



Charles Menge

was born in Granges in the County of Valais, Switzerland on 16th 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