

***Why are you
staring at
the clock?***



***Life is fleeting;
existence is ephemeral.***



Time is man's nemesis.

Philippe de Champaigne's *Vanitas* (1671)



Life

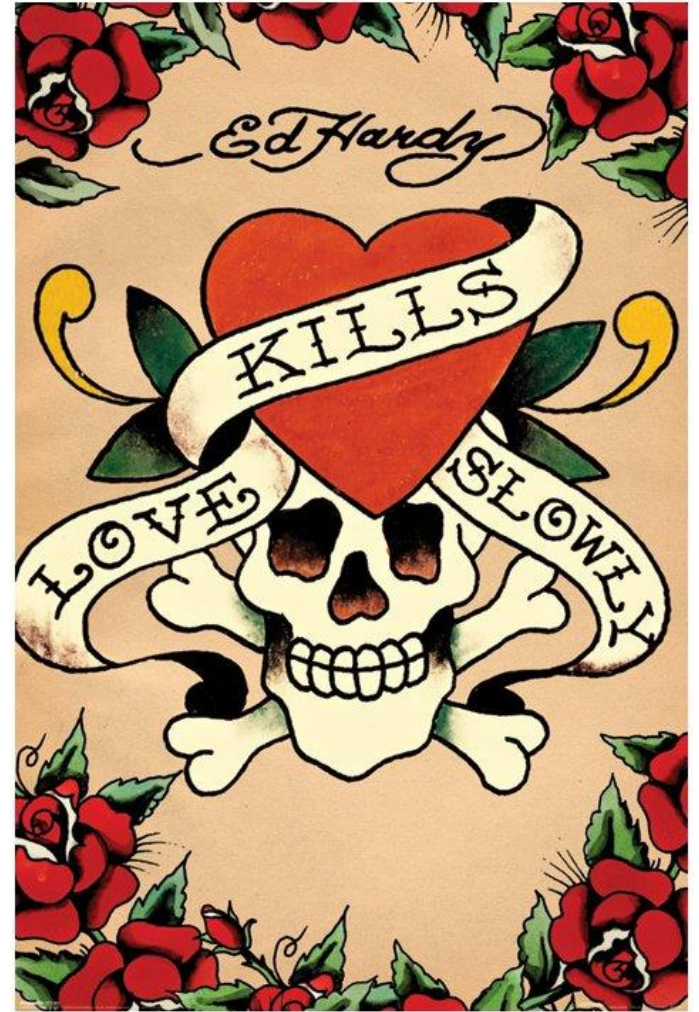
Death

Time

Vanitas

- still-life painting containing symbols of death and/or change as a reminder of their inevitability
- Latin word from which *vanity* derives, closely related to futility and emphasizing the meaninglessness of earthly life and the transient nature of all earthly goods and pursuits

Ed Hardy



Ubi sunt qui ante nos fuerunt?

- Latin phrase meaning, "*Where are those who were before us?*"
- literary convention focusing on the fleeting nature of human existence
- a persistent idea that provides a meditation on mortality and life's transience

The Egyptians in their banquets exhibited a skeleton to the guests, to remind them of the brevity of human life saying as they did so, “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.”

(Corinthians 15:32)

**excerpt from “The Wanderer,”
Anglo-Saxon elegy (circa 900 CE)**

*No wonder therefore, in all the world,
If shadow darkens upon my soul
How one by one proud warriors vanish
From the halls that knew them, and day by day
All this earth ages and droops unto death.*

**Memento Mori from
Libre Vermell de Montserrat (1399)**

Life is short, and shortly it will end;

Death comes quickly and respects no one,

Death destroys everything and takes pity on no one.

from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (1601)

Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio: a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy: he hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now, how abhorred in my imagination it is! my gorge rims at it. Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? quite chap-fallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come; make her laugh at that. (Act 5, Scene 1)

**Dutch Masters,
Still Life,
and *Vanitas***



“Still Life with Lighted Candle” (Pieter Claesz, 1627)



“Vanitas Still Life” (Pieter Claesz, 1630)



“ Breakfast Table with Blackberry Pie”
(Willem Heda, 1631)



“Still Life with Oysters, a Silver Tazza, and Glassware”
(Willem Heda, 1635)



“Still Life with a Gilt Goblet” (Willem Heda, 1635)



“A Vase of Flowers” (Jacob Vosmaer, 1618)



“Flower Still Life” (Willem van Aelst, 1656)



“Flower Still Life with a Timepiece”
(Abraham van Beyeren, 1663-65)



“Vase of Flowers” (Rachel Ruysch, 1670)