

EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS

C H A R L E S

**MENGE**



**24 March to 23 April 2004**

**SWISS EMBASSY**  
21 Bryanston Square, LONDON W1H 2DR

**UK+CH**

**Swiss Embassy Lecture Hall**  
Open to the public on Thursday 25 & Friday 26 March (4pm to 7pm)  
(All other times by appointment only)



## Charles Menge

was born in Granges in the County of Valais, Switzerland on 16<sup>th</sup> April 1920. He attended both primary and secondary schools in Sion and at the age of 16 became a student of the School of Industrial Arts in Geneva. A further four years was spent at the School des Beaux-Arts, directed by Adrien Bovy.

During vacations he developed his watercolour and oil painting techniques. Although he received much guidance from his school professors (Haberjahn, Blondin, Jacobi, Hainard, Mairet and Rheinwald), he wanted the freedom to develop his own style.

In 1940 Menge was recognised by an award for his lithographic achievements. After completing his studies in Zurich he returned to Valais where the beauty of the local scenery provided the necessary inspiration to continue painting.

His first exhibition in Sion was a great success. Menge continued to develop his style by visiting important art and cultural centres throughout Europe including Florence, Paris, Provence, Louvain and Amsterdam. His first exhibition outside Switzerland was in 1954 at the Brandt Gallery, Amsterdam.

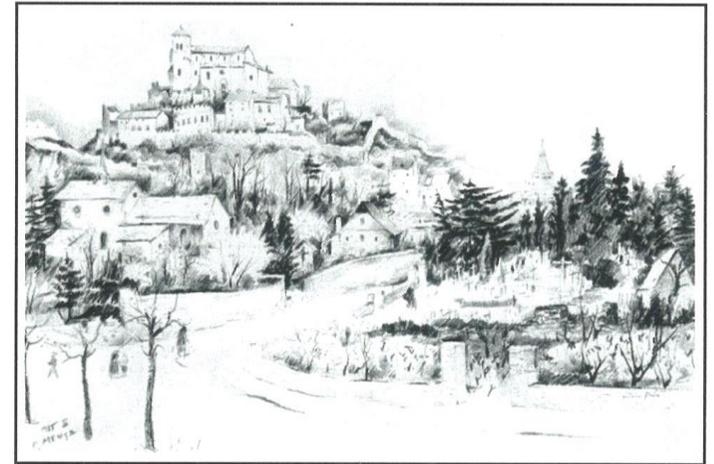
As the years past his reputation as an artist grew and further exhibitions were held in other parts of Switzerland (Montreux, Bern, Lausanne, Geneva, Neuchâtel and Basel). Many paintings can now be found in both private and public collections in some prominent European capital cities such as Paris, Brussels, New York, Frankfurt and Amsterdam.

Charles Menge married Rose-Marie Wenger in 1964 and has three sons. They live in secluded house close to Mont d'Orge, a hill overlooking Sion. The house and the artist's studio are surrounded by vineyards and tall pine trees; elements of nature which have been the inspiration for much of Menge's work since the mid-1950's.

The painting poet of Mont d'Orge

*"Charles Menge is the 'Breughel' of Valais. A self-willed (stubborn), sensitive artist, a gentle rebel, an inexhaustible storyteller deeply rooted in his homeland of Valais in Switzerland. He is a man who will not let himself be categorised and stereotyped. He confronts reality with nostalgia and a sense of mystic".*

An extract by Hildegard Stucky, (journalist) - published in the 'Walliser Bote' December 1992



'Eglise de Valere' - 1985 (pencil sketch 35cm x 25cm)

*A medieval church that overlooks the old town of Sion. The church is home to the oldest musical organ in the world, which is still in use*



'Arbres' - 1987 (pencil sketch 35cm x 25cm)

*Preliminary sketches of trees for a later painting*



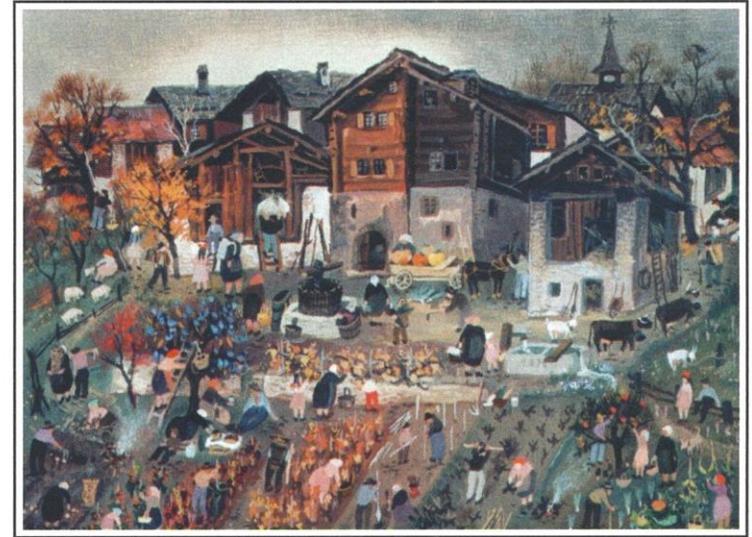
'Champlan' - 1942 (gouache 32cm x 23cm private collection)

*A typical small village c1940 depicting a picturesque winter scene*



'Sortie Ecole' - 1973 (oil 70cm x 51cm)

*The end of a school day in winter*



'Recolte D'Automne" - 2000 (gouache 28cm x 20cm)

*The climate of Valais is ideally suited for growing vines and producing fine Swiss wines such as 'Fendant', made from the fruits of the Chasselas vine*



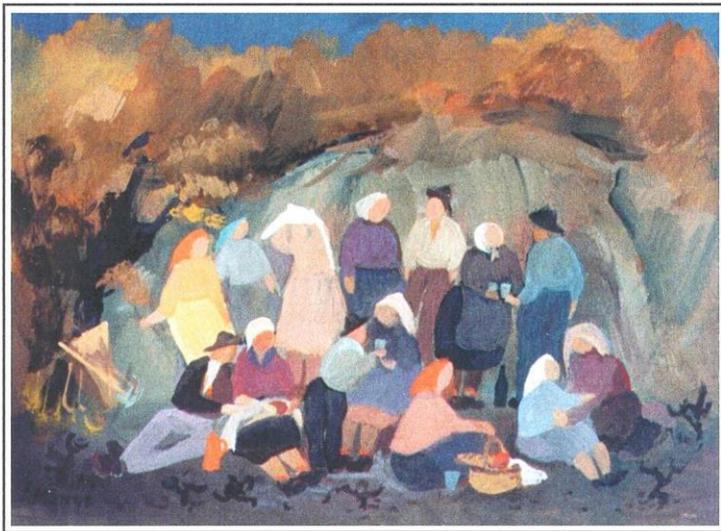
'Printemps' - 1994 (gouache 60cm x 36cm - private collection)

*Easter time during early Spring in Sion*



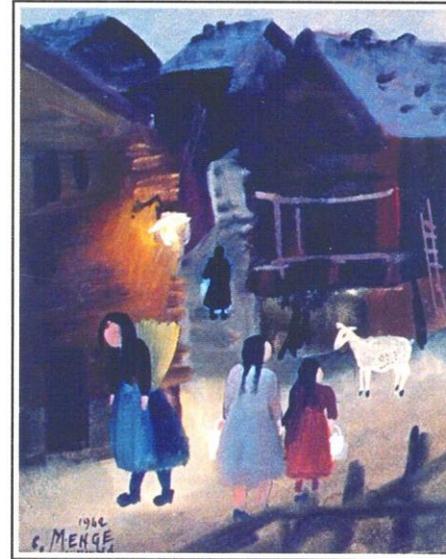
'Printemps dans la Vigne' - 1972 (gouache 38cm x 32cm)

*Springtime in the vineyard*

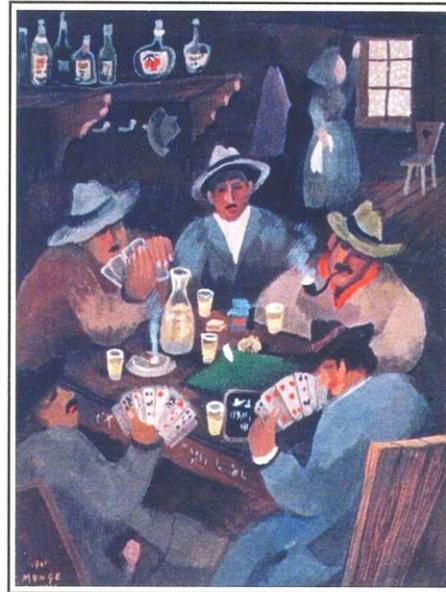


'Scene de Vigne' - 1997 (gouache 38cm x 32cm)

*Work activities in the vineyard have stopped for lunch*



'Le Soir' - 1962  
(gouache 20cm x 15cm)



'Le Cafe' - 1961  
(gouache 20cm x 15cm)

Created during the early 1960's, these paintings depict scenes from Bellwald, a small mountain village in the Swiss Alps. Some timber village buildings date back to the 16<sup>th</sup> Century.

Today Bellwald still retains all its original charm, even though during the winter months it is a thriving ski resort.

Left: Villagers at dusk

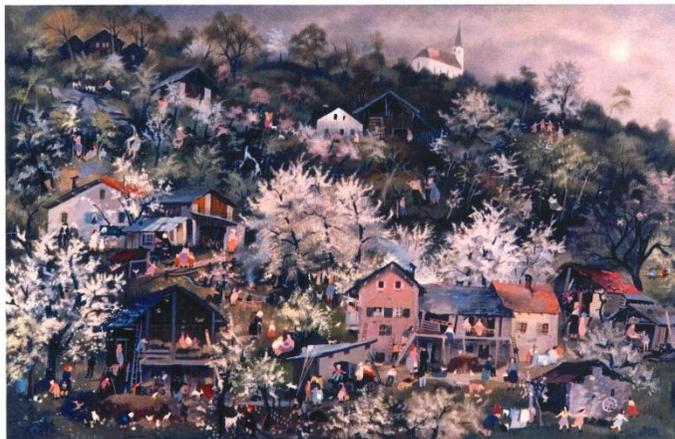


'La Bourrasque' - 1961  
(gouache 20cm x 15cm)

Above: Heavy snow storms can be frequent in Bellwald during the winter months.

Left: Some village men socialising in a local cafe as the snow falls outside.

**Exhibition of Paintings by Charles Menge  
and return of the  
Swiss Mount Everest Marker Flag of 1952**



**Wednesday, 24 March 2004 from 6.30 to 10 pm  
at the Swiss Ambassador's Residence**



*Charles Menge's Exhibition  
Du 24 mars au 24 avril 2004*

*Discours vernissage  
AMBASSADE SUISSE  
LONDRES*



## Programme

- 6.30 pm Arrival of guests
- 6.50 pm Welcome by the Ambassador
- 7.00 pm Addresses by
- Charles Menge, Artist
  - Christian Rümelin, Ashmolean Museum Oxford on "Mountains - Fascinating subject in painting"
  - George Lowe, Member of the British Mount Everest Expedition 1953, who will hand over the Swiss marker flag to Ernest Hofstetter and Jean-Jacques Asper, Members of the Swiss Mount Everest Expedition 1952

Followed by a Buffet Dinner

10.00 pm Carriages

**Mr Bruno Spinner, Ambassador of Switzerland and  
Mrs Madelon Spinner**

request the pleasure of the company of

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**at an Exhibition of paintings of the Valais by  
Charles Menge and the return of the Swiss marker flag  
from the Swiss Mount Everest expedition in 1952  
followed by a Buffet Dinner**

**on Wednesday, 24 March 2004 from 6.30 to 10 pm  
at the Ambassador's Residence**

21 Bryanston Square  
London  
W1H 2DR

R.S.V.P. by 12 March 2004  
on enclosed slip or by e-mail to  
[events@lon.rep.admin.ch](mailto:events@lon.rep.admin.ch)

**UK+CH**  
An event supported by Switzerland