

Shipping scene

William Anderson

Sold



Description

William Anderson was born in Scotland in 1757, though the precise details of date and place are elusive. He trained initially as a shipwright, but by the age of thirty was an accomplished and skilled marine painter and had settled in London. He seems to have applied himself to the study of the Dutch Old Masters of the Van de Velde school, since he produced numerous small works on panel which are strongly evocative of that style. Anderson first exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1787. He seems to have been on the periphery of artistic life in London: he was a pall-bearer at the funeral of Giuseppe Marchi, Reynolds's favorite assistant, and in 1797 he was an unsuccessful candidate for Associate Membership of the Royal Academy. He seems to have had no part in the artistic controversies of the day.

His regular Royal Academy exhibitions continued annually until 1811, and then intermittently until his last in 1834. His best work was executed in the years 1790-1810, when the demand for marine paintings, during the Napoleonic Wars, was at an all-time high.

Anderson painted many of the naval battles of the period, often commissioned by serving officers, and his work shows a meticulous attention to nautical detail allied to an accurate draughtsmanship and lively coloration. At this period, he may be considered one of the leading marine artists of his generation.