

## Giorgio Morandi Still Life

Giorgio Morandi (1890-1964) is best known for his still life paintings and etchings which typically depict bottles, vases and containers. He would spend a long time setting up the objects and observing the shapes and how the form of the objects related to each other. He would adapt the objects by painting them in thin layers of muted colours and let dust settle on them which would subtly change the light. After much contemplation and making small adjustments he would paint the still life very quickly. This activity explores the process of contemplation involved in arranging objects and observing subtle differences in tone that Morandi is so well know for.



Giorgio Morandi, Still Life with Five Objects, 1956



Giorgio Morandi, Various Objects on a Table, 1931



Giorgio Morandi, Still Life, 1944



Giorgio Morandi, Still Life, 1948

- 1) Find some 3-5 bottles, vases or containers.
- 2) If possible paint them with thin white paint.
- 3) Place the objects on a table with a plain light coloured background.  
You could use some cardboard or fabric for your backdrop.
- 4) Spend some time carefully arranging the objects in an area with natural light.
  - Look carefully at the shape of the spaces between the objects
  - What feels awkward, satisfying or balanced?



- 5) Keep observing your still life over a day and make any adjustments.
- 6) Look at the still life in different lights throughout the day. You could take photos to help you observe the subtle changes in the light.



Top Tip: Take time to contemplate your still life and make adjustments

Experiment: Leave your still life out and observe it over a long period of time. Let the dust settle on the objects and see how it changes their appearance.

Research: Draw the shapes of the shadows in your still life or create a drawing of light and dark without using lines.

**Key Words**



Contemplation: The act of looking thoughtfully at something for a long time.

Tone: Refers to the light and darkness values of something. This could be a shade or how dark or light a colour appears.

## Cubist Breakfast Collage

Gino Severini (1883-1966) was a Futurist artist who settled in Paris in 1906. Living there his work was influenced by Cubism, a style of art invented by Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque around 1907-1908 that represented different viewpoints of figures or objects in one picture, often resulting in abstract and fragmented looking paintings. The painting below is an example of 'Synthetic Cubism' a phase from 1912-1914 which is characterised by simple shapes, bright colours and included collaged elements from real life objects such as food labels, packaging and newspapers.



Gino Severini, Quaker Oats, Cubist Still Life, 1917

1) Set up a breakfast scene



2) Draw the shapes of the objects on the back of a cereal box



3) Cut the shapes out. You can cut out the different sections of your drawing too.



4) Draw around the shapes as many times as you like and at different angles.



5) Colour in some of the shapes or fill them with patterns.



6) Select some of the collaged shapes to your drawing and arrange them to create your Cubist Still Life.



**Top Tip:** Shade in some of the shapes you drew to make them look 3D.

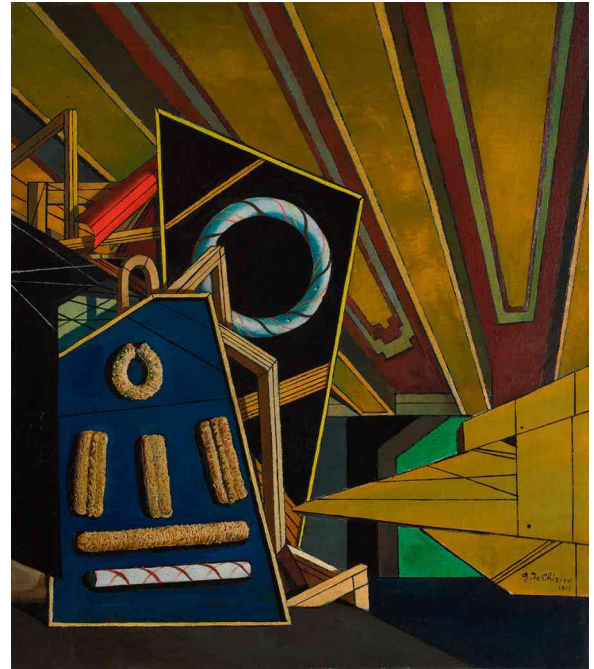
**Experiment:** Try it again with a different still life scene. If you have access to a computer try taking photos of a still life from different angles and cut them out and arrange them into a photographic still life.

## Giorgio de Chirico Still Life

Giorgio de Chirico (1888-1978) was an artist who developed the 'Metaphysical' style of art which explored the meaning of objects and arranged them in seemingly random still life compositions. Using the following list of Giorgio de Chirico inspired objects, consider their meaning, shape and size and compose your own still life in spaces around your home.

### De Chirico Objects

- Objects for measuring e.g time (clock), length (tape measure/ ruler/ compass) volume (cups/ jugs)
- Objects that look like body parts e.g gloves, hats, shoes, dolls
- Objects that represent other things eg. wigs, toys, ornaments
- Picture frames
- Wheels of cotton
- Boxes
- Balls
- Biscuits
- Fruit
- Vegetables



Giorgio de Chirico, The Revolt of the Sage, 1916

- 1) Collect 5 de Chirico style objects.
- 2) Explore different spaces, corners and surfaces of your home and arrange the objects.
- 3) Take your time and explore the different ways they could be laid out. Far apart, on top of one another, at different heights. How do the shapes relate?
- 4) Take photos of each still life you make. Try taking the photo from low down and high up, far away and close up. You could draw them too or just talk to someone about your choices and the image they make.





