





Ludolf Bakhuizen, *Self-portrait*, ca. 1662.
Drawing in pencil and leaves: wash.
Amsterdam Historical Museum

Ludolf Bakhuizen

(Fowler 1661 – Amsterdam 1729)

The *Koggenwerf* on the southern side of the island of Texel. On the left a hooyer under sail, on the right a fluit sailing into harbour.

Canvas, 55 x 65,3 cm.

Signed L. Beck and dated 1661

Provenance: Dutch private collection.

Tekeningen Ludolf Bakhuizen 1661-1729, Schepenwerf – koggenwerf – schuiten, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum Nederlandsche Schepenwerf Museum / Funder, Omschrijvings Landmuseum, 1995

Ludolf Bakhuizen started his career as a calligrapher and draughtsman, and only took up painting in the late fifties of the seventeenth century. As a painter, Bakhuizen seems to have been largely self-taught. He used to visit other painters' studios regularly and learned by looking and questioning. His fellow-artists were impressed with his talent and encouraged him to progress. Bakhuizen's earliest painting is dated 1658, but he wasn't admitted to 'the painters' guild' of St Luke until February 1663. His reputation grew rapidly and in 1665 he got an important commission from the burgomasters of Amsterdam for a large view of the harbour of Amsterdam as a gift to Hugues de Lionne, minister of Louis XIV of France. This shows that his work was rated as highly as that of Willem van de Velde the Younger, who was still working in Amsterdam at the time. As an artist of superior standing, Bakhuizen had considerable influence on his contemporaries and also on later generations of marine painters, such as J.C. Schotel and J.H. and H. Kosterik.

This painting by Bakhuizen – the second earliest known – at which it combines an atmospheric quality on a sea with Storm, the *Vlieger* with subtle tones, a wonderfully luminous colour scheme and a happy composition, shows that not only technically but also artistically he was on a level with the best.

Paintings of this quality are rarely found today, as museums have secured most of them.

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