

JOHN MITCHELL

FINE PAINTINGS



Charles-Henri Contencin (1898 - 1955)

Winter in Wengen, Bernese Oberland, Switzerland

oil on panel, 46 x 60cm.

signed

The painter's inventive motif of ski or sledge tracks comes into its own in this beautiful scene painted above Wengen. Using the three diagonal elements formed by, firstly, the chalets, then the dark line of trees and behind the flank of the Jungfrau, Contencin could cut the view in half pictorially; conjuring the sense of a vast void beyond before one's eye alights on the rocky wall across the valley. This painting is complex but highly successful and one where the painter has favoured using the wooden panel's 'ground' as a colour intermittently. However, as is often the case in Contencin's pictures, the confident handling of the deep snow in the broad foreground is the key to the composition's success.