



**DISCOVER THE  
MASTERPIECES OF  
THE MUSEUM OF  
IXELLES!**

Trail for adults

**1**100masters  
brussels**DELVILLE, Jean**  
*L'Amour des âmes (The Love of Souls), 1900*

By representing these two united bodies, Jean Delville is inspired by the **myth of androgyny** that embodies the ideals of the **19th century Symbolists**. In a whirlwind, these two amorous souls seem to merge in order to recreate the third sex destroyed by Zeus. The fluid forms, inspired by **Art Nouveau**, express the artist's pursuit of the decorative nature. Serpentine and sensual, the line animates the two bodies in their upward ascent towards a luminous sky. The **idealist aesthetics** of Delville, inspired by philosophy and spirituality, is revealed by the colour scheme (blue, pink and gold) and the iconographic vocabulary.

**2**100masters  
brussels**VAN RYSSELBERGHE, Théo**  
*Thé au jardin (Tea in the Garden), 1903*

*Summer Afternoon, or Tea in the Garden*, is emblematic of Théo Van Rysselberghe's work as the initiator of **neo-impressionism** in Belgium. Nevertheless, the painter strips the technique, borrowed from **Georges Seurat**, of its rigidity and systematic nature, making it **free and light**. The brushstroke adapts itself, a sign that Van Rysselberghe masters portrait art: he brilliantly succeeds in **giving life** to the characters, their personalities expressed by their flamboyant hats and the realism of their features.



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**DE SMET, Gustave**  
*De Zeearend (The Sea Eagle), 1926*

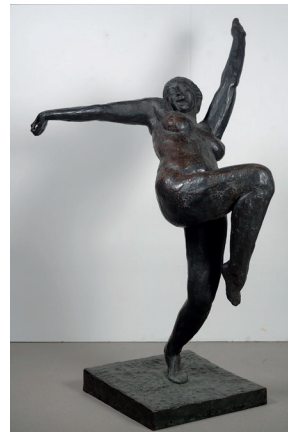
*De Zeearend* evokes a **harbour's nocturnal life** as sailors enjoy free time in between missions. Perhaps **inspired** by Manet's famous *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe (Luncheon on the Grass)* of which he reproduces the posture of the characters and female nudity, suggesting the presence of a prostitute, Gustave De Smet freely interprets reality. The painter, one of the most imminent members of **Laethem School**, develops the style that is characteristic of this piece: **geometrical shapes** becoming monumental and sober, as well as the perspective's drawdown. His **attention to detail** drives him to paint a Dutch flag rather than a Belgian one as the colours correspond better with the tones of the painting.

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**WOUTERS, Rik**  
*La Vierge folle (The Foolish Virgin), 1912*

The exhilaration of **Isadora Duncan**, famous dancer and considered an avant-garde figure of contemporary dance, is immortalised in this sculpture by Rik Wouters. The artist was captivated by the grace of the dancer's movements during a performance at the Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brussels. Wouters nevertheless uses the features of **his wife Nel**, who remains his muse and his main model. The bronze work contrasts with the smooth, academic finish and reveals a living material which emphasises **energy in this pose**.





**DÜRER, Albrecht**  
*La Cigogne (The Stork), 1500-1505*

*The Stork* illustrates German artist Albrecht Dürer's – creator of thousands of drawings and prints – interest in the **natural sciences**. The animal is depicted with **encyclopaedic precision**, which demonstrates his vast knowledge of ornithology and remarkable skill of **pen drawing**. His monogram and date were later added: there is a consensus that this work dates between 1500 and 1505, making it **the oldest object** in the Museum's collection.



**TOULOUSE-LAUTREC, Henri de**  
*Ambassadeurs. Aristide Bruant (Ambassadors. Aristide Bruant), 1892*

In 1892 the **singer Aristide Bruant**, eager to conquer new audiences in Paris, becomes **the star of one the chicest cafés-concerts** of the Champs Elysées, *Les Ambassadeurs*. Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec immortalises him in his trademark apparel: wide cape, red scarf and wide-brimmed felt. Initially rejected by the café's owner, but vigorously defended by Bruant who threatened to cancel his show if it would not be circulated, this **poster** emerged as an emblematic work of Lautrec.



**PANAMARENKO**  
*Paradox, 1980-1986*

Both art and invention, this curious object illustrates Panamarenko's interest for aviation and physical sciences. *Paradox* is also representative of the Antwerp-born artist's production, known for his myriad of machinery, inviting the **imagination to take flight**. Despite the deliberately ironic perspective of its creator, *Paradox* falls well within the long and fascinating artistic tradition of interaction between **science, technology and visual arts**.



**ALECHINSKY, Pierre**  
*Cobra de transmission (Cobra transmission), 1968*

In a sea of blue, a gigantic undulating green snake, in a convolution of curves and forms, seizes our imagination. Below the main scene, a predella, originally placed on the base of an altar, consists of several sequences of images. The **title of the painting**, *Cobra transmission*, refers to the **CoBrA movement** (the initials of three European capitals: Copenhagen, Brussels and Amsterdam). This movement was established in **1948** by **Christian Dotremont**, an advocate for **spontaneity in art**, an admirer of the **first and popular** arts and the decompartmentalization of artistic disciplines, including the association of painting and writing.



## MAGRITTE, René *L'Heureux donateur (The Happy Donor), 1966*

A mysterious nocturnal landscape within a silhouette wearing a bowler hat, an old wall immersed in daylight, a bell, a monochrome background... René Magritte, a major figure of **Belgian surrealism**, intentionally disturbs any attempt at rational understanding. The relationship between the viewer and the work is misleading, but the **title**, however, reveals a part of **its history**: it is most likely a reference to the artist's recognition towards **Jean Coquelet**, former curator of the Museum of Ixelles, who organised his first retrospective exhibition in 1956.



## MIRÓ, Joan *Le Cheval de cirque (The Circus Horse), 1927*

The 1920s are fertile years for Jean Miro, who develops a repertoire of symbols and shapes, and a **coded language** which he uses in *The Circus Horse*. The monochrome blue reflects the **artist's inner world**, inspired by the interpretation of **dreams** and the **unconscious**, while vibrant black strokes give impulse to the galloping horse in a cosmic and dreamlike atmosphere.

### Colophon

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