

By **Anna Savitskaya** - Wednesday, January 11, 2017



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De Jonckheere gallery has acquired its fame thanks to its specialization in Flemish art from the 16th and 17th centuries. The gallery has consistently presented a great collection of works by Old Masters, and its professional examination of the authenticity of old paintings. After opening the doors of its first gallery space in 1976 in Brussels, the brothers Georges and François De Jonckheere decided to expand the business in Paris, opening an additional space there in 1983. In April 2011, De Jonckheere inaugurated another gallery in Geneva, and soon they will open yet another new venue in Monaco, in the first quarter of 2017.

What allows the De Jonckheere family business to successfully develop and open new galleries in a number of European capitals? What do they think about contemporary art, and how do they plan to celebrate the 40th anniversary of their first opening? Laura De Jonckheere, daughter of co-founder Georges De Jonckheere, answers these questions and more in this interview with Artdependence Magazine.

**Artdependence Magazine: De Jonckheere gallery has worked with classical art for several decades. How did this start, and what does the gallery specialize in now?**

Laura De Jonckheere: Today, the gallery has more than 40 years of experience. My father, Georges De Jonckheere, opened the gallery 40 years ago in Brussels, and then opened a second venue in Paris. The specialty and the core of our business is the expertise of Old Masters and Flemish art of the 16th and the 17th centuries. We deal with Brueghel, Cranach, first circle of Bosch, Peeters, and others - this type of very high quality Old Masters paintings. This is how the gallery made a name for itself.

My father and uncle have been working together since the beginning, and now we are experts in this niche on the market. Since 2010, we have added another direction to the gallery - we started to work with Modern Masters, like Magritte (because we are Belgian) and also with Italian modern painters like Lucio Fontana, of whom we have a very big collection. It has been almost a decade now since we started with this new direction.



PIETER BRUEGHEL THE YOUNGER. Brussels 1564 – Antwerp 1638. Peasants warming themselves beside the hearth. Oil on oak panel, Maker's mark on the back (clover leaf of Michiel Claessens) Panel: 23.5 x 34.5 cm. Provenance: De Jonckheere Gallery, Paris. Private collection. Copyright and courtesy De Jonckheere gallery



ABEL GRIMMER. 1570 - Antwerp - 1618. The month of September or the Parable of the Barren Fig Tree. Inscription bottom right LVC. 13. The month of December or Mary in front of the inn. Inscription bottom centre LVC.2. Signed and dated ABEL.G.../FECIT.159.(?). Panels: 25.4 cm in diameter. Provenance: Tardieu collection (beginning of 20th century); Private collection, France. Copyright and courtesy De Jonckheere gallery

**AD: What do you think about your role and place on the art market now? How do you position yourself towards contemporary art? Is contemporary art kind of a threat to you, or you feel totally secure in your own niche?**

LDJ: For us, contemporary art is in no way a competition. We work with Old Masters, and this is the secondary market. So we are not in the primary market, which means there is no competition for a work, we do not have artists we represent, and we deal with art that already has a history, provenance and pieces that are from Masters who have already proved to be established. This means that the speculation on the market we work on is much less and it's a different approach to collecting and to art in general. Contemporary art plays its positive role by making art - I would not say more affordable - but more general in a way, and the market much wider.



JAN MANDIJN.1502 Haarlem - 1560. The Temptation of St Anthony in a panoramic landscape. Panel: 20 x 29.2 cm. Provenance: Private collection. Copyright and courtesy De Jonckheere gallery



JAN VAN KESSEL THE YOUNGER. Antwerp 1654 - Madrid - 1708. Basket and bowls of fruit with two monkeys, a squirrel, a macaw and two guinea-pigs. Copper: 31 x 42 cm. Provenance: Filippo Franco Gallery, Brussels, 1979; Private collection, Italy. Copyright and courtesy De Jonckheere gallery

**AD: And what is your personal attitude to contemporary art?**

LDJ: We are in Classical and Modern art, we don't follow any contemporary artists, we don't buy any Contemporary art. And what I think is that lately there has been too much of a disparity when you compare the prices for Contemporary art with Classical and Modern art. You can sometimes be shocked how Contemporary art is much more expensive than works that appear in museums. So sometimes for us it seems that the market doesn't make much sense, and we believe that people will come back to Old Masters, who have real proven value.

**AD: Who are your clients?**

LDJ: Our clients are mostly connoisseurs; so because of this the majority are of the older generation. The main characteristic with which I can define them is their passion. Because we really offer something special, so our clients usually have a perfect education, know exactly what they like and can differentiate a good painting from a bad one and are seeking to find and acquire something different - and that is what we are here for.



THE MASTER OF THE HOLY BLOOD. Active in Bruges around 1520. Triptych: Mystical Marriage of Saint Catherine (central panel)Saint Barbara and Saint Mary Magdalena (wings Panels: 113.5 x 170.2 cm. Provenance: Collection Sir George Donaldson, London, Great Britain; Sotheby's, London, 03.07.1929, lot 31; Private collection James Mann, Glasgow, Scotland, 1929; Christie's, London, 01. 04. 1929, lot 29; Private collection Cornelis Johannes Karel van Aalst, Hoevelaken, Netherlands, 1960; Robert Fink 1964/5; Galerie De Jonckheere, Brussels/ Paris, 2002; Private collection, Italy. Copyright and courtesy De Jonckheere gallery



MAERTEN VAN CLEVE. 1527 – Antwerp – 1581. The wedding dance outside. Circa 1570. Panel: 94.3 x 122.3 cm. Provenance: Private collection. Copyright and courtesy De Jonckheere gallery

**AD: "The Golden Age" exhibition, running in Geneva until January 27, contains pieces from the latest acquisitions of your gallery. Could you please tell us a bit more about it?**

LDJ: our gallery presents the exhibition "The Golden Age". We are showing an ensemble of our latest acquisitions of works by the gallery's key artists which include the Master of Half-Lengths, Corneille de Lyon, Jan Mandijn, the Master of Holy Blood, Lucas Cranach the younger, Pieter Huys, Maerten Van Cleve, Hans Bol, Pieter Brueghel the younger, Jan Brueghel the elder, Abel Grimmer, Frans Francken the younger, Gijsbrechts Leytens, Isaac Soreau, David Teniers, Jan Van Kessel the elder and Francesco Guardi. From religious scenes to the rural scenes and traditional celebrations, the diversity of the subjects and styles is a perfect illustration of the eternal mastership of the Flemish painters of the time. The rich details and the pictorial vocabulary of these exhibited artworks are tell-tale of the modernity of the Flemish painting from the 16th and 17th centuries.

"The Golden Age" is on view at [De Jonckheere gallery](#) until January 27, 2017.