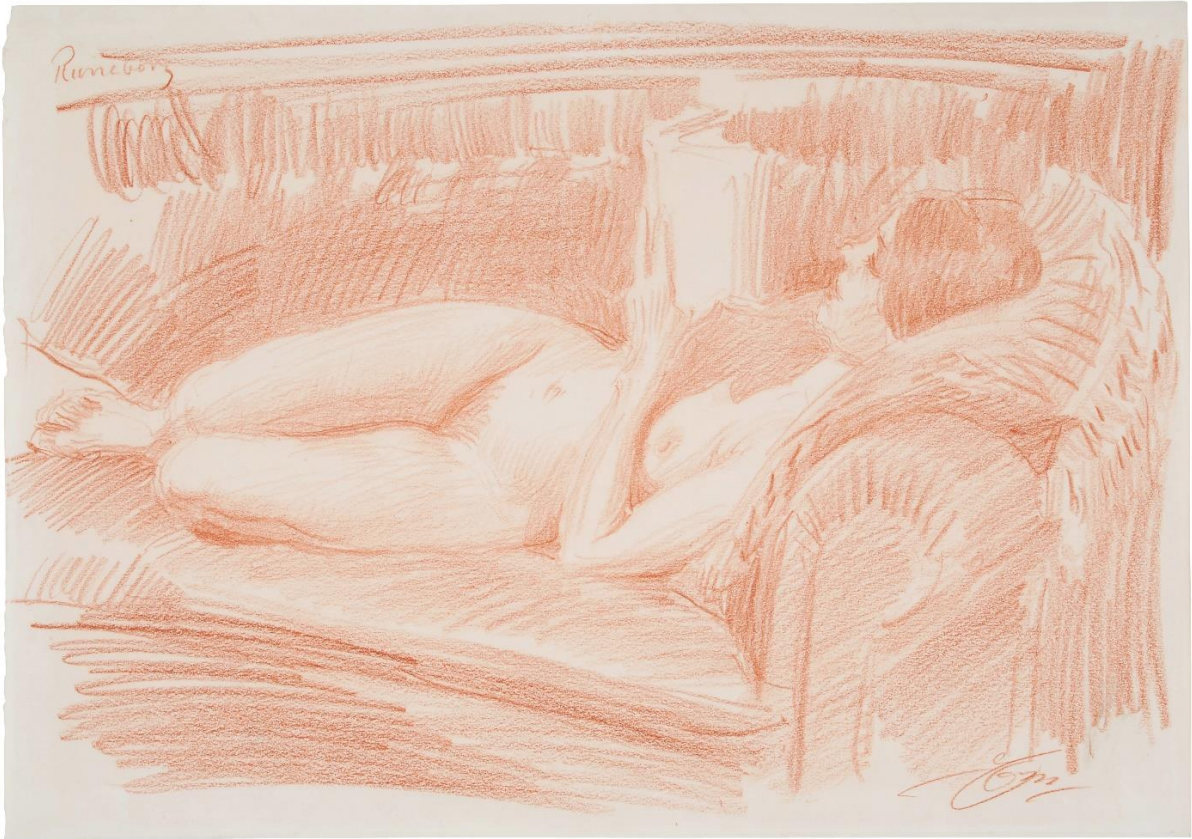


# LE CLAIRE

KUNST SEIT 1982



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ANDERS ZORN

1860 - Mora - 1920

*Reclining Nude Reading, Gulli Runeborg*

Red pencil on tan paper. Signed lower right *Zorn* and inscribed *Runeborg* top left; c.1917.  
240 x 350 mm

PROVENANCE: Private collection, Vienna

Women - they populate Anders Zorn's entire oeuvre. As seductive nymphs they stretch among exotic plants, bathe lost in thought in Swedish waters, have themselves portrayed as sophisticated ladies of the world or row their boats through the bright midsummer night as simple peasant women. Zorn shows women of all ages, young girls, mature women and old women. He paints, draws or etches real beauties just as virtuously as everyday folk. An astonishing range of motifs.<sup>1</sup>

Manet's innovative, scandalous nude motifs such as *Olympia* of 1863 showed Zorn new possibilities. In their search for pictorial content that represented modern life, the artistic avant-garde of the time liberated the nude human figure from the corset of historical painting.<sup>2</sup> Zorn chose bathers and women at their daily toilette as his favourite subjects in order to show the female body without clothing beyond Old Testament figures such as Susanna and Bathsheba, or figures of the ancient world of the gods such as Diana or Venus.

Not only does the outdoor nude play a central role in Zorn's work, but the artist also made a name for himself with interior scenes. In contrast to Degas's approach, he refrains from a voyeuristic gaze or the evocation of erotic fantasies. His models have a self-confident posture. Neither shame nor any participation in the artist's work in the studio can be detected. In our notable drawing, for example, his model Gulli Runeborg is lying relaxed on the sofa, engrossed in reading a book.

It dates from the artist's late period, around 1917-18. At this time, while the First World War was raging and Anders Zorn was in poor health, he often used models from conveniently close quarters, for instance from his household.

For most of his time Zorn worked in the so-called "outer studio" at Södermalmstorg 4 in Stockholm. Again the model was Gulli Runeborg. She also posed for two of his etchings, executed in 1914 and 1918 [Figs. 1, 2]<sup>3</sup>. Many of his models at that time posed in the nude on a blue-grey leather sofa as for

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<sup>1</sup>Janina Nentwig, *Zorn, Maler der Frauen*, in: Alexander Bastek, Anna-Carola Krausse, *Der Schwedische Impressionist Anders Zorn*, exhib. cat., 15.1.-15.4.2012, Museum Behnhaus Drägerhaus, Lübeck 2012, p. 115.

<sup>2</sup>Janina Nentwig 2012, op. cit., p. 121-124.

<sup>3</sup>Gulli I and Gulli II. See, Zorn Gallery Sven Lidbeck, *Anders Zorn Etchings, Catalogue Raisonné*, Stockholm 2007, ZG 265, p. 310, and ZG 280, p. 325).

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example in a painting in a private collection in Sweden<sup>4</sup> [Fig. 3]. Similar drawings in red pencil belong to the Zornmuseet collection in Mora, Sweden.

We would like to thank Håkan Knutsby, Johan Cederlund, and Cecilia Lengefeld for their help in our research and identifying the model.



Fig.1: *Gulli I*, etching, 1914. 129 x 89 mm

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<sup>4</sup> *On the blue-grey leather couch*, 1916. Oil on canvas, 64 x 100 cm. Sold at Bukowski's, Stockholm, anonymous sale 3.12.2013, lot 80.

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Fig.2: *Gulli II*, etching, 1918. 189 x 148 mm



Fig.3: *On the blue-grey Leather Sofa*, 1916  
oil on canvas, 64 x 100 cm.  
Private collection, Sweden