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SIMON JACOBSZ. DE VLIIEGER

Rotterdam circa 1600/1 – 1653 Weesp

A calm Sea with Ships in the Roads.

Oil on Panel, 59 x 71 cm

Signed on a piece of driftwood at bottom right:

S. DE. VLIIEGER

c. 1650

Provenance: Private Collection, Switzerland;
Sale Schuler Auktionen, Zurich, 20-23 June 2000, lot 3295, reproduced pl. 3
(as Willem van Diest);
David Koetser Gallery, Zurich, 2000-2001 (as Simon de Vliieger);
Private Collection, United Kingdom.

Exhibited: *In de Ban van de Zee, De Gouden Eeuw van de Nederlandse marineschilderkunst, De Inder Rieden Collectie*, Museum Bredius, The Hague, 10 December 2019- 1 March 2020, no. 21, reproduced.

Literature: G. de Beer, *The Golden Age of Dutch Marine Painting, The Inder Rieden Collection*, Leiden 2019, Vol. II, no. 30, pp. 530-539, reproduced.

In this painting, evening falls as the setting sun casts its light on the rippling water of a calm sea. Several ships are anchored, including a "smalschip" on the right, which was the most important transport vessel on Dutch inland waterways during the 17th century. This single-masted vessel measured 18 meters in length and 4.68 meters in width—dimensions that allowed it to pass through the lock at Gouda. The ships depicted, partially overlapping, are arranged in such a way that the viewer's gaze is drawn into the depth of the scene through the empty center.

De Vliieger's versatility as a marine painter led him to become one of the leading artists in the field, forging the direction of the *genre* in Holland in the 1630s and 1640s. The artist was skilled in the depiction of calm seascapes, wild stormy oceans and dramatic shipwrecks and he recreated his subjects with remarkable variety and invention. His influence on artists of the following generation is significant and the impact of his painting can be seen in the work of Willem van de Velde the Younger, Jan van de Capelle and Hendrick Dubbels among others.¹

¹ G.S. Keyes, "Simon de Vliieger", in *The Dictionary of Art*, J. Turner ed., London and New York 1996, vol. 32, p. 673.