

Galerie Falk Losniza

# Marta Ravasi

## *LE ORE*

23 April - 30 May 2026  
Opening Reception  
Thursday, 23 April, 6 - 8 pm

Galerie Falk Losniza is delighted to announce Marta Ravasi's solo exhibition *LE ORE*, in the gallery's upper exhibition space.

Marta Ravasi presents in *LE ORE* a group of small-format still lifes, with the exhibition title referring to the hours of the day and the changes of light. The works emerge from a practice of repetition, reduction, and variation. Similar motifs recur, yet each painting develops from independent painterly decisions.

To the question "What happens if you try to paint an apple," the painter Philip Guston (1913-1980) responded with a reference to tradition: "You've got Chardin, you've got Cézanne on your mind." [1] Painting thus begins in relation to already painted images. To paint a still life means positioning oneself within this structure of references. Ravasi's decision to work with still life can also be understood in this sense as a deliberate choice: "Even though it has no importance, it's a choice, nowadays." [2]

Still life (from the Flemish *stilleven*) established itself as an independent genre in the early 17th century. The French term *nature morte* – in Italian *natura morta* – emerged toward the end of the 18th century; "however," as the art historian Gerd Tolzien notes, "it is less accurate, since the point is precisely [...] to render visible, in representation, the secret life inherent even in seemingly lifeless objects." And, as Tolzien continues, "hardly any other painter" understood how to sense and make visible "the secret life inherent in seemingly lifeless objects" as did Jean Baptiste Simeon Chardin (1699-1779). [3]

Around one hundred years later, the focus shifts further with Paul Cézanne (1839-1906). Stable objects such as apples, vessels, or cloths serve Cézanne as constant elements through which perception is examined. Here, still life functions as a problem of appearance. As Cézanne worked rather slowly, he preferred apples as models for fruit, since they last the longest.

For a long time, this art-historical line appeared as a development of painterly questions. In 1980 – again a century later, and nearly ten years after the beginning of the New Women's Movement in 1969 – the art historian Avis Berman asked: "A decade of progress, but could a female Chardin make a living?", thereby directing attention to the conditions of this painterly practice. [4] Still life thus becomes visible as part of specific social and economic conditions, and the "still life painter" becomes a model of artistic labor that illustrates inequality within the art world.

Today, the decision to paint still lifes cannot be considered independently of either its history or the conditions of its production. Ravasi's motifs derive from her immediate living environment. With a small child at home, she explains, fresh fruit was always present, and spending much time at home, her gaze as a painter increasingly turned to her immediate surroundings. Fruits appear as part of everyday routines in which things are prepared, used, and perceived anew. Still life becomes a form of attention to the near, the temporal, and the recurring. Objects emerge as part of a perceptual context that develops through the process of painting.

Central to Ravasi's work is the materiality of painting. Her images arise from a sequence of operations – rubbing, layering, erasing – that remain visible. Color forms in the process as a broken mixture. Forms lose their contours and appear as atmospheric condensations. In a present shaped by the circulation and overproduction of images, this practice gains in precision. The decision to work with a limited medium, small formats, and simple motifs articulates a concentrated mode of perception. Still life functions as an instrument for determining the conditions of image-making, experience, and time, for reflecting on painting as such – and in doing so reveals itself to be strikingly contemporary.

E. B.

[1] Clark Coolidge (ed.), Philip Guston: Collected Writings, Lectures, and Conversations, London / Los Angeles, 2011, p. 26.

[2] In conversation with the artist, March 2026.

[3] In: Kurt Fassmann (ed.), Kindler's Malerei Lexikon, vol. 14, Zurich, 1976, p. 282 ff.

[4] Avis Berman, „A Decade of Progress, But Could a Female Chardin Make a Living Today?“, in: Art News, vol. 79, no. 8, October 1980, p. 77.