

PRESS RELEASE

TEFAF MAASTRICHT 2026

The European Fine Art Fair — March 14, 2026 – March 19, 2026

COLNAGHI: Stand 304

The presentation opens with a **nineteenth-century Fang reliquary head** (Añgokh-NIô-Byeri) from **Gabon**, attributed to the **Betsi group** and mounted on a base by Kichizô Inagaki (1876–1951). Such heads formed part of the byeri complex, serving as mediators between the living and ancestral remains preserved in bark containers. Early accounts document the ritual handling of relics, including the removal of cranial fragments for propitiatory use, practices that correspond to the deliberate abrasion visible on facial features. The head's elongated neck, incised coiffure and modelling place it among the most refined Betsi examples to enter European collections. Its provenance through Paul Guillaume and its inclusion in the Museum of Modern Art's 1935 African Negro Art exhibition position it centrally in the early canonisation of Central African sculpture.

Among the highlights presented is **Portrait of a Carmelite Monk** by **Alonso Cano**, painted circa 1644 and recently identified by Dr Benito Navarrete. The work belongs to Cano's Valencian period, following his departure from Madrid, and constitutes rare evidence of his activity as a portraitist. The sitter, identifiable as a Calced Carmelite friar, is shown standing and turning toward the viewer. The painting corresponds closely to documentary references to portraits by Cano noted by Palomino and later historians, and materially expands the surviving corpus of his portraiture.

Another highlight is a recently rediscovered, signed portrait by **Lavinia Fontana**, one of the earliest professional female artists in European painting. Trained in Bologna by her father, Prospero Fontana, Lavinia established herself by the late 1570s as one of the city's leading portraitists, sustaining a large family through her practice before later relocating to Rome at the invitation of Pope Clement VIII. The sitter, Isabella Ruini Angelelli, a Bolognese noblewoman renowned for her beauty and intellect, is documented as having posed for Fontana on three other occasions, including for the 'Venus and Cupid' (1592) in the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Rouen and the 'Portrait of Isabella Ruini Angelelli' (1593) in the Palazzo Patti, Florence. The present work therefore not only enlarges the corpus of one of the most significant women painters of the late sixteenth century but further strengthens our understanding of Fontana's elite Bolognese clientele and her role within the city's aristocratic circles.

Exhibition Information**Event:** TEFAF Maastricht 2026**Dates:** March 14, 2026 – March 19, 2026**Location:** MECC Maastricht, Forum 100, 6229 GV Maastricht, Netherlands**Stand:** 304**Website:** <https://www.colnaghi.com/>



Fang artist, Betsi group, *Reliquary head (Añgokh-Nlô-Byeri)* mounted on a Kichizô Inagaki (1876–1951) base, Gabon, 19th century, wood, 31.8 × 13.3 × 8.9 cm (12 1/2 × 5 1/4 × 3 1/2 in.); with base: 39.7 × 11.7 × 10.5 cm (15 5/8 × 4 5/8 × 4 1/8 in.).



Alonso Cano (Granada 1601–1667), *Portrait of a Carmelite Monk*, c. 1644, oil on canvas, 112 × 92 cm (44 1/8 × 36 1/4 in.).



Lavinia Fontana (Bologna 1552–1614), *Portrait of Isabella Ruini Angelelli with a Lady-in-waiting*, 1592, signed on the jewellery box “Lavin. Fon. Facies,” oil on canvas, 69.5 × 65.5 cm (27 1/2 × 26 in.).

COLNAGHI ELLIOTT: Stand 621

Among the highlights is *Head of a Tahitian* by **Paul Gauguin**, executed during the artist's first stay in Tahiti in 1891–1892. The drawing belongs to a phase of graphic production undertaken before Gauguin embarked on major oil paintings and reflects his use of drawing as a primary investigative medium. Executed in coloured chalks and pastel, the sheet is closely related to imagery developed in Gauguin's painting *Te Nave Nave Fenua* and to profile heads preserved in the *Cahier pour Aline*, his illustrated scrapbook dedicated to his daughter. The recurrence of this motif across multiple works confirms its central role within Gauguin's early Tahitian production.

Colnaghi Elliott Master Drawings is also presenting an important drawing by **Bartolomé Esteban Murillo**, datable to circa 1658–1659. Executed in pen and brown ink with wash and touches of red chalk, the sheet belongs to a mature phase of Murillo's graphic practice and is closely related to an earlier drawing in the Colomer collection. It documents Murillo's method of resolving compositional and structural problems through drawing and confirms the medium's function as an independent site of invention within his later production, rather than as preparatory material for painting.

Exhibition Information

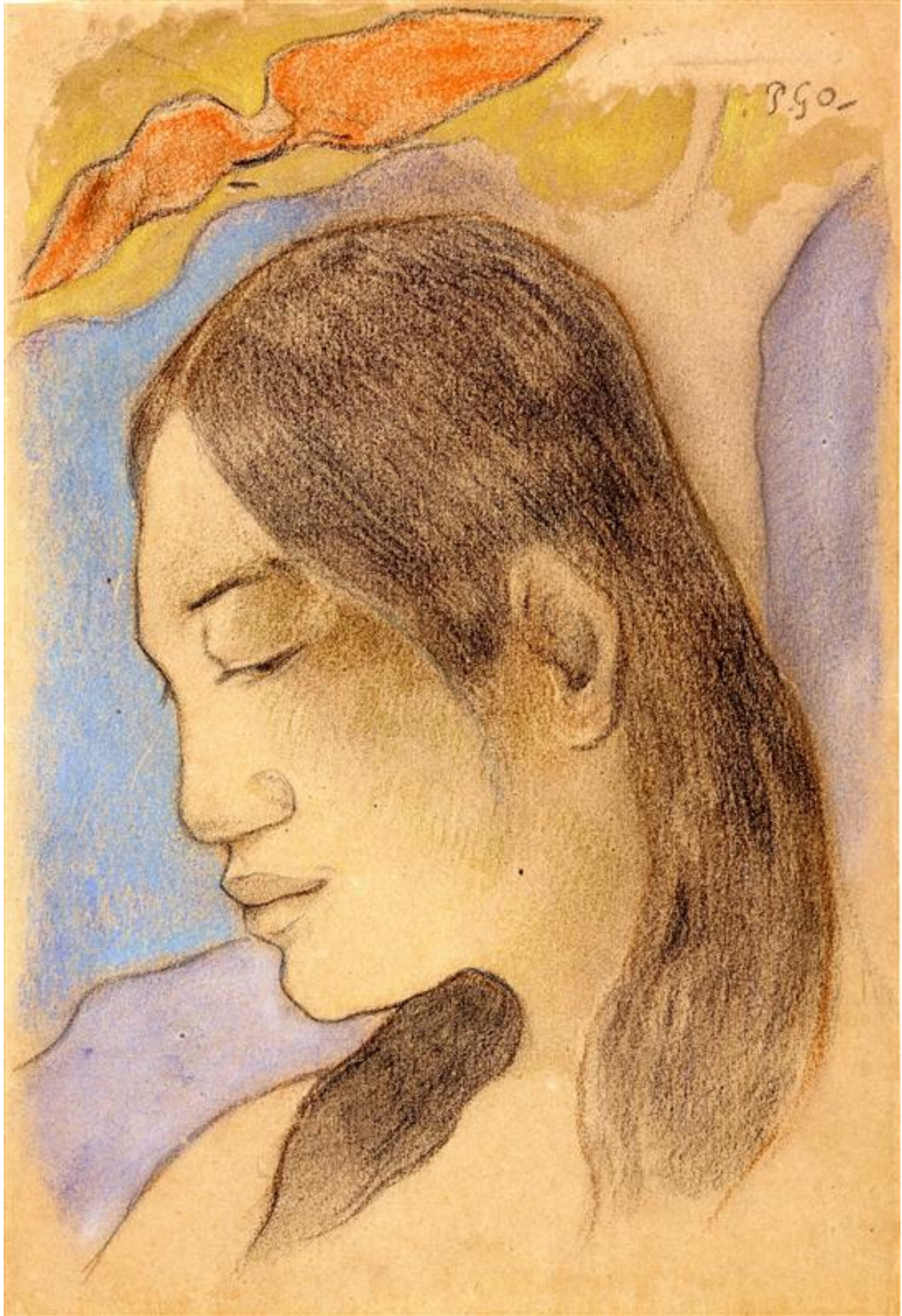
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Paul Gauguin (Paris 1848–1903 Atuona), *Head of a Tahitian*, monogrammed upper right in black chalk “P. Go” and numbered on the verso “No. 79-13” in red ink, coloured chalks and pastel heightened with touches of gold, 31 × 21.2 cm (12 1/4 × 8 1/2 in.).



Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (Seville 1618–1682), *Madonna and Child*, ca. 1658–1659, inscribed upper right in pen and ink (unidentified text or numerals, probably an old collector's inscription), watermark of a crowned shield with three lobed flowers and the letters "DA" below (17th century), pen and brown ink and brown wash with touches of washed red chalk on laid paper, 26.5 × 18.7 cm (10 3/8 × 7 3/8 in.).