

JOHN MITCHELL

FINE PAINTINGS



Charles-Henri Contencin (1898 - 1955)

L'Aiguille de Varan seen from the Montjoie Valley, Savoie, France

oil on canvas, 19¾ x 24in. (50 x 61cm.)

signed

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This late afternoon scene by Contencin was painted near Bionnay situated on the Route des Contamines between St. Gervais and Les Contamines. A band of mist has descended over St. Gervais and to the north the sunlight is catching the Aiguille de Varan which towers above the town. This remains a somewhat secluded valley lying between Megève and Chamonix and a 15,000-acre nature reserve was set up in the 1970s to protect the area. The rimy Bon-Nant river, captured in a passage of sap green, flows into this wintry landscape which is suffused with hues of pink to capture the declining light.

The canvas's reddish priming combined with the tinted areas added to the forested slopes, the snowfields and rocks, make for a subtle and beautiful recollection of the Savoie.