



Anna Walinska (American, 1906-1997)

Paris Nude #39, 1929

Ink on paper, 8 1/2 x 11 in.

Signed lower right: AW '29

Provenance:

Estate of the artist

An ambitious young artist, Anna Walinska was determined to study in Paris and secured funding from her father's employer to make the journey possible. She set out in 1926, taking up residence on the Left Bank at 67 Rue Madame, just around the corner from Gertrude Stein. While in Paris, Walinska studied under André Lhote, took classes at the Grand Chaumiere, and sketched daily at the Académie Colarossi. The influence of Picasso and Matisse on her work is apparent; while Walinska avoids being derivative of these masters, concepts prominent in their respective practices appear in her work, especially those created between the late '20s and '30s. Paris was the first place the artist was able to take a nude figure drawing class complete with live models, something she had dreamed of for years. She produced hundreds of line drawings, delicately capturing her subject's form in visceral, unplanned sketches that hint at the artist's natural grasp on composition.

The present sketch is an example of the figure drawings Walinska completed in Paris. These works were typically executed on artist sketchbook paper, in their original form allowing her to work quickly and jump from one composition to the next. Her time in Paris was instrumental to her overall artistic development, as it offered her the opportunity to take figure drawing courses where she would sketch bodies of different genders, races, sizes, and shapes. Walinska arguably would have been a champion of the body positivity movement today – beyond her admiration of the human form, she painted nude self portraits and modeled for other artists.