

## Charles-Melchior Descourtis

Charles-Melchior Descourtis (born in Paris 1753) was a French printmaker. He specialized in the production of color prints using aquatint and wash-manner. Among his earliest known works were a series of four engravings of views of Paris and Rome after paintings by Pierre Antoine de Machy, which appeared in 1784. He collaborated with Janinet on the illustrations for *Vues remarquables des montagnes de la Suisse* in 1785, which were engraved after several artists.

He is best known, however, for his four color prints after the genre scenes of Nicolas-Antoine Taunay, notably the *Village Wedding* (1785) and the *Village Fair* (1788). The subtle green tones of the landscape setting complement the white and red of the small figures, successfully conveying the gentle mood of Taunay's rural scenes. The second pair, the *Tambourine and the Brawl*, both animated and slightly grotesque compositions, are less finely executed. Such prints of genre scenes were avidly collected by contemporaries. Descourtis also produced a number of portrait engravings, including *Princess Wilhelmina of Prussia* (1791).

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