

Filippo di Liagno, called Filippo Napoletano (Rome  
ca. 1589 – 1629)

*Two Citrons*, 1618

Oil on canvas

Florence, University of Florence, Museo di Storia  
Naturale, Sezione Botanica, inv. 1844, no. 39

Filippo di Liagno, known as Filippo Napoletano, possibly because of his family origins, actually painted very few still lifes. Only three are known, all painted for the Medici and preserved in Florentine museums. He lived in Florence between 1617 and 1621, and at the Medici court he was exposed to artistic and scientific experiences of the first order. He undoubtedly knew and appreciated the botanical drawings of Jacopo Ligozzi, but he was also exposed to the works of northern European painters – Flemish, Dutch and German – that were valued and collected by Grand Duke Cosimo II. For the Medici, Filippo also executed many landscape paintings and genre scenes.

Giovan Battista Crescenzi (?) (Rome 1577 – Madrid  
1635)

*Fruit, Vegetables and Mushrooms*, before 1625

Oil on canvas

Poggio a Caiano, Villa medicea (Medici Villa), Museo  
della natura morta, inv. Poggio Imperiale, no. 138

Giovan Battista Crescenzi, who was a marquis, regularly held “academies” of painting from nature at his Roman residence. He was in close contact with both Caravaggio and his artistic circle. This canvas attributed to him illustrates an important early moment in the development of Italian still-life painting. It is close to the earliest examples of still life, which had emerged in Rome in the wake of the revolutionary teachings of Caravaggio in the early 17th century. The choice of humble fruits and vegetables, such as were present on the tables of the poorer classes, is typical of the Caravaggesque still life.

Roman School, (attributed to Paolo Porpora or  
Tommaso Salini)

*Cauliflower and Pomegranate*, first decades of the  
17th century

Oil on canvas

Florence, Galleria degli Uffizi, inv. Castello, no. 705

Jacopo da Empoli (workshop)

Pair of Still Lifes, ca. 1630, with *Lamb, Eggs and Chickens in a Basket* and *Fish and Crustaceans*

Oil on canvas

Florence, Museo Bardini, Collezione Corsi, inv. nos.

244, 246

Empoli was not a true specialist in the genre of still life, yet he was one of the few Florentine artists of the early 17th century to paint independent works of this kind, stimulating a local production that was based on his models and on certain easily recognizable features. In the 1620s and 1630s, he gathered around him in Florence a group of assistants and followers who painted still lifes, which often take up the same themes as those of the master: larders, kitchens, cheeses, vegetables, pumpkins, game and dead birds and fish.

Jan van Kessel, (Antwerp 1626-1679)

Pair of Still Lifes, ca. 1650, with *Delft Porcelain Bowl,  
Flowers, Fruit and Vegetables*

Oil on copper

Prato, Museo Civico, inv. nos. 1345, 1348

Jan Van Kessel, one of the most famous still-life painters of his time, was the nephew of Jan Brueghel the Younger and David Teniers the Younger, and a pupil of Simon de Vos. His works, frequently of small format, are present in all the major European collections. The Medici collections contain works by the Antwerp painter, whose repertory was vast: still lifes with flowers and small animals, tables laden with food, precious objects and porcelain, as well as allegories of the senses and illustrations of aspects of the world at large.

**Otto Marseus van Schrieck**, (Nimega ca. 1619 –  
Amsterdam 1678)

*Sottobosco (Undergrowth) with Snake and Butterflies*,  
1652-57

Oil on canvas

Florence, Galleria degli Uffizi, inv. 1890, no. 1184

The Dutch painter Otto Marseus van Schrieck traveled in Italy between 1648 and 1657 and enjoyed the patronage of the Medici family. It seems very likely that Marseus sojourned in Florence, between 1652 and 1657, where he painted several works that are still preserved in the Florentine museums. Many paintings by Marseus portray small naturalistic scenes with plants and small animals, set at the foot of large trees in a forest, bathed in a mysterious filtered light.

**Willem van Aelst**, (Delft, 1626/27 – active in  
Amsterdam until 1683)

*Game Birds*, 1652

Oil on canvas

Florence, Galleria degli Uffizi, inv. 1890, no. 1245

Willem van Aelst was one of the leading exponents of the 17th-century Dutch still life. He may have been a pupil of Otto Marseus van Schrieck (also on view). He traveled in Italy, starting in 1648, and was in contact with the Medici court as early as 1652, staying in Florence on several occasions until 1656 when he moved to Venice. The two Cardinal brothers, Leopoldo and Giovan Carlo de' Medici, were among his major patrons. Numerous van Aelst paintings are still preserved in the Florentine museums, which, thanks to the Medici, contain the most extensive, and possibly most significant, group of van Aelst's works.

**Giovanna Garzoni**, (Ascoli Piceno 1600 – Rome  
1670)

*Ceramic Bowl with Pears and Morning Glories*,  
1651-1662

Tempera on parchment

Campione d'Italia, Private Collection, Silvano Lodi

The famous miniaturist from the Marches, Giovanna Garzoni spent a long period in Florence at the service of the Medici court, between 1642 and 1651. During this time she became familiar with the important Florentine tradition of meticulous and scientific documentation of natural phenomena found in the works of artists such as Filippo Napoletano (also on view), and especially Jacopo Ligozzi. In the earlier years of her training in northern Italy, Garzoni had instead been closely acquainted with the still lifes of Ambrogio Figino, Panfilo Nuvolone and Fede Galizia, whose paintings presented a refined and synthetic naturalism, with intense religious and spiritual overtones.

**Anonymous** painter (Tuscan?) of the 17th century

*Flowers in a Landscape*, before 1663

Oil on canvas

Poggio a Caiano, Villa medicea (Medici Villa), Museo  
della natura morta, inv. Poggio Imperiale 1860,  
no. 101

**Bartolomeo Ligozzi**, (Florence, ca. 1631/39 – 1695)

*Vase of Flowers*, 1670s-1680s

Oil on canvas

Florence, Private Collection, Giampaolo Fioretto

Bartolomeo Ligozzi was greatly appreciated by the Medici (Cardinal Carlo, Grand Duchess Vittoria and Grand Prince Ferdinando) and by other Florentine collectors. Grandson of the more famous Jacopo, Bartolomeo devoted himself to a varied and copious production of still life. His compositions consisted of fruit, with or without flowers, frequently accompanied by animals, in line with schema of Roman origin, and also individual vases and bunches of flowers of different dimensions and great decorative effect. A sojourn in Rome during the 1670s accelerated his stylistic evolution from clarity of image that was still northern to greater pictorial freedom, inspired by baroque and decorative trends, which was of great significance in Florence at the time.