

Swiss art and artists in London

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SWISS ART AND ARTISTS IN LONDON.

To most of us Swiss living in England there are moments when we regret that we are not as much in touch with our country as we should like to be. The "Swiss Observer" and the "Echo" bring us news from home, we may even read Swiss papers and magazines and listen to the wireless. But there are gaps that cannot be filled. It is, therefore, always a great pleasure to go to concerts given by Swiss artists, to see exhibitions of Swiss paintings, books, posters or to attend any other similar events. Within just over a week I have been to two Swiss functions of this kind.

On Friday, 24th February, *the Consort of Viols of the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis* gave a concert at the Wigmore Hall. Under the able leadership of Mr. August Wenzinger the four artists gave a programme of 16th century viol music which was a delight to listen to. I may have been sorry that this time it did not include my own favourite compositions by the Frenchman Marin Marais, but the four fantasias by Alfonso Ferrabosco, Orlando Gibbons' Fantasia I, and the charming piece by Melchior Franck which they played as an encore, more than made up for my regret. The perfection of the ensemble playing, the mastery of technique and the completeness of harmony combined to make the evening one of outstanding value.

On Tuesday, 28th February, an *exhibition of contemporary Swiss painters* was opened by the Swiss Minister at the O'Hana Gallery, 13, Carlos Place, W.1. In most attractive surroundings recent works by eight Swiss artists, all born round about 1900, are shown, most of them to great advantage. There is something of interest to every taste.

There are the rather sad portraits of Martin A. Christ and his "Railway Bridge at Basle" which must be dear to every "Basler". The paintings of women by Wilhelm Gimmi are well known in this country as he has had several exhibitions already in England. Though the works by Max Gubler have quite a name in Switzerland and abroad I am afraid I did not take to his "Summer morning" or any of the others. On the other hand I liked most of the paintings by Adrien Holy, specially his "Place de la République". The soft colours and delicate technique of Leonard Meisser found many admirers, especially his "Evening in Autumn" and "Skating". The bold colours in Turo Pedretti's canvasses were most attractive from the distance, particularly "Autumn" and "Sunset in the Mountains". A large part of his work had been destroyed in an avalanche in 1951. Then there are the works by Fred Stauffer, whose "Park in Geneva" I should not mind having in my drawing room. But on the whole my favourite is Raoul Domenjoz, whose "Topsham" and "The Docks" have the same clear beauty that I admire so much in Utrillo.

What little I can say about the paintings does in no way justice to the truly excellent exhibition which was selected by the Verena-Mueller Gallery in Berne and which will be open till 17th March. It is well worth seeing, and as Monsieur Daeniker said in his opening address, it deserves every support and success.

Mariann.