

Fine Art Bridging Project

Time and Space in Still Life

1. Developing Ideas

Welcome to Art!

This project introduces you to the four main areas we study in A Level Fine Art - Develop, Explore, Record and Present - and provides you with the opportunity to create work based on a topic entitled **“Time and Space.”**

We want you to produce an ambitious set of work that explores the theme through the genre (subject type) of **Still Life**. You'll need to create your own resources using **photography and research artists whose work could inspire you**. We'd like you to produce a collection of work showing a personal response to the topic.



Juan Sánchez Cotán
Still Life with Quince, Cabbage, Melon and Cucumber 1602



Georgio Morandi
Still Life 1946



Pablo Picasso
Goat's Skull, Bottle and Candle 1952



John Dugdale,
Empty Chair in the Gloaming, 2009



Barnaby Barford, *Do it again, I didn't press record* 2009



Peter Jones, *Lamb* 2009

Still Life was often considered to be the lowest form of Art. In rank order, it was considered to be less important than History Painting, Portraiture and Landscape. However, the genre of Still Life was used to tell a narrative; to explain and symbolise life and death. It has enabled us to see into the lives of the famous artists we know about through the painted studies they produced. We have been able to see how they live, through the spaces they occupy and what they felt about the world they lived in. Many showed the theme of Time and Space in their work and portrayed a variety of symbols to tell a narrative.

Look up the following terms to develop your understanding further-

Memento Mori (and symbols used such as a lute, shells, feathers, candles, mirrors, animals, books or shells).

Vanitas

Bodegón

Nature Morte

Readymades

Find out about Steenwyck's painting to understand how each part showed symbolism relating to the time.



Herman Steenwyck, *The Vanities of Human Life*, 1645

The piece above depicts an unusual still life with random objects placed together, almost collapsing onto the table. The light streams through the window, highlighting the skull. The shell, reflecting the light, is set apart from the composition, almost forgotten. Each object bears meaning for the Artist and tells us about life and the passing of time.

Still Life has changed over the centuries. Artists have used the genre to symbolise life and death, wealth, new beginnings, hope, intelligence and beauty. Today, Still Life has been explored by a variety of contemporary artists, who are trying to change its meaning and importance in the world of Art. They are using new forms of display to project their ideas, whilst referring back to a more traditional sense of the term.



Juan Sánchez Cotán, *Still Life with Quince, Cabbage, Melon and Cucumber* 1602

<https://www.fvu.co.uk/projects/pomegranate>

Watch Ori Gersht's response to Cotán's Still Life



Further still life artists –

Paul Cezanne
Pablo Picasso
Juan Gris
Henri Matisse
Fernand Leger
Hans Holbein
Adam Bernaert
Adriaen Coorte
Peter Claesz
Sam Taylor-Wood
Ori Gersht
Peter Jones
Darren Jones
Matt Collishaw

REBECCA HARP

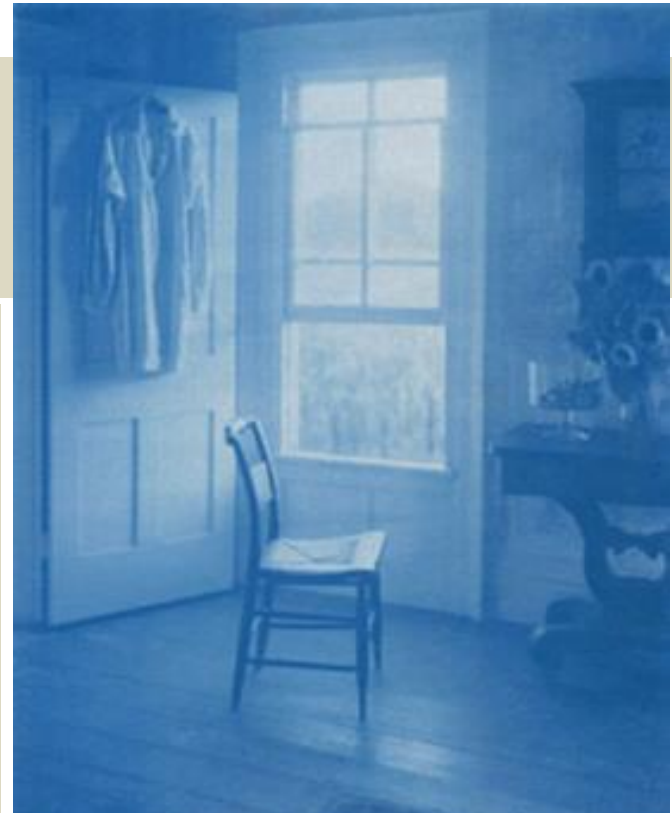
“The bedroom in our house is an endless source of inspiration for me, given the chasing light and movement of sheets, laundry and objects from day to day and from morning to night. I remember the first days that I was drawn to it for painting, and how when my fiancé returned home, he put some things away. I had to explain that he had just moved my “stillife.” Now I am not only used to it, I enjoy the changes, and have painted bedroom days on top of bedrooms days as a possibly truer way of painting the “reality” of the bedroom, and my life. When I paint these, I think of them as landscapes, looking at the sheets, pillows, window, laundry and other objects as if they were hills, mountains, sky or earth. The peek out the window provides a second dimension to the viewing experience, reminding me that I am inside after all.”



Misty Sundown in Pink and Blue,
2010

Task 1 Develop

Select two artists from those given to you on this document, or find your own whose work explores the genre of Still Life. Explore one from history and a contemporary artist whose work portrays the theme “Time and Space.” Find examples of their work and explain the focus of their still life. How have they shown a sense of time and space? Consider how they have used the formal elements to enhance their ideas. Write about the work, finding comparisons between the two pieces.



In the piece above, the artist John Dugdale presents a still life with chair, coat and desk. The limited palette suggests a solitary or empty space. The light from the window is reminiscent of Vermeer’s interiors; the artist is showing links to the work through the closed interior, perspective and window light. Note how the chair, placed in the centre of the room suggests that someone has left it there. The coat hanging on the door also portrays a physical presence. The window open will be closed later. There is a feeling of time within the composition; a passing moment captured in still life by the artist.



George Deem

Johannes Vermeer

