

Janet Fish

DC MOORE

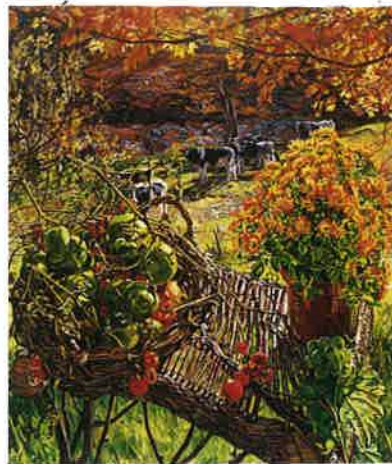
"Reflections" was the appropriate title for this long-overdue survey of Janet Fish's painting, covering 1968 through 2002. It was occasioned by Vincent Katz's recently published monograph (Abrams). From the literal reflections in her early work—glass bottles, plastic wrap stretched over packages of fruit—to the more elegiac reflections of and on the lived life that are increasingly Fish's focus, the term remains apt.

Pop-style trademarks appear in two 1971 paintings of shiny liquor bottles sporting Majorska and Seagram's labels—period nods to commercial experience. Pivotal in the show, though, was *Mustard Pickles* (1970), a painting that looks backward and forward. Here the visual feast of peppers of different colors packed tightly into a glass jar is sensually rich, combining Fish's early, head-on approach to objects with homey, or homemade, subject matter. The jarred peppers look toward Fish's recent concentration on the simple elements of life around her, rather than on proplike still-life accoutrements. Her emphasis has become more rural, combining landscape, genre, and still life.

From the curious cows returning the artist's gaze in *Meredith's Table* (2002) to the clutter of objects in *Lawn Sale* (2000) to the indoor still life and outdoor landscape (seen through a window) in *January Snow* (2002), Fish makes connections and leaves questions dangling. Not the least, Where does a still life originate? In the basket of picked tomatoes in the autumnal outdoor scene *Meredith's Table*; in the harvest of ripe objects in *Lawn Sale*?

Reflecting on the connection of objects, or physical phenomena, to life remains Fish's particular contribution. That this is done with clarity and radiance is easy to overlook, precisely because it is that way.

—Cynthia Nadelman



Janet Fish,
Meredith's Table,
2002, oil on canvas,
70" x 60". DC Moore.