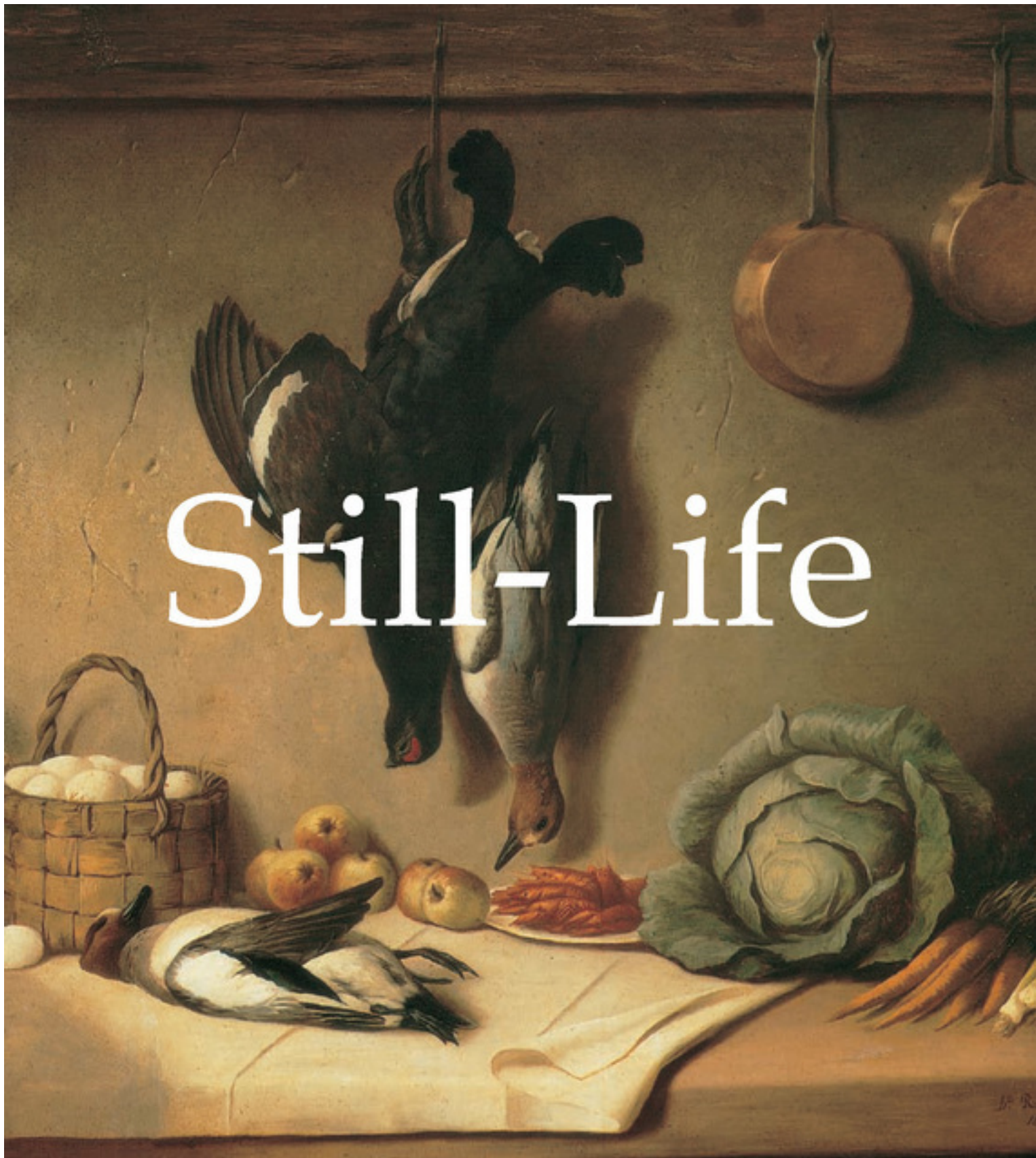


Still-Life



Mega Square

Victoria Charles
Still Life

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Cézanne transformed a teacup into something alive, raising still-life to the point that it ceased to be inanimate. Wassily Kandinsky said about the French artist: “He painted these things as human beings because he was endowed with the gift of divining the inner life in everything.” In addition to those of Cézanne, this book is devoted to still-life paintings by artists such as Van Gogh, Matisse, Chardin and Picasso.

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Victoria Charles

Still Life

“Cézanne made a living out of a teacup, or rather in a teacup he realised the existence of something alive. He raised still life to such a point that it ceased to be inanimate. He painted these things as human beings, because he was endowed with the gift of divining the inner life in everything. His colour and line are alike suitable to the spiritual harmony. A man, a tree, an apple – all were used by Cézanne in the creation of something that is called a ‘picture’, and which is a piece of true inward and artistic harmony.”

Wassily Kandinsky

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Still Life with Large Earthenware Jar

Félix Vallotton, 1923

Oil on canvas, 81 × 65.3 cm

Galerie Vallotton, Lausanne

Henri Matisse

PICASSO

J. Jean

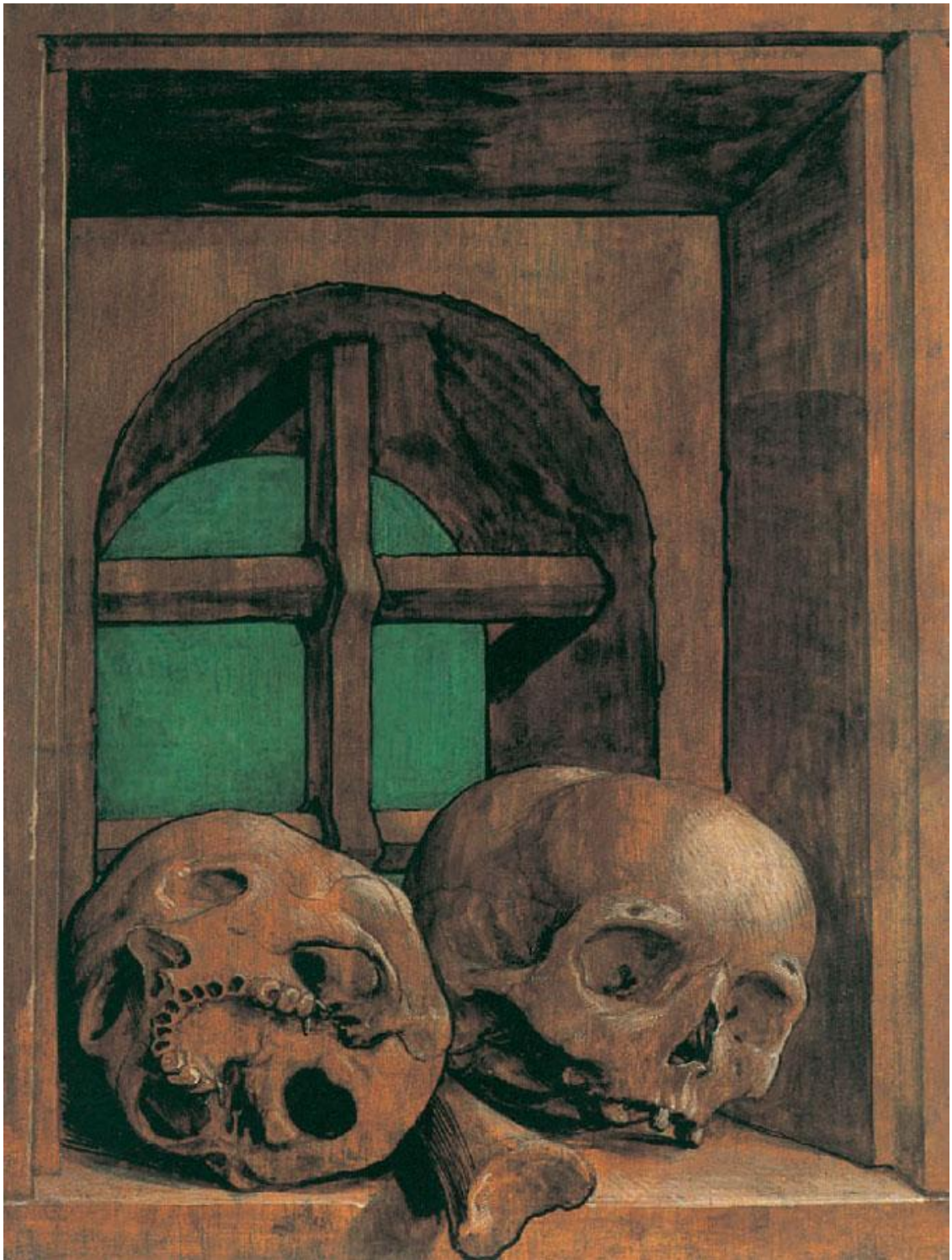
Paul Gauguin

Robillon

Vincent

One should treat with doubt the extremely widespread conviction that the still life has been in art since time immemorial. We know of a large number of “still lifes” from the art of antiquity, but it cannot serve as the sole criterion for today’s definition of still life in art history.





Two Skulls on the Embrasure of a Window
Hans Holbein the Younger
tempera varnished on wood, 33 × 25 cm
Public collection, Art Museum, Basel

We should therefore avoid a confusion of the genre's history with its pre-history. It seems that the researchers link the history of the still life with easel painting, "where its laws manifest

themselves most distinctly and have direct parallels with the emergence of other genres within painting.”





Game and Fruits

Peter Boel

Oil on canvas, 61.5 × 81 cm

Museum of Western and Oriental Art, Odessa

The Dutch term “stilleven” (“the quiet life”), first recorded in the year 1650, came into general use only towards the end of the seventeenth century. Later still, it was taken up by the English and German languages, and only then was its meaning inherited by the French term “nature morte,” which shows however some degree of narrowing down, if compared with the original connotation. The fate of the still life proved completely different from that of the majority of genres in painting.





Flowers and Fruit
Jean-Baptiste Monnoyer
Oil on canvas, 74.5 × 122 cm
The Hermitage, Saint Petersburg





Fruits

Jean-Baptiste Oudry, 1721

Oil on canvas, 74 × 92 cm

Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow

Alexandre-François Desportes, the noted still-life artist, “painter of the royal hunts”, was still entirely in the thrall of the Flemish school, as can be seen from *Still Life with a Hare* and *Fruit and Still Life with Game and Vegetables* (both in the Hermitage).





Still Life with a Hare and Fruits
François Desportes, 1711
Oil on canvas, 115 × 199 cm
The Hermitage, Saint Petersburg

He displays the same refined naturalism in the juxtaposition of different textures to create his effect – foliage, fruit, stone, wood, feathers, wool, fur, and so on.





Still Life with Fruits
Jean-Baptiste Oudry, 1721
Oil on canvas, 74 × 92 cm
The Hermitage, Saint Petersburg

His still lifes might also include works of art such as, say, the relief by Duquesnoy included in *Still Life with Dead Game and Vegetables* – one of the highly fashionable “quotations” found in French painting from that time (and one more proof of close Franco-Flemish links in art).





Still-Life with Game and Vegetables

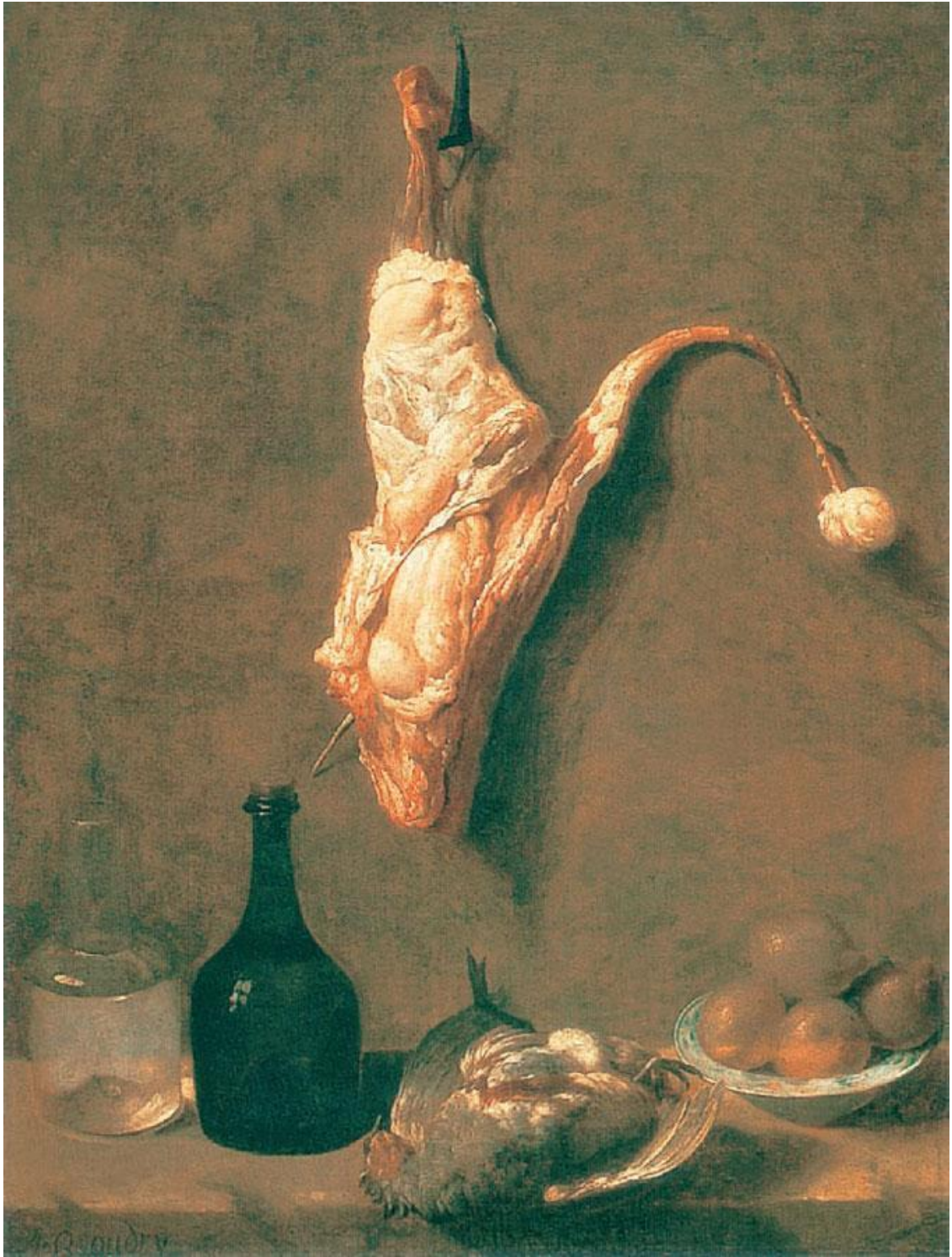
François Desportes, c. 1700

Oil on canvas, 121 × 135 cm

The Hermitage, Saint Petersburg

In short, in this modification the genre demonstrates what Boris Vipper termed a striving “to turn the still life into living nature”. Diderot notes in 1765 that it is to Chardin that we owe the fact that things, which had till then imitated perhaps beautiful, but nonetheless alien prototypes, those “silent creations” finally began to speak in French. Chardin recreated the genre, as it were, on the basis of the national artistic tradition.





Still Life with a Leg of Veal
Jean-Baptiste Oudry, c. 1720
Oil on canvas, 98 × 74 cm
The Hermitage, Saint Petersburg





Still Life with the Attributes of the Arts
Jean-Baptiste-Siméon Chardin, 1760s
Oil on canvas, 53 × 110 cm
Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow

It is important to bear in mind that the system of genres is anthropocentric: even if the human being is not shown directly in a work, the human element forms the basis of any genre orientation.





Still Life with the Attributes of the Arts
Jean-Baptiste-Siméon Chardin, 1760s
Oil on canvas, 112 × 140.5 cm
The Hermitage, Saint Petersburg

That means that objects arranged to make something independent, forming something whole, do not supplant, but only mask the human subject expressing in a new manner its aim with regard to the world as a whole.





Fruits

Jean-François van Dael, 1808

oil on wood, 56 × 45 cm

Pushkin Museum of Fine Art, Moscow

In Chardin's painting, "inanimate objects" (the usual description of the genre at the time) blended together, as it were, to express in their own way the character of the national perception of the world.





Still Life

Unknown artist, first half of the 19th century

Oil on canvas, 115 × 92 cm

Art Museum, Sebastopol

While in his early still lifes Chardin paid tribute to the Dutch and Flemish traditions, his mature work marks the establishment of a new set of stylistics for the genre. Without himself being aware of it, Chardin resolved within the sphere of a little genre a task of great magnitude.





Still Life

Alexandre Gabriel Decamps

oil on panel, 28 × 24 cm

The Hermitage, Saint Petersburg

And then came Cézanne. To a certain extent he drew the balance of European easel painting, the application of the still-life formula specifically to the landscape, the portrait and the composition with figures.





Bouquet of Flowers in a Vase
Simon Saint-Jean, 1856
Oil on canvas, 47 × 38 cm
The Hermitage, Saint Petersburg

Now it required no effort of the imagination to see that the folds of drapes and the folds of a mountain, a person's head and an apple are identified in a paintwork visual whole. Cézanne's

painting is devoid of isolated shapes and colours, just as it does not recognise the dichotomy of line and colour.





Still Life. Green Pot and Tin Kettle
Paul Cézanne, c. 1869
Oil on canvas, 64.5 × 81 cm
Musée d'Orsay, Paris

According to the painter and critic Emile Bernard, who recorded Cézanne's thinking on art, the painter asserted that neither lines nor shapes exist – there are only contrasts.

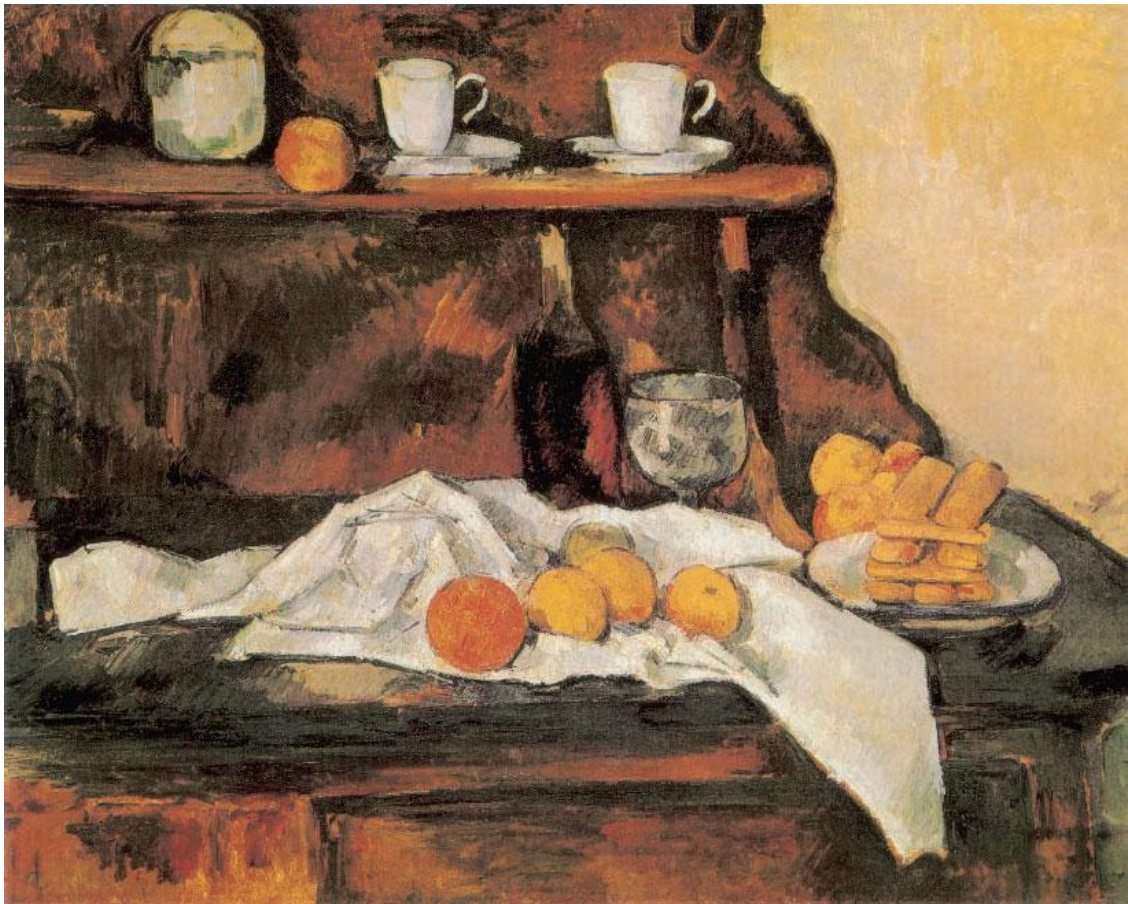




Still Life with Fruits
Nicolae Grigorescu, 1869
Oil on canvas glued on wood, 38 × 71 cm
Location unknown

Shape is created by a precise interrelationship of tones, and if they are harmoniously juxtaposed, then the painting creates itself. For that reason the verb “model” should be replaced in the painter’s vocabulary by the word “modulate”.

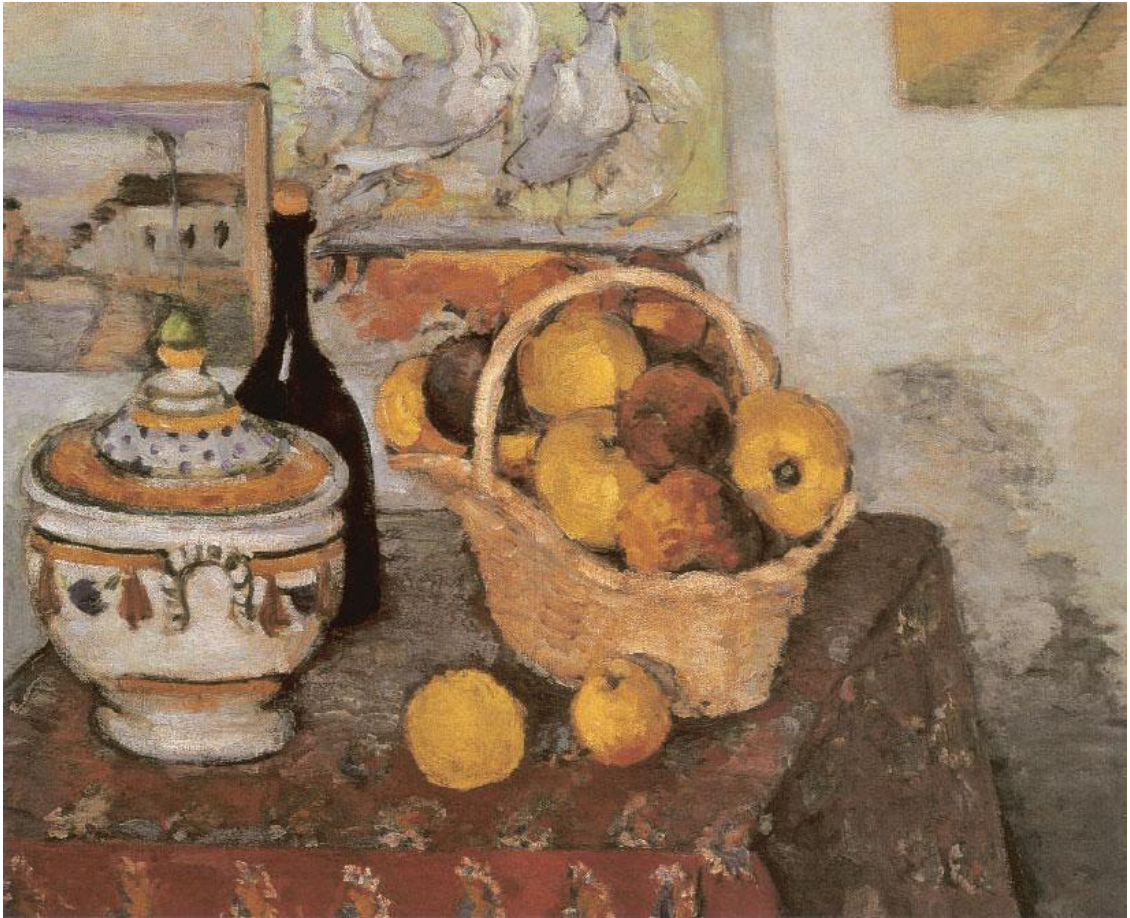




The Buffet
Paul Cézanne, 1873–1877
Oil on canvas, 65 × 81 cm
Szépművészeti Múzeum, Budapest

In seeking out the fundamentals of expressivity, Cézanne did not draw sharp boundaries between genres. The objects on his table, be they jugs, cups or apples, are of no less significance than the figures in some painted “story”.

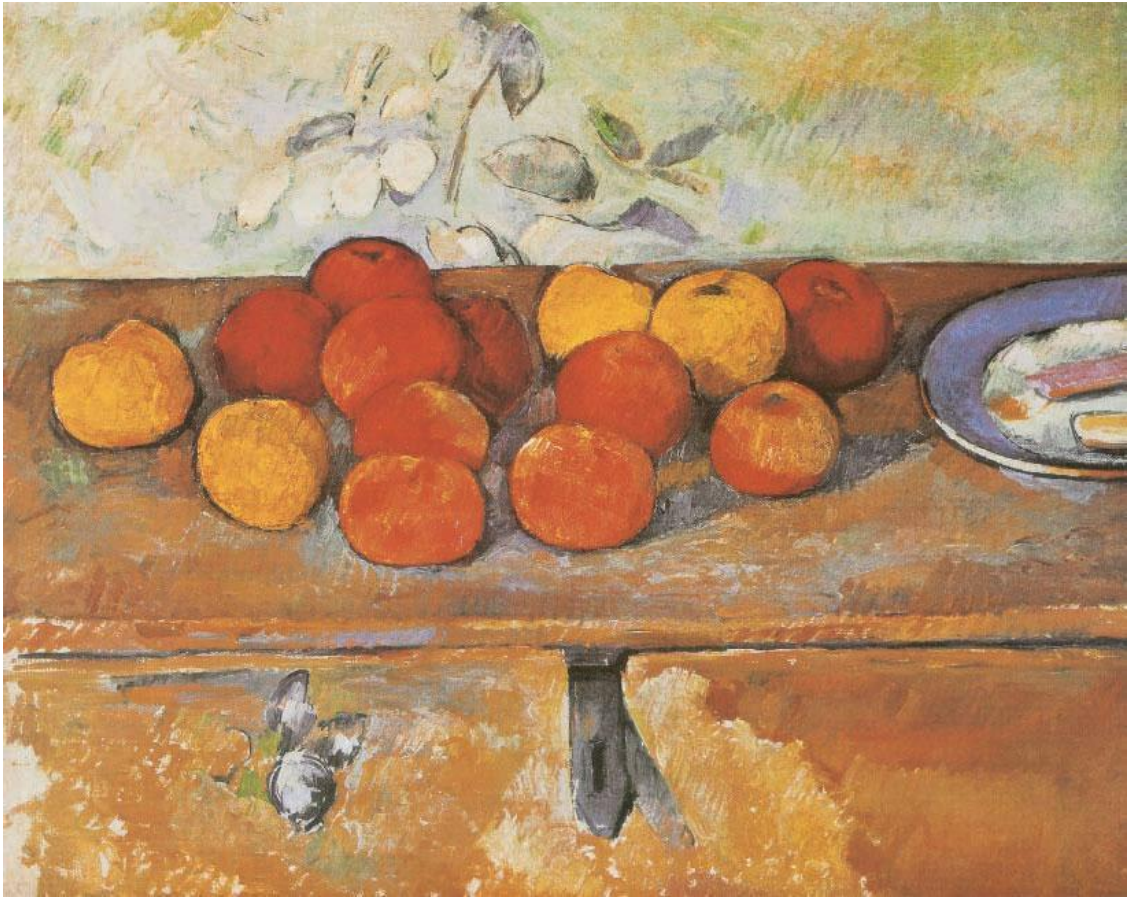




Still Life with a Soup Tureen
Paul Cézanne, c. 1877
Oil on canvas, 82 × 65 cm
Musée d'Orsay, Paris

He had a profound respect for the Old Masters, regarding them as intermediaries between art and nature. And since the study of the great variety of nature comprises the hardest part of a painter's studies, a few objects gathered together can become a subject of universal significance.

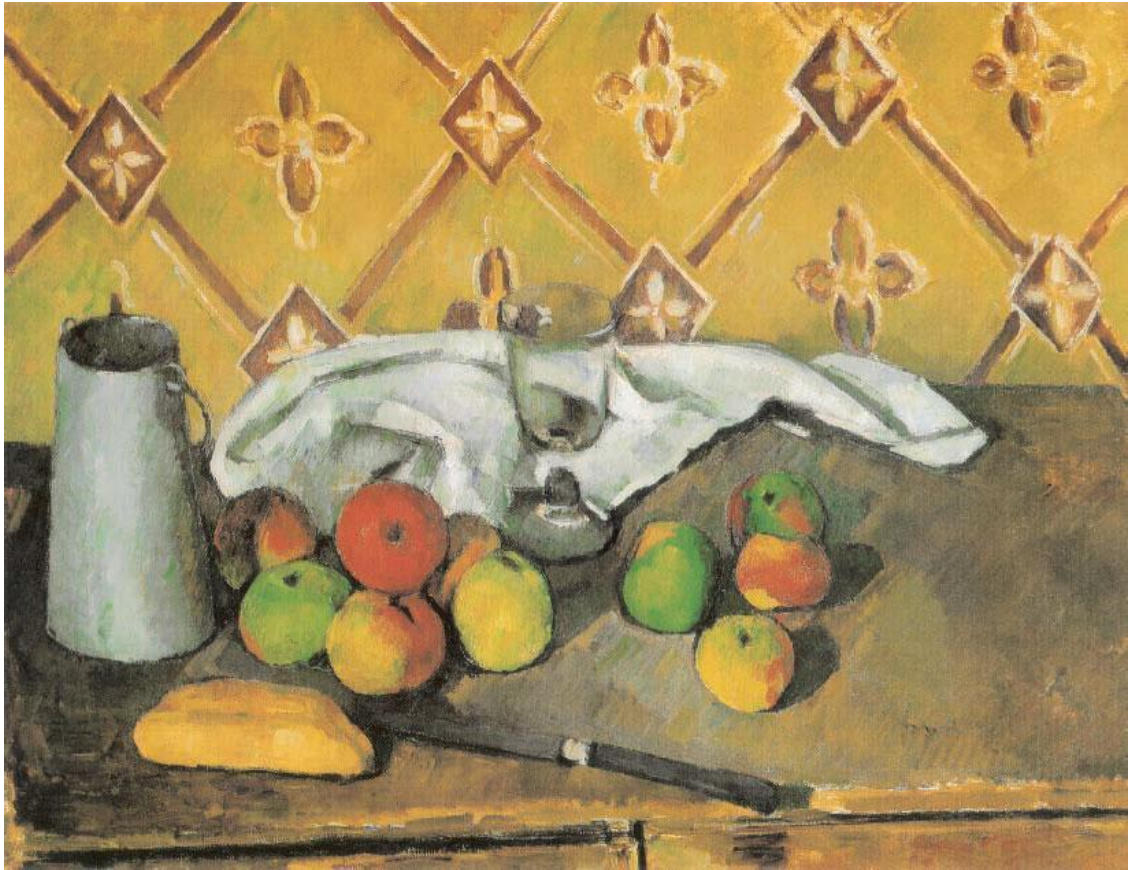




Apples and Biscuits
Paul Cézanne, 1879–1882
Oil on canvas, 45 × 55 cm
Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris

Not without Chardin's influence, still life became a privileged genre in painting (although the very concept of genre was no longer as important as it had been). Many of the greatest painters of Cézanne's era were indebted to him, including Gauguin, who overtly imitated Cézanne by intensifying the decorative, rhythmic aspect to the detriment of an integral understanding of the paintwork element.





Still Life. Pitcher, Fruits and Tablecloth

Paul Cézanne, 1879–1882

Oil on canvas, 60 × 73 cm

Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris

Generally speaking, the impression emerges that Cézanne's work served as a “key junction” in which the paths of European painting came together before diverging once again. It has become a cliché to speak about the link of inheritance between Cubism and Cézanne, although on closer examination the situation proves much more complex than supposed.





Dish of Apples
Paul Cézanne, 1879–1882
Oil on canvas, 55 × 74.5 cm
Collection Oskar Reinhart, Winterthur

One way or another this link does exist and clearly proclaims its existence in the powerful lapidary forms of the early Cubist paintings, in which still life will play an essential role as an experimental genre. The astonishing pace with which the language of objects changed in Picasso's painting is eloquently demonstrated by the still lifes of 1906–1908.

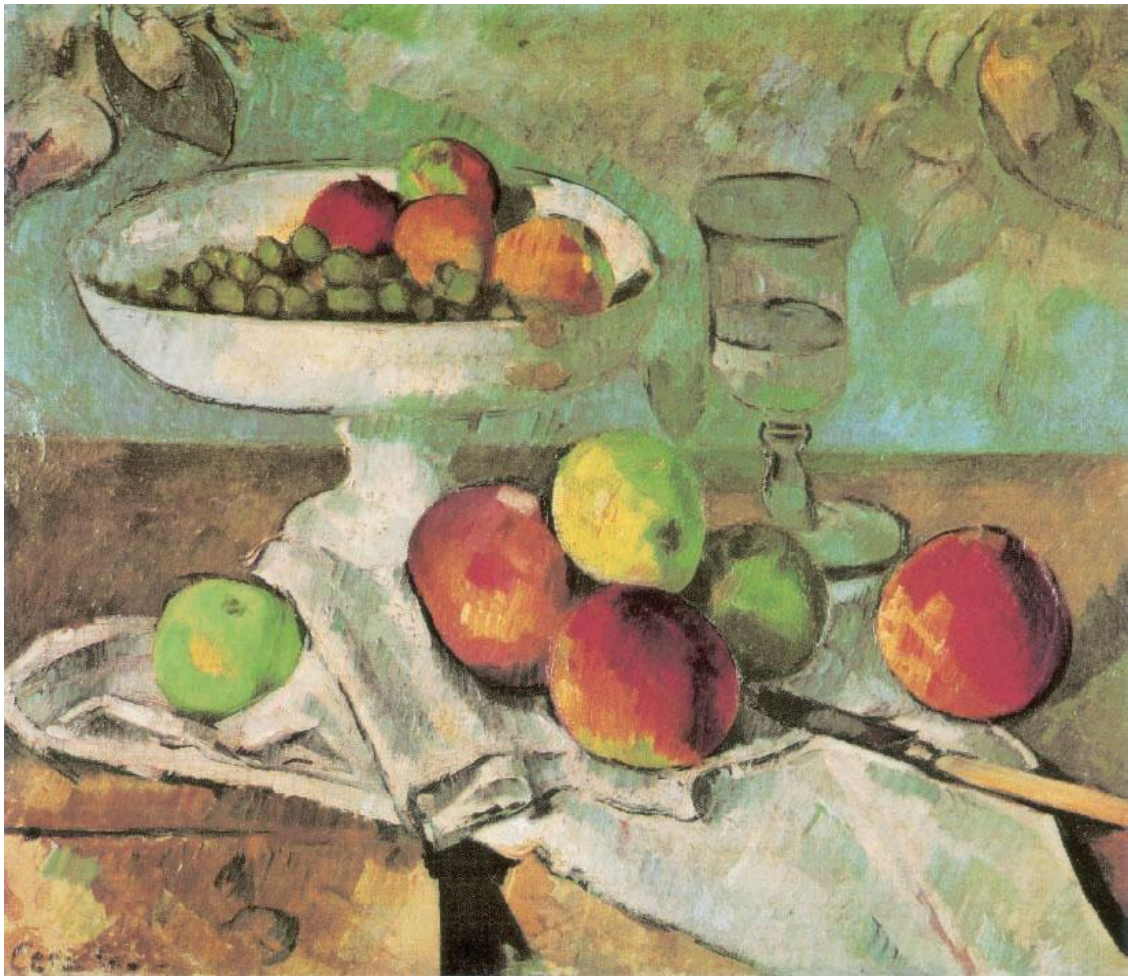




Still Life with Fruits
Paul Cézanne, 1879–1880
Oil on canvas, 45 × 54 cm
The Hermitage, Saint Petersburg

If there is anything that most closely expresses Cézanne's celebrated behest, it is the still lifes which Picasso produced on the threshold of Cubism. The objects in them appear as symbols of "object-ness" itself, as if the artist intended to carve out in the thickness of paint graven images of minor deities – the patrons of form and substance.





Still Life with Dish, Glass and Apples
Paul Cézanne, 1879–1880
Oil on canvas, 46 × 55 cm
Private collection, Paris

The principle of “reverse perspective” together with dense texture creates the impression of a palpable density of space, which the founders of Cubism attempted to “tame” (to somewhat distort Braque’s words).





Apples and Leaves
Ilya Repin, 1879
Oil on canvas, 64 × 75.5 cm
Russian Museum, Saint Petersburg

Picasso never became hung up on the realisation of abstract ideas and, moved by inner impulses, continued to change rapidly. Henri Matisse understood the language of things and the very tradition of the genre in a totally different way.





Fruits from the Midi
Auguste Renoir, 1881
Oil on canvas, 51 × 68 cm
The Art Institute, Chicago

He did long studies of artistic tradition and made many copies of Old Masters. At the same time, Matisse had an affection for the Primitives and children's drawings which was fully in keeping with his pursuit of pure expressivity.

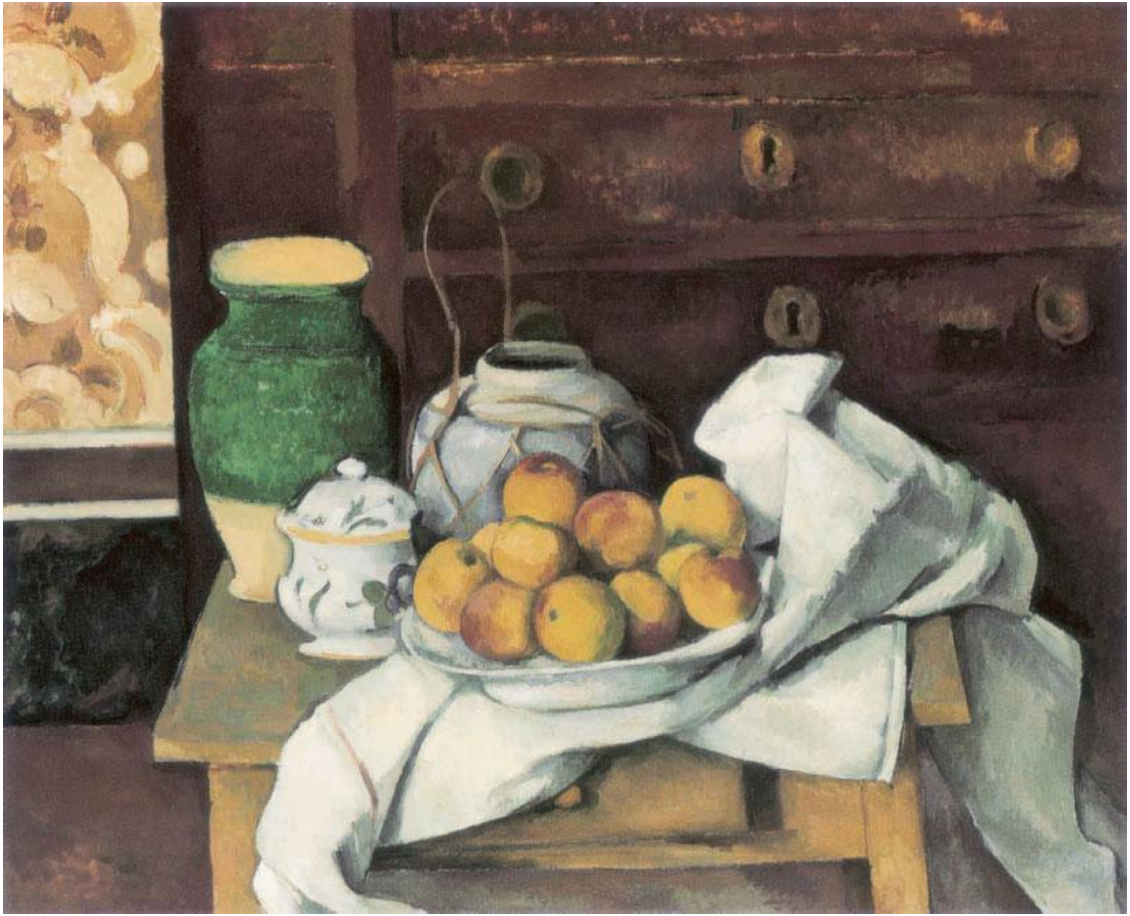




Vase of Flowers on a Table
Paul Cézanne, 1882–1887
Oil on canvas, 60 × 73 cm
Private collection, Paris

His still lifes reflect various stages in the cleansing of the palette and change of techniques used to apply paint. In the mid-1910s Matisse's painterly hand gained assurance and his colour a saturated intensity.

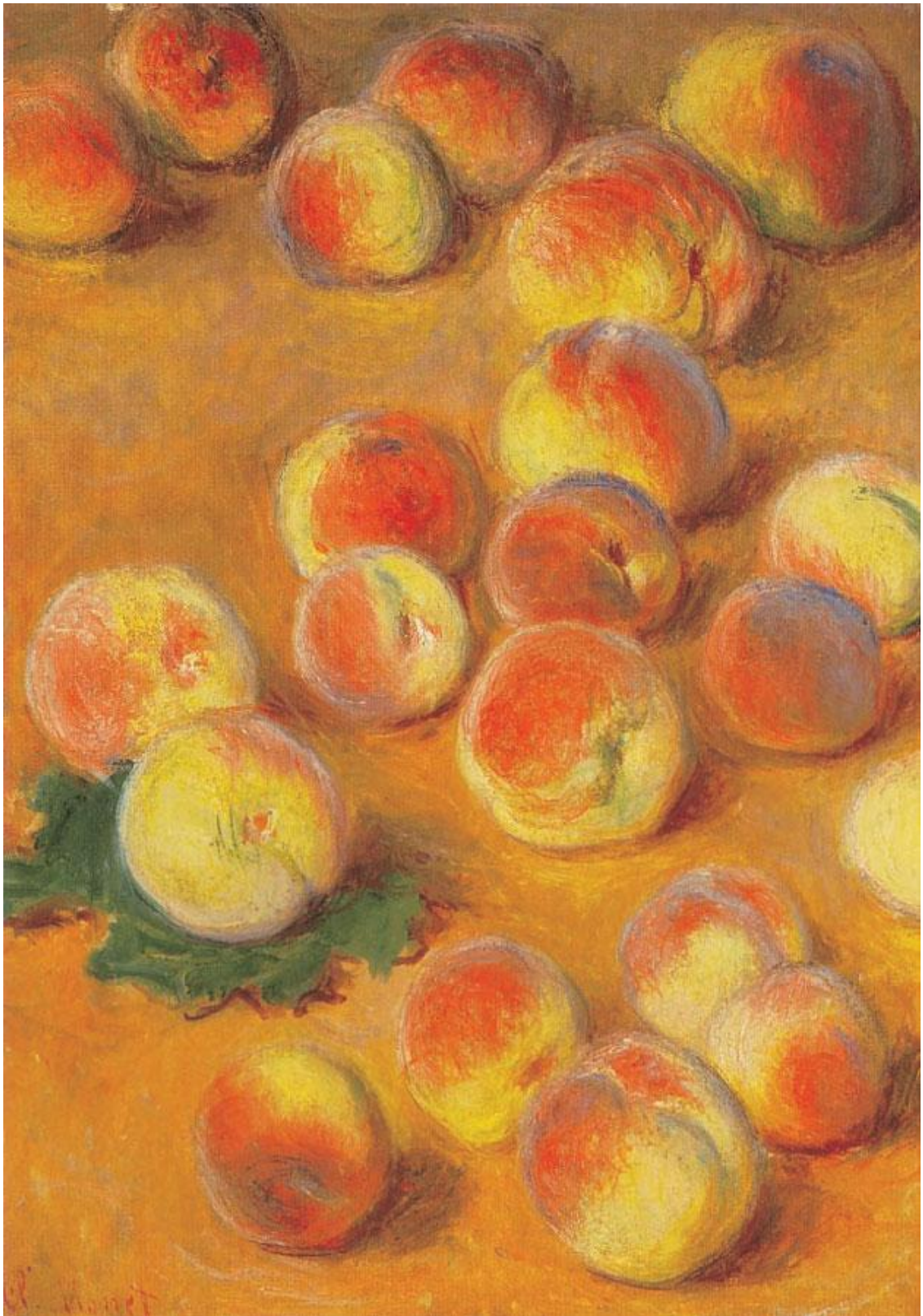




Still Life with a Chest of Drawers
Paul Cézanne, 1883–1887
Oil on canvas, 73.3 × 90.2 cm
Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen
Neue Pinakothek, Munich

He freed himself completely from the compromise of halftones and revealed the limits of pure expressivity inherent in line and colour, yet he did not break with the material world. His path forward was clear and consisted in bringing the principles he had discovered to perfection.





Peaches (in the door of the Salon Durand-Ruel)

Claude Monet, 1883

Oil on canvas, 50.5 × 37 cm

Private collection

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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