



Gallery 101 interior



Madame Haenggi

Obituary: Madame Haenggi remembered

by Sandra Brewster

A grand old lady of the visual arts community passed away on July 20, 2000, in Kantonsspital, Interlaken West, Switzerland. Fernande Marie-Louise Haenggi was known for her encouragement and promotion of younger black and white artists during her 18 years in Johannesburg.

Madame Haenggi, as she was often called, was born on October 1, 1904, in Auxenne, Cote d'Or, France. During her life she lived in Denmark, Belgium, Switzerland, Australia, France and the USA. She entered the Johannesburg art gallery scene in 1959 when she became one of three partners of Queens Hall Art Gallery. This lasted until February 1961. From April 1961 to December 1973 Haenggi was partners with her elder son, Fernand, at Gallery 101 where they ran many exhibitions. Some of the artists that showed in Gallery 101 during this period were Lucas Sithole, Lucky Sibiyi, Dumile, Sidney Kumalo, Durant Sihlali, Ezrom Legae, Lucas Seage, Azaria Mbatha and John Muafangejo. From June 1974 to October 1976 Madame Haenggi ran her own business called Madame Haenggi Gallery then was in partnership with Chris Crake until April 1977 running the Chris Crake Madame Haenggi Gallery.

A policy of showing work by black and white artists was always in place. All artists were considered and encouraged to bring in their work. Madame Haenggi supported many of them by purchasing their work or lending them money towards an exhibition, being refunded out of net sales proceeds. Openings were always mixed and liquor was served although it was against the law.

Madame Haenggi was highly interested in the arts of all periods. She studied painting with a local artist in Melbourne during the 1928 - 1931 period. However, she never painted much and only for her enjoyment. She will be missed and remembered as a generous supporter of the visual arts and young artists. Madame Haenggi is survived by her two sons, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.