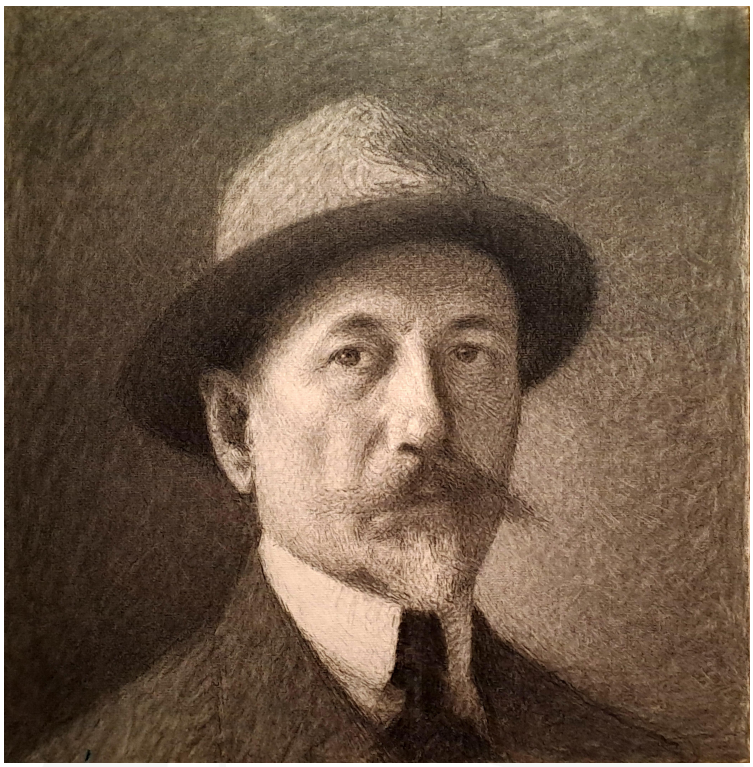
Achille Laugé (1861-1944) - Self-portrait, circa 1910



Pencil and wash on paper, artist's stamp in lower left corner

Dimensions : H. 43 cm x W. 42 cm (with frame : H. 63 cm x W. 62 cm)

Achille Laugé is a major figure in French Neo-Impressionism. The lack of a comprehensive catalog of his work partly explains why his reputation has long lagged behind the true importance of his oeuvre. Yet Laugé occupies a unique place: his pictorial language, based on Pointillism and Divisionism, began to assert itself in the 1890s.

Trained at the École des Beaux-Arts in Toulouse and then in Paris, Achille Laugé frequented Cabanel's studio before adopting a radically modern style that went against the grain of academic teaching. Returning to his native region, he chose to live and work in rural solitude, around Cailhau and Carcassonne, developing an intimate style of painting entirely devoted to the light of the south. From 1889 onwards, he exhibited regularly in Paris and participated in several major salons, including the Salon des Indépendants, where his pointillist approach was well received. His favourite subjects were tree-lined paths and portraits of those around him, rendered with small, regular strokes or luminous hatching.

Achille Laugé belongs to those painters for whom the coherence of vision is as important as technical virtuosity. His best works, structured by impeccable drawing and a subtle science of diffuse light, are today among the finest achievements of French Neo-Impressionism.

Our painting: This is a self-portrait painted by Achille Laugé around 1910, at a time when the artist had already reached full maturity in his art. Enjoying solid recognition, Laugé had perfectly mastered this graphic style consisting of regular hatching, which allowed him to model light with remarkable subtlety. The format is important for a work on paper. Preserved in perfect condition and from a private collection, this work is rare because we know of very few self-portraits by Achille Laugé.

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Works by Laugé in museums:

Musée d'Orsay, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Carcassonne, Musée National d'Art Moderne (Paris), National Gallery of Art (Washington), Musée Fabre (Montpellier), Musée des Augustins (Toulouse).