



## Aesthetic Impermanence

By Sylvie Samani

This paper aims to present an evolving observation and appreciation that confront one another raising our leniency to impermanence, as we question the relevance of the imagery presented to us and more so, its permanence. An image with scarce or no artifact can become an artistic challenge that unsettles our former judgment. Hence, what appears to be a motionless painting dwelling a plain character showing a set (rigid) expression, maybe is not. There is a disparity between what we believe to be, what we actually perceive and, what we are monitored to perceive. The locus of certainty is as impermanent as our argumentation.

Prelude to our argumentation, is the mandatory distinction between what seems a motionless scene and inertia. What appears to be at rest, or frozen in an inaudible attitude such as the character and the surrounding, is not, despite the placid composure of the character displaying apparently no connection with the bare surrounding. The pointed finger meant to capture and direct the attention of the observer, breaks through that sense of motionless as it permits interactivity to take place. The open sky with clouds scattered here and there, acts as an outside force that responds to the thoughts of the character. We therefore, distinguish different types of motion in a scene that offers various interpretative readings of imagery and content yielding a gradual and measured perception of information, due to its abundance formerly restraint from the observer. The richness of information lies behind the apparent simplicity of the character and the inscription - *life is a moment* - which requires a renewed observation due to the complexity of its iconography.

A realistic touch combined to the mysterious inscription is not uncanny but is here, associated to a sleek image standing between a portrait, (some vanitas included the depiction of a self-portrait in Dutch painting) an allegory, and a free variant vanity. The full grasp of the significance requires a persevering assessment of the changing observation of what can be considered as a new form in genre painting.