 1504”,

the Royal Academy of Arts explores the influence of the great masters on the young Raphael. The British Museum presents a major exhibition on “The Silk Road between 500 and 1000 AD.”, following how the journeys of people, objects and ideas shaped cultures.

### **PLEASE NOTE**

Dates and destinations for the 2nd half of 2024 are subject to change.

**For the travels and excursions, please contact  
Virginie Descamps**

**T** +32[0]2 639 4653   **E-mail** [virginie@preference.be](mailto:virginie@preference.be)

The payment with your name and excursion reference number [BE92 7440 6349 9223] confirms the registration and is not refundable.

**Preference Travel Team**

Rue des Francs 79, boîte 4 – 1040 Bruxelles

# Become a Friend

## *The Protecting Members*

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## More for Friends



More for Friends organises visits for the Friends. The number of participants is limited. Unfortunately, we are unable to accept more registrations than the number of places on offer, even for a fee.

### FEBRUARY 2024

**22.02 2024** > GUIDED TOUR IN THE MAGRITTE MUSEUM, "FOLON x MAGRITTE. LA FABRIQUE POÉTIQUE". Folon was full of admiration for Magritte, who used to say "you can create anything in painting, even mystery". Let's discover the poetic dialogues and "elective affinities" that brought these 2 great Belgian artists together.

► Meet at **10:45** am in the Forum of the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, rue de la Régence 3, 1000 Brussels. **15 free places.**

### MARCH 2024

**22.03 2024** > GUIDED TOUR OF THE EXHIBITION "HISTOIRE DE NE PAS RIRE. SURREALISM IN BELGIUM" at Bozar. Bozar is celebrating 100 years of Surrealism with an exhibition on this Belgium's famous avant-garde movement spanning no less than 60 years.

► Meet at **13:45** in the entrance hall of Bozar, rue Ravenstein 23, 1000 Brussels. **15 free places.**

### APRIL 2024

**27.04 2024** > GUIDED TOUR OF ART BRUSSELS

► Meet at **13:45** at Brussels Expo, Heysel. Details will be sent before the visit. **15 free places.**

### MAY 2024

**14.05 2024** > GUIDED TOUR OF THE EXHIBITION "JAMES ENSOR. INSPIRED BY BRUSSELS" at the Royal Library. Choose between:

**13:00** [NL] Guided tour by exhibition co-curator Vanessa Braekeveld. **15 free places.**

**14:30 [FR] Guided tour. 15 free places.**

► Meet at **12:45** or **14:15** in the lobby of the Bibliothèque Royale,  
Mont des Arts 28, 1000 Brussels.

**JUNE 2024**

**06.06 2024 ► GUIDED TOUR IN THE OLD MASTERS MUSEUM,**  
“5 ARTWORKS ..... 5 SENSES”. An immersive journey in the collections of  
the RMFAB through touch, sight, hearing, smell and taste. A different way  
of discovering and, above all, having fun.

► Meet at **10:45** in the Forum of the Royal Museums of Fine Arts  
of Belgium, rue de la Régence 3, 1000 Brussels.

**! Please note that registration criteria have changed.**

In order to widen access to these activities, from 2024 onwards,  
registrations will be limited to 1 activity per person (2 for patron  
members) during the 20 days following dispatch of this booklet.  
After this date, the remaining places will be filled on the usual basis  
[first registered, first served]. If you are interested in more than one  
activity, please list them in order of preference.

If you would like to take part in a More for Friends activity,  
registration is compulsory via the email [moreforfriends@gmail.com](mailto:moreforfriends@gmail.com),  
stating your surname, first name and membership card number  
[these activities are reserved for members who have paid their  
membership fees by the date of the event]. Only confirmation of  
registration will give access to the tour. Only registrations received  
by this mailbox will be taken into account. Please notify us of any  
cancellations as soon as possible via [moreforfriends@gmail.com](mailto:moreforfriends@gmail.com).  
Thank you for your understanding.

**MANY THANKS  
TO OUR PARTNERS!**

**BRAEA**

**ART  
BRUSSELS**

**ART.  
PARIS  
ART  
FAIR**



## Contemporary art circuit

We are delighted to announce that the Contemporary Art tour of galleries in Brussels will continue in 2024.

Many thanks to Jean-Philippe Theyskens for 6 years of wonderful explorations.

A new adventure begins: **5 Saturdays** in the company of new guide Laurent Courtens. Exciting walks will take you to well-known and lesser-known art sites to discover the creations of artists of today and yesterday!



**On Saturdays > 17.02, 23.03, 20.04, 18.05 &  
06.06 2024 at 14:30**



**Please note!** In order to extend access to more members, we have decided to give priority to applications from Friends who have not participated in the previous tour, i.e. Autumn-Winter 2023/24. Registrations will be processed about ten days after this booklet is dispatched.

The participation fee is 110€ per person for the 5 Saturdays. Exclusively for Friends who have paid their membership fees. Registration is compulsory via [moreforfriends@gmail.com](mailto:moreforfriends@gmail.com) Please wait for confirmation of your registration before making the payment.

# Become a Friend

*Thanks to all the volunteers*

Anne **Anne** Annie **Annette** Arlette **Barbara**  
Béatrice **Bernadette** Bernard **Brigitte**  
**Caroline** Catherine **Chantal** Chantal **Christel**  
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**Pascale** Paule **Philippe** Régine **René** Renée  
**Sarah** Suzanne **Sylvie** Thérèse **Valérie** Willem

Our team of volunteers is constantly expanding!  
If you feel like joining us, please send an email to  
[volunteers@fine-arts-museum.be](mailto:volunteers@fine-arts-museum.be)



The Friends  
support the  
Museums

**THANKS TO  
OUR FRIENDS**

In 2023, the Friends supported the Museums' Cultural Mediation service through the following actions:

- **"Free Guide"**, guided tours every first Wednesday of the month.
- Production of **10 video** capsules about the Magritte Museum.
- Facilitating the production of the **"Petit Musée Portatif"** for schools, a project financed by the Fédération Wallonie Bruxelles.
- The association also finances the **kunstinmetro d'art** and the **"Digital Experience"**.
- Every week of the year, it sends a bouquet of flowers for the info desk.
- It manages the **67 volunteers** who work in the various departments of the Museums (info desk, Friends' office, shops, library, archives, Musée sur mesure, Digital Museum, administration) and pays the salaries of the 2 students who work at the info desk.



Sandrine Defays and her 2nd primary class. © FWB PROF.

# IMAGINE!

## 100 years of international surrealism

The Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium inaugurate “IMAGINE! 100 years of international surrealism”, an extraordinary international touring exhibition conceived in close collaboration with the Centre Pompidou. Explore Surrealist poetry through themes such as the dream, the labyrinth, metamorphosis, the unknown and the subconscious, led by the great names of Surrealism, from Max Ernst to Giorgio de Chirico, Salvador Dalí, Joan Miró and Man Ray.

Each partner museum hosts the core of the touring exhibition, focusing on its own heritage. The RMFAB offer a broader reading of Surrealism from a Symbolist perspective, with some 150 paintings, works on paper, sculptures, assemblages and photographs. Symbolism, embodied in particular by Rops, Spilliaert, Khnopff, Delville and Minne, developed in Brussels and largely anticipated the emergence of the Surrealist movement.





Léon Spilliaert, *Vertige*, 1908. Watercolor and colored pencil on paper, Mu.ZEE d'Ostende.

21.02 2024 > 21.07 2024

# Folon × Magritte.

## The poetic factory

Heir to Magritte, Jean-Michel Folon has made his world known worldwide. Watercolour poet, atypical illustrator and committed cartoonist, Folon leads us into a labyrinth of images where we like to escape. Who better than the Musée Magritte to present the links between these two dreamers? With paintings, drawings and posters, this exhibition confronts the works and visual language of these two major creators.



Jean-Michel Folon, *Le rêve éveillé*, 1971. Watercolor on paper. Photo : © J. Geleyns - Art. MRBAB.

22.02 2024 > 02.06 2024

## James Ensor. Inspired by Brussels



James Ensor, *Les masques singuliers* [detail], 1872. Oil on canvas. © SABAM Belgium.

The Royal Library of Belgium, in collaboration with the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, presents a special exhibition which demonstrates the crucial role that Brussels played in the artist's imaginary world.

Well-known works on canvas and hidden treasures on paper are on display in the Palace of Charles of Lorraine, a place where Ensor often stayed during his years in Brussels.

# Amuse(u)ment for everybody in 2024!

## Become a Friend

A-Musée-Vous! Have fun, support the RMFAB projects and benefit from all the advantages (free entry without booking, activities for Friends, discount in the shops, etc.)

**Give a lasting gift that can be enjoyed for a whole year!**

Use the link [www.becomeafriend.be](http://www.becomeafriend.be)  
or go to the INFO desk, Rue de la Régence 3

**Give someone or treat yourself  
to a membership card!**

### UPCOMING EXHIBITION – Autumn 2024

- ▶ The creative gesture: sketches from the Flemish Primitives to the present day.



**Become a Friend**

Royal Museums  
of Fine Arts of Belgium

Choose your category and fill in the form below.

- \* Full members who, in addition to their membership dues, remit a donation of at least **€150** on the account of Fonds des Amis des Musées, BE81 6790 7542 9624/PCHQBEBB, will be recognized as Patrons of the Museums.

Donation BE81 6790 7542 9624 / PCHQBEBB

First name | Last name

A horizontal number line with 20 tick marks, labeled from 1 to 20.

Address

Post code | City

Tel. | E-mail

Date | Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Send to the Friends of the RMFAB: Rue du Musée 9, 1000 Brussels



[www.becomeafriend.be](http://www.becomeafriend.be)