

## The World of Still Life is a World that is Motionless or that Has Become Motionless.

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**Abstract:** The world of still life is a world that is motionless or that has become motionless. If the composition includes an image of a living, capable of movement: a fly crawling over fruit, a butterfly fluttering over flowers, or, finally, a person offering it to the audience, then all this living in a still life serves only to reveal the specifics of dead nature.

**Keywords:** still life, composition, image, living in still life.

Still life as an independent genre was finally determined at the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries. The 17th century in Europe is the heyday of still life. Then all the main varieties of it were created and in fact all the thematic and iconographic variants were exhausted. The unprecedented development of still life in Western European painting of the 17th century can be largely explained by the peculiarities of the general cultural and worldview situation.

For the first time in the XX century, there is not only a blurring of the boundaries of things within a still life, but also, to a large extent, a blurring of the boundaries of the genre itself. In the open canvases of Matisse, objects that make up a still life, permeated with the organic rhythms of nature, merge with the landscape, or they themselves turn into a landscape, overcoming the barrier between the world of the living and the inanimate.

In the allegorical painting by Giovanni Bellini, which is conventionally called "Lake Madonna", in the very center of the composition, on the marble floor of the terrace, lies an orange. What is this, still life? No. But why do the same oranges, lying on a marble countertop or on a stone kitchen shelf in the

canvases of the 17th century masters, become a still life? And why are flowers growing in a garden or in a field, even when they are shown large in the foreground, are still regarded as a landscape, but the same flowers growing not in the garden, but in a flower pot on the windowsill, are they already a still life? And why can't the image of a table set for a meal be called a still life, if people are sitting at this table, and the same set table becomes a still life if there are no people in the picture? It is not always easy to define the boundaries of a still life; and the answer is not always unambiguous when it comes to a particular work. This approach to the problem shows the relativity of all genre and style distinctions. And yet still life as a kind of artistic whole exists, and the determination of the main features that make it possible to reveal its inner unity is no less important and, undoubtedly, more difficult task.

The world of still life is the world of artificial reality, to one degree or another transformed by man. All living things in a still life become dead - and thus are equated with things. To get into a still life, flowers must be cut; fruits and vegetables - plucked; animals and birds are killed; fish, marine animals - caught. Still life is an image of things created by human hands, or the products of living activity.

The world of still life is a world that is motionless or that has become motionless. If the composition includes an image of a living, capable of movement: a fly crawling over fruits, a butterfly fluttering over flowers, or, finally, a person offering it to the audience, then all this living in a still life serves only to reveal the specifics of dead nature. In this capacity, still life opposes the landscape, which also

depicts the external world, but the world of living nature, natural reality. Unlike a still life, a landscape depicts the world that is mobile, in motion, or capable of moving, changing. Fixed objects are included in the landscape only in order to reveal, contrastly emphasize the living variability of nature.

Still life is a world of small sizes, compositionally enlarged; a picture of things seen up close, examined in detail. In this quality, still life is the opposite of such a painting genre as the interior, which also depicts an artificially created world, but a world of great magnitudes.

By paying close attention to things, still life returns them to their primary, essential meaning. A thing brought to a still life is transferred to another dimension, increased in compositional and, accordingly, semantic rank. On the contrary, the interior, included in the still life, is reduced to the degree of a small detail, acquiring a secondary, explanatory meaning: it is only the edge of a table, or a part of a wall, or a window; it is not an image, but only a designation of a place, something not so much manifested as implied.

At the level of the objects themselves, images, which, having not yet become a subject for the artist, are already products of creativity, or, in any case, transforming human activity. Often in still life works of applied arts are presented: art glass, ceramics, small sculptures, engravings, painting, in other words, art in art. All living things are turned into a consumer product for still life. Flowers, arranged in a bouquet and woven into garlands, fruits and vegetables, fish, animals, everything is selected, prepared, everything has passed the initial processing, the initial stage of aesthetic transformation.

Objects for a still life are placed in a certain way, laid out, placed, hung. A painter, before taking up a brush, constructs a composition from ready-made objects. In the genre of still life, the moment of composition on nature, the setting of a model, as a rule, plays a greater role than in other painting genres.

The highest degree of organization of the material is the artistic embodiment of the still life on canvas. Accordingly, still life can be interpreted in at least three different aspects. In the aspect of identifying the depicted objects, determining the degree of accuracy of their reproduction in a painting, this is an aspect not so much of art as of skill. The task of the research is to decipher the symbolism embodied in the still life - allegorical, ritual or everyday situations. In this case, the image is considered not in its relation to the world of reality, but in its relation to the world of ritualized formulas. Finally, still life, like any other genre, can be considered at the level of its pictorial embodiment. In this case, it appears as a specific manifestation of artistic styles and national schools in their historical evolution.

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