

ABRAHAM STORCK

(Amsterdam 1644 - Amsterdam 1708)

Shipping at Anchor

black chalk, pen and brown ink, grey wash, pen and brown ink framing lines
20.3 x 31 cm (8 x 12½ in)

Provenance: L.H. Philippi (L. 1335);
B. Jolles (L. 381);
Fürst von Hohenzollern-Hechingen (?) (L. 2087).

A BRAHAM STORCK, HELD IN GREAT ESTEEM FOR HIS accurately detailed and often dramatic maritime works, exhibits his consummate skill as a draughtsman in *Shipping at Anchor*. Two intricately realised vessels dominate the foreground as they cut through a choppy sea. The strength of the wind can be gauged from the taut sail and tilting keel of the ship most immediately to the left of the composition.

The formation of the ships and overall layout of the present drawing is strikingly similar to one of Storck's paintings, *Sea Piece with Dutch Man-of-War*, especially in the lower left quadrant (fig.1). It is possible that a drawing such as this could have been a preparatory sketch for his large-scale paintings. Another drawing by the artist (fig. 2), demonstrates the immense detail that would later be translated into oil: the shaded sails on the ships are similar to the careful *chiaroscuro* Storck employed to accomplish the highly realistic perspective in the present drawing.

Storck, a prolific painter of maritime landscapes and other genre paintings was described in 1708 as an artist of 'tempestuous and tranquil



Abraham Storck, *Sea Piece with Dutch Man-of-War*, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge (Figure 1)

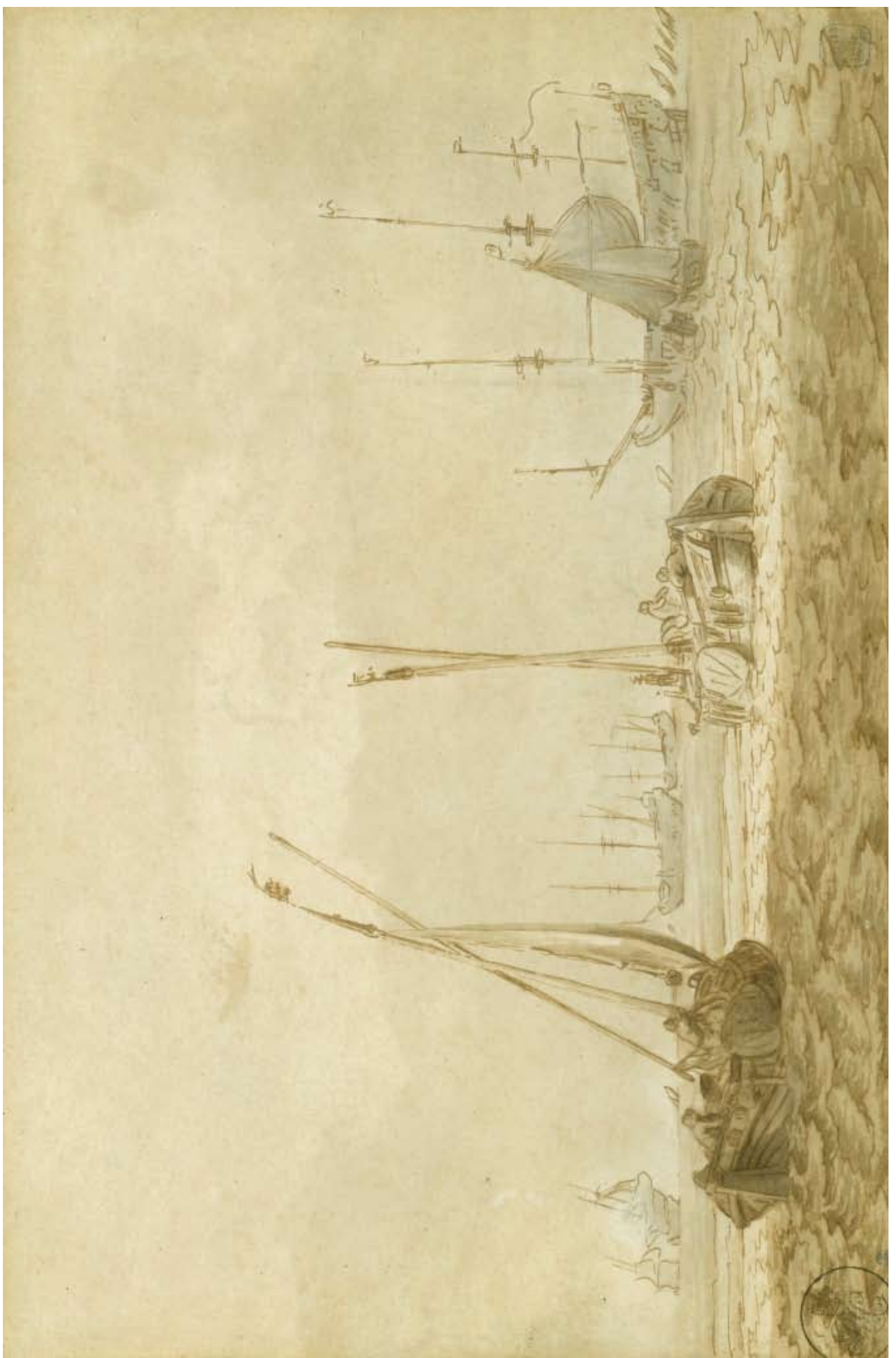


Abraham Storck, *Voiliers près d'un débarcadère*, The Louvre, Paris (Figure 2)

seascapes.¹ Storck's output was extensive, encompassing sea battles, river scenes and townscapes. His river and coastal scenes were greatly influenced by Ludolph Backhuysen (1631-1708) (see catalogue no. 61) in their pictorial treatment of sea and sky. Storck also absorbed influences from other leading Amsterdam marine painters including Willem van de Velde the Younger (see catalogue no. 136). It is thought that van de Velde, in particular, inspired Storck's great technical accuracy in his depiction of ships and other sailing vessels.

Storck was born in Amsterdam in 1644, the youngest son of the painter Jan Jansz Sturck, who was also known as Sturckenburch. It is likely that Abraham Storck and his brothers were trained and educated by their father and the painter Jan Abrahamsz Beerstraten (see catalogue no. 60) who was a friend of the family. From Beerstraten, Storck adopted his artist's densely packed compositions. By 1688 Storck was a member of the Guild of St. Luke in Amsterdam and enjoyed a reputation as a highly skilled artist during his lifetime.

¹ A. Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh* (1718-21.)



(Actual Size)