

# Painter of Rodolfo Lodi

active in Bologna at the end of the seventeenth century

## *A Still Life of Apples*

Oil on canvas  
50 x 63,5 cm (20 by 25 in.)

The fruits are very casually placed on a ledge. But when the light brushes the indentations, it creates extremely hard shadows, which also leaves the background dark. Therefore a twig with leaf hardly stands out against the background.

The lure of the present painting is its natural beauty, free from any courteous and solemn ambitions. In fact, at the end of the seventeenth century, this strength of Emilian still life painting proves the limits of its contemporary historical painting, which were affected by these ambitions. While still life painters like Cittadini and later also Candido Vitali promoted a very sumptuous and decorative style, others preferred a more direct and sincere approach to the subject. These painters refused to look upon nature through a filter of intellectual meditations and courteous intentions. This was the case with the brother of

Guercino, Paolo Antonio Barbieri, and slightly later with the painter of the present still life. He got his name from a pair of paintings depicting fruit. The fruits had a label attached to them revealing the commissioner's name as Rodolfo Lodi, therefore he is called: Painter of Rodolfo Lodi

The same artistic traces can be found in the still life with apples and vegetables kept in the Pinacoteca in Bologna as in two paintings formerly with Briganti, and in other paintings which scholars have grouped together to assemble the oeuvre of this mysterious, but fascinating artist.<sup>1</sup>

Typical for this artist seems to be his talent, to render sparsely but well the full volume of the fruits with subtle brush strokes, which are applied repeatedly. Typical of the artist also, is his stripping away any false pretention when looking at nature: what is left, is pure nature. This way it seems that still life painting recaptures the spirit of the former solemn painting cultivated in Northern Italy by Panfilo Nuvolone and Fede Galizia.

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(Translation from  
the Italian by EL)

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1) Colombi Ferretti (1989), pp.470-473



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