

LE CLAIRE

SEIT 1982

KUNST



JOHANN ELIAS RIDINGER

1698 Ulm - Augsburg 1767

The Jump into a Wild Hog Preserve

Pen and brown ink, brown and grey wash over black chalk on paper with a Strasbourg Lily watermark. Signed and dated in brown ink in the lower margin: *J. E. Ridinger fec. A[ugusta]. V[indelicum]. 1728 Jun: / in Sylva ad vivu[m] delineav[it]*, titled: *Der Einsprung an einem Sau Garten* and with a personal dedication: *Honoratis: Amico / Dr: Will*¹.

336 x 248 mm

PROVENANCE: William Esdaile, London (bearing the collector's initials *WE* lower left and his annotation on the verso: *1815 WE P 91 N66x*. (Lugt 2617) – European private collection

This sheet is very closely related to an etching of the same title [fig. 1] published in 1729 as plate 20 of a set of thirty-six etchings titled *Vollkommene und gründliche Vorstellungen der vortrefflichen Fürsten-Lust oder der Edlen Jagdbarkeit* [Exemplary and Thorough Representations of the most Admirable Princely Pleasure or the Noble Pursuit of Hunting].² The set is the first in a series of important and highly instructive sets by Ridinger on hunting and the first set to be published on his own account. Plates 19 to 22 depict four different types of wild boar hunt. They are titled: *Wie die Schweine mit Netzen gefangen werden* [How Wild Boar are Caught with the Help of Nets], *Der Einsprung an dem Sau Garten* [The Jump into a Wild Hog Preserve], *Wie auf Schweine angestanden wird* [How to Lie in Wait and Lure Boar], and *Die Schweins Hatz* [Hunting Wild Boar with Hounds].³

The present drawing only represents the central part of the etching. One boar has already sprung, landing awkwardly on the floor of a stockade trap, another grunts as it slides down a wooden ramp into the pit and two others follow close behind. The format of the drawing and the semi-oval framing line in the upper margin indicate that it was originally intended for a different set of prints. Ridinger enlarged the format of the image to match the horizontal format of the other prints in the set by adding trees at each side, widening the fence and increasing the number of boar.

The etching bears a lengthy legend in German and French describing the construction and purpose of this type of trap: *This stockade trap is of use only [to] such gentlefolk who are without large expanses of woodland or stretches of forest which provide a suitable habitat for wild hog, although they often encounter and track whole sounders of wild boar, especially since, as is well known, it is the custom of boar to travel constantly, rarely remaining long in one spot,*

¹ The dedication probably refers to the German engraver and art dealer Johann Georg Wille, or Will (1715-1808) who corresponded regularly with Ridinger from his home in France. In a letter of 1747, Ridinger mentions a wish to commission drawings of the exotic animals kept at Versailles and asks advice on his son's planned study trip to Paris. The timbre of the correspondence between the two artists in 1761-2 is decidedly amicable. (See Elisabeth Decultot, Michel Espagne and Michael Werner (eds.), *Johann Georg Wille, Briefwechsel*, Tübingen 1999, pp. 35-6 and 73-4).

² Georg August Wilhelm Thienemann, *Leben und Wirken des unvergleichlichen Thiermalers und Kupferstechers Johann Elias Ridinger. Mit dem ausführlichen Verzeichnis seiner Kupferstiche, Schwarzkunstblätter und der von ihm hinterlassenen grossen Sammlung von Handzeichnungen*, Leipzig 1856, no. 32 – Ignaz Schwarz, *Katalog einer Ridinger-Sammlung* [R. v. Gutmann], Vienna 1910, I, no. 32.

³ Thienemann, op. cit. (1856) and Schwarz, op. cit. (1910), nos. 19-22.

LE CLAIRE

SEIT 1982

KUNST

and thus for such occurrences experienced huntsmen have invented this stockade trap. In a forest one shall select a spot that is thickly vegetated with oak, beech and other species of wild copse, in which spring water and other elements of use to boar may be found; the said trap can be built, if circumstances allow, to a format of 200 paces square, the whole being enclosed on all sides with sturdy oak planks and an opening made for the jump at one or two points, and in addition to the planks, a height shall be dug out within, being deep so that the hog may not go out once they have sprung into the enclosed area. To this end the entrance where they jump shall be fitted with sturdy wood sanded smooth, but a false bridge shall be laid over it to better accustom them to march in and out, and when the rutting-season comes it will be taken away but they shall be fed with acorn malt or wild fruits on the wings of the stockade and at the entrance where they jump, but 2, 3, or 4 young wild sows shall be kept in the reserve, and when those approaching grow aware of this scent they will rush in at full pelt to join them and thus be caught unharmed.

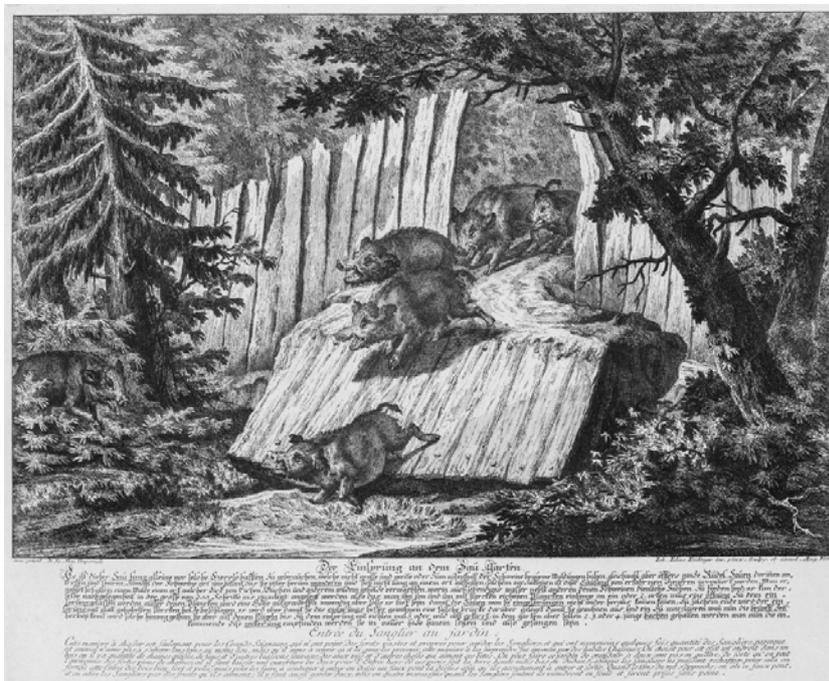


Fig. 1: Der Einsprung an dem Sau-Garten [The Jump into a Wild Hog Preserve], 1729, etching, plate 20 of the series *Der Fürsten Jagd-Lust* [Representations of the most Admirable Princely Pleasure]. (Thienemann 32)