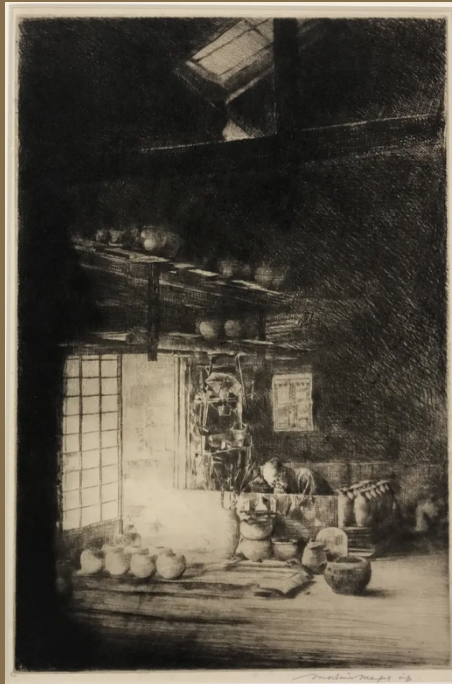


MONDAY 14 OCTOBER | 1 PM - 4 PM

*THE WAY HE SAW*  
*THE WORLD*

This exhibition presents a curated selection of etchings and drypoints by the distinguished artist Mortimer Menpes, inviting an in-depth exploration of his artistic vision and technique. Menpes' mastery in etching and drypoint engraving is evident in the precision and finesse with which he captures the nuances of light and shadow. His meticulous approach to chiaroscuro reveals a profound understanding of the interplay between light and darkness, imbuing his compositions with a remarkable sense of depth and atmosphere.





Japanese pottery is not only a daily utility but also an art form. During the Meiji era, many pottery craftsmen continued to use ancient techniques such as wheel throwing, glazing, and kiln firing, preserving the traditional characteristics of Japanese pottery. This artwork was created in 1888, a period that marked Japan's transition following the Meiji Restoration, as the country rapidly transformed from a closed feudal nation into a modernized state. In this artwork, Menpes successfully captured the tranquility and simplicity of a Japanese potter's studio. Through the etching technique, the artwork reveals the flow of light within the studio. The fine lines of etching allowed Menpes to create the effect of light filtering through paper windows and into the interior, forming contrasts between light and shadow, which enhanced the sense of space and depth in the artwork.

## Japanese Potter's Studio

Mortimer Menpes 1888  
Etching and drypoint on paper 30 x 20 cm

# Tokyo



## Family Meal, Evening, Tokyo

Mortimer Menpes 1912—1913  
Etching and drypoint on paper 34 x 25.5 cm



## Old Junks in Shanghai Harbour

Mortimer Menpes 1914  
Etching and drypoint on paper 13.6 x 17.4 cm

After the Xinhai Revolution, China's social and economic structures underwent significant changes. As one of the earliest cities to open up to foreign influence, Shanghai became a forefront of cultural and economic exchange between China and the world. At that time, Shanghai Harbor connected Eastern and Western trade, becoming one of the most prosperous ports globally. In Shanghai Harbor, traditional Chinese junks coexisted with modern Western steamships. The traditional junks carried with them a thousand years of Chinese maritime history, while the steamships heralded the technological advancements of the Industrial Revolution and the accelerating pace of globalization. This juxtaposition not only vividly depicted the unique social landscape of Shanghai at the time but also reflected China's complex mindset and cultural clashes in the face of globalization.

In the early 20th century, Shanghai was in a semi-colonial state. The infiltration of Western culture altered the social landscape of Shanghai, creating a unique phenomenon of "East-West fusion." Despite this, traditional Chinese culture and architecture remained significant symbols of the city's cultural heritage. The painting actually depicts the Huxinting teahouse near Yu Garden in Shanghai. The teahouse is built in the typical Jiangnan water town garden architectural style, surrounded by water. The man in the foreground is wearing a skullcap, a style popular during the Qing Dynasty, cleverly bridging the past and the present. This artwork fully reflects the resilience of Chinese cultural identity in the context of rapid change and foreign domination.



## A Temple in Shanghai

Mortimer Menpes 1913—1914  
Etching and drypoint on paper 37.6 x 34 cm

# Shanghai

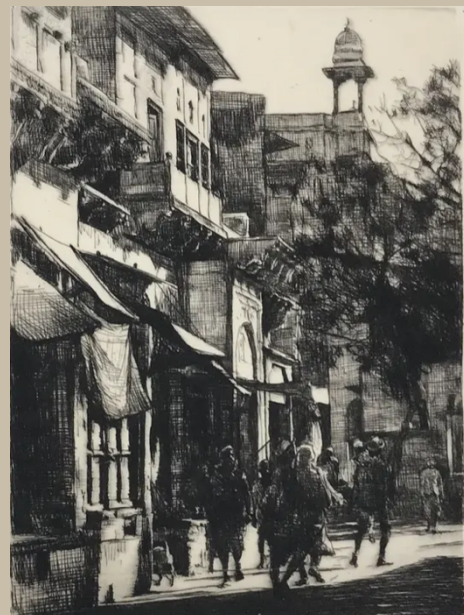
MORTIMER MENPES



## A Bullock Cart, Jeypore

Mortimer Menpes 1915-1916  
Etching and drypoint on paper

"A Bullock Cart, Jeypore," Menpes uses the same etching and drypoint technique to portray a quiet street scene in Jeypore. In the scene, a bullock cart is parked in front of a building with several figures surrounding the cart. The scene of this painting gives an overall more tranquil view and expresses the city's slowly moving life. Through the line, Menpes can convey the structure of the bullock cart and the texture of the surrounding buildings to reveal an everyday view of the streets of Jeypore. His treatment of the line becomes so refined that it carries the weight of material and depth of space. In this painting, Menpes portrays a humble set of buildings with unique regional character and a sense of history. This work, through the painting of bullock carts and their environs, would not only bring out the streets of Jeypore but also blend tradition and modernity in this urban lifestyle. Jeypore's bullock carts and the landscape around them are given by Menpes, who has a well-rounded comprehension of this city with much greatness and respect towards it for the way it lives, making this painting not only visually recreated but a cultural legacy and record.



## Jeypore: Midday sun

Mortimer Menpes 1915-1916  
Etching and drypoint on paper

In "Jeypore: Midday Sun," Mortimer Menpes changes what would have been a fairly commonplace scene for the streets of Jeypore into a vivid and almost bustling impression of a city teeming with life. He achieved this by masterful manipulation of delicate lines and gentle shading through the etching and drypoint technique—depth and movement within mansions of the composition. In a midday scene of Jeypore, Menpes has given the effect of brilliant light slants over everything, giving the impression of a city teeming with life, for all but a few figures.

The figures in the center of the picture are walking in the sunshine, their forms bathed in that intense, warm light that characterizes this period of the day. Besides, these are not mere figurines of the narrative; their attitude and interaction with the environment fill the entire composition with life and action.

Menpes' extensive travels, particularly throughout the East, including India and Japan, significantly shaped his artistic language. These journeys not only expanded his visual repertoire but also infused his work with a rich tapestry of cultural influences, reflecting his encounters with diverse landscapes and traditions. His works in this exhibition embody a synthesis of these experiences, showcasing his ability to translate the subtleties of the world around him into evocative visual narratives.

# THE WAY HE SAW

# THE WORLD

*Through this collection, viewers are afforded the opportunity to witness Menpes' extraordinary technical prowess and the depth of his lived experiences, which are intricately woven into the fabric of his art. The exhibition thus serves as a testament to Menpes' enduring legacy and his unique contribution to the art of etching and drypoint engraving.*

# Joypore