

SCHOLASTIC

ART

MARCH 1996

VOL. 26, No. 3 ISSN 1060-832X
PUBLISHED IN COOPERATION WITH
THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART,
FORMERLY ART & MAN

JANET FISH

Working with Reflected Light

 SCHOLASTIC



Cover: Janet Fish, b. 1938. *Dark Mirror* (detail), 1976. Oil on canvas, 50" x 50". Cleveland Museum of Art. Photo, courtesy of the artist.

THE C CAMERA

Which of the works shown here are painted

SCHOLASTIC
ART

Maurice R. Robinson, founder of Scholastic Inc., 1895-1982

FOR THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

Director EARL A. POWELL, III

Head of Education LINDA DOWNS

Head, Education Resources RUTH R. PERLIN

FOR SCHOLASTIC INC.

President, Chief Executive Officer, Chairman of the Board RICHARD ROBINSON

Editor MARGARET HOWLETT

Art Director JOAN MICHAEL

Associate Art Director DEBORAH DINGER

Contributing Editors SUZANNE BILYEU

DENISE WILLI

Production Editor SUZANNE McCABE

Senior Picture Researcher DONNA FRANKLAND

Copy Chief RENEE GLASER

Publisher HUGH ROOME

Editorial Director DAVID GODDY

Vice President, Editorial Design and Production WILL KEFAUER

Executive Production Director RICHARD WALSH

Director, Manufacturing & Distribution J. G. BROWNELL

Associate Director, Manuf. & Distribution GAY SICCARDI

Editorial Systems Manager DAVID HENDRICKSON

SCHOLASTIC ART ADVISORY BOARD:
Lana Beverlin, Harrison R. IV School, Gilman City, Missouri • William Harper, Susan B. Anthony I. S. 238Q, Hollis, New York • Carol Little, Charles F. Patton Middle School, Kennett Square, Pennsylvania • Lydia Narkiewicz, Pioneer High School, Whittier, California • Sue Rothenmel, Wynford Middle School, Bucyrus, Ohio

POSTAL INFORMATION
Scholastic Art® (ISSN 1060-832X; in Canada, 2-c no. 9360) is published six times during the school year, Sept./Oct., Nov., Dec./Jan., Feb., Mar., Apr./May, by Scholastic Inc. Office of Publications: 2931 E. McCarty Street, P.O. Box 3710, Jefferson City, MO 65102-3710. Second-class postage paid at Jefferson City, MO 65101 and at additional offices. Postmasters: Send notice of address changes to SCHOLASTIC ART, 2931 East McCarty St., P.O. Box 3710 Jefferson City, MO 65102-3710.

PUBLISHING INFORMATION
U.S. prices: \$7.95 each per school year, for 10 or more subscriptions to the same address. 1-9 subscriptions, each: \$18.00 student, \$31.80 Teacher's Edition, per school year. Single copy: \$1.90 student, \$2.95 Teacher's. (For Canadian pricing, write our Canadian office, address below.) Subscription communications should be addressed to SCHOLASTIC ART, Scholastic Inc., 2931 East McCarty Street, P.O. Box 3710, Jefferson City, MO 65102-3710 or by calling 1-800-631-1586. Communications relating to editorial matter should be addressed to Margaret Howlett, SCHOLASTIC ART, 555 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012-3999. Canadian address: Scholastic-TAB Publications, Ltd., 123 Newkirk Rd., Richmond Hill, Ontario L4C 3K5. Available on microfilm through Xerox University Microfilms, Inc. 300 N. Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Also available on microfiche through Bell & Howell Micro Photo Division, Old Mansfield Rd., Wooster, OH 44691. Copyright © 1996 by Scholastic Inc. All Rights Reserved. Material in this issue may not be reproduced in whole or in part in any form or format without special permission from the publisher.

Printed in U.S.A.



ings? Which are photographs?

S EYE



PORTRAITS, LANDSCAPES, AND still lifes—artists have painted these subjects realistically for hundreds of years. At the end of the 19th century, a new process—photography—replaced most realistic painting. Although many 20th-century artists still painted these subjects, they began using nonrepresentational styles to depict them. A few artists continued to paint realistically, but the modern way to depict reality was to take a photograph.

All the works shown here were done during the 1970s by three contemporary American artists. Chuck Close (who did the portrait of the woman, below right), Richard Estes (cityscape, above right), and Janet Fish (still life, left) worked in a style called *Photo Realism*. Photo Realists felt that photographic images had become more real to many people than actual objects and scenes. Photo Realists used paints and brushes, but saw the world through the lens of a camera. These works are paintings, but each has been so influenced by camera techniques that it might easily be mistaken for a photo.

Many of the Photo Realists like Close actually worked from photos. Like a camera, Close seems detached from his subject. *Leslie*—his huge, photographically detailed painting (right)—tells us nothing personal about his subject. Everything in this “portrait” is equally important and the focus of each feature changes as if seen through a camera lens.

In his landscape, *Broadway and 64th* (above), Richard Estes has used the panoramic effect of a wide-angle lens to capture the enormity of New York City. The sharp focus of every detail is another quality usually found only in a photograph.

Janet Fish never considered herself a Photo Realist, but her complex still lifes, like *Wine and Cheese Glasses* (left) and *Dark Mirror* (cover), have clearly been influenced by photography. Her tightly cropped images fill the entire frame, and the foreground and background are compressed

“I feel as though I haven’t really seen an object until I actually start painting it.” — Janet Fish

Janet Fish, b. 1938. *Wine and Cheese Glasses*, 1975, 71" x 54". Indiana University Art Museum, Bloomington, Indiana. Photo, courtesy of the artist.



“When you look at a scene, you tend to scan it. As your eyes move, the vanishing point seems to move.” —Richard Estes

Richard Estes, b.1936. *Broadway and 64th*, 1978. 40" x 72". Private Collection.

“I made this portrait six feet high. I find that if a face is big enough, it’s hard to ignore.” —Chuck Close

Chuck Close, b. 1940. *Leslie*, Watercolor, 73" x 57". Private Collection.



as if seen through a telephoto lens. This effect emphasizes the varied patterns made by all the reflecting surfaces.



Compare the nearly 200-year-old still life (above) with one (right) done last year by contemporary artist Janet Fish.

James Peale (1749-1831). *Fruit Still Life*, 1824, 14 7/8" x 17 5/8". The National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas M. Evans.

"The early realistic painters took ordinary objects and gave them an incredible suggestion of spirit beyond."—Janet Fish

Photo: D.C. Moore Gallery, N.Y., N.Y.



EVER SINCE SHE can remember, Janet Fish wanted to be an artist. Born in 1938 in Boston, she grew up in New England in a family of artists—her grandfather was a painter; her mother was a sculptor. Fish studied sculpture at Smith College and went on to Yale, where she found that everyone in her sculpture class was working abstractly. Interested in capturing the beauty of the ordinary objects she saw around her, Fish began painting. With little encouragement, the artist painted realistically until she graduated in 1963.

The next year Fish moved to New York City, supporting herself with jobs in shops and offices. She lived and painted in a small unheated loft, taking showers at friends' houses. She painted objects she found in second-hand shops, focusing on the way light plays on surfaces, how it reflects and breaks up forms. Her first paintings (cover; pages 2, 6), were mainly black and white; her current works (like the one on the right), are filled with colors so bright, the paintings seem almost to glow from within.

Fish's paintings are very contemporary, but her work follows in a long tradition of realistic still-life painters. Earlier paintings—like the one above by 19th-century American James Peale—usually have a single main center of attention. Everything in this work leads the eye to its focal

TWO VIEW

"Realism is a

point, the bowl of fruit. The strong, simple shapes set in a dark, three-dimensional space give the work a solid, lifelike appearance

Compare Janet Fish's still life (right) with Peale's. Although Fish never considered herself a Photo Realist, her work has many Photo Realist qualities. *Cut Peach, Blue Vase* has no single focal point. Every detail is equally important. Like Peale's painting, Fish's work is a still-life. But is it really "still"? Can you look at just one of the objects in this work, or is your eye forced to keep moving around the canvas? There are only six glass containers in this composition; why do there seem to be dozens?

We see Peale's still life from one point of view—eye level. But the viewer seems to be hovering above Fish's painting, giving the work a restless, dynamic feeling. The light source in the Peale is even and steady; the earth colors (browns, greens, tans) are muted and natural. In Fish's complex and interconnected composition, the reflecting patterns of light and shadow shimmer like waves in a stream. The warm (reds, oranges, yellows) and cool colors (blues, greens, purples) contrast with each other so the whole painting appears to vibrate.

"Appearances never stay the same. It is not possible to 'copy' a reality that is always changing."—Janet Fish

Cut Peach, Blue Vase, 1993, 40" x 50". Photo, D. C. Moore Gallery, N.Y., N. Y.



matter of painting what you choose to see.”—Janet Fish

VIEWS OF REALITY



FISH'S

G GLITTERING IMAGES

"I paint the movement of light and color."—Janet Fish

TOWARD the end of the 1960s, Janet Fish was searching for her own painting style. She said, "Abstraction didn't work for me. I had to get out of my own head into the outside world."

She painted landscapes and portraits, but worked so slowly she had trouble finding people who could sit still long enough. She tried painting vegetables, but these didn't last either. Glasses and bottles wouldn't decay, so she added a few to the still life she was working on. As the light came through her studio windows, morning changed to noon, then late afternoon, and the artist watched what happened to her glasses and bottles. She loved the way the light broke up the forms, so she gathered every glass object she could find and began to paint.

Fish was so happy with the results, she began painting glass containers of all **sizes, shapes, thicknesses, and patterns**. Some were filled with **water** and placed on **mirrored surfaces**.

Light reflected back and forth through the glass, the water, and the mirrors. Compositions like *Rain and Dusk* (below) are realistic, but complex and hard to read because the light filters through and bounces off many distorting surfaces. Any change in the weather completely changes the colors and values. That's why, to this day, Fish keeps two paintings going—one for sunny days, another for clouds.

Fish works every day in her New York studio, "capturing the beauty of everyday objects." While her early paintings like *Rain and Dusk* are made up of **ovals, straight lines, regular shapes**, and a few **muted colors**, is there any color you *can't* find in her recent work, *Glass and Shells* (right)? Can you find any **solid shapes**? The artist paints everyday objects, but they are not the subject of her paintings. As she says, "My real subject is the movement of light and color from one form to another."

Fish's still lifes are made up of fleeting, ghostly images and their reflections, which bounce from surface to surface. The artist uses **lines—thick, thin, curved, dotted, short, continuous, slashing, diagonal—and brilliant colors** to keep the viewer's eye moving across the canvas. In a recent painting, *Jump* (pages 8-9), the glittering glass objects in the foreground are as dynamic as the solid, active figures in the background. In her outwardly traditional still-life paintings, Fish expresses constant change, furious inner motion, and restlessness, qualities that characterize modern urban society.

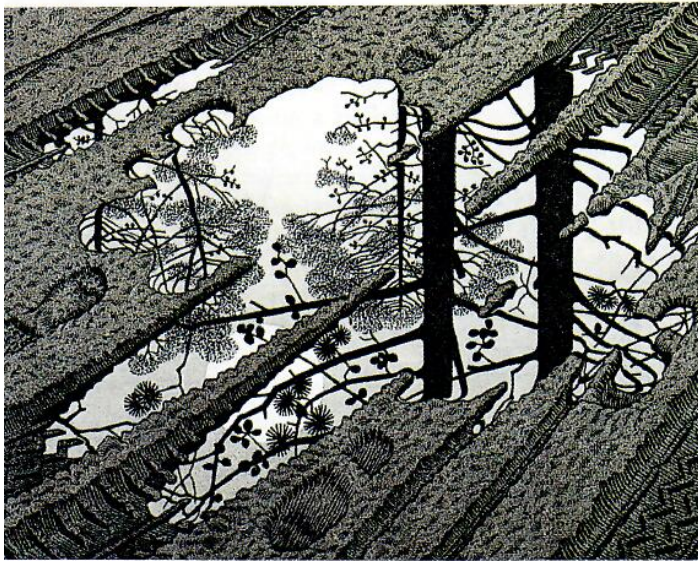
"I want my paintings to have energy, a movement that goes across the entire surface."—Janet Fish

Glass and Shells, 1990, 52" x 52". Private Collection.

If you look carefully at the work below, can you find at least one Janet Fish self-portrait included in it?

Rain and Dusk, 1978, 58" x 85".
Photo: D. C. Moore Gallery, N.Y., N. Y.





◀ Liquid Landscapes

Early 20th-century Dutch artist M. C. Escher was fascinated by the difference between **two and three dimensions**. He wrote about this print, “The reflections of the trees indicate a three-dimensional world above; the tire tracks and footprints in the mud below suggest the two-dimensional surface of the water.”

Escher spent his career trying to visualize the concept of many different worlds existing in the same place at the same time.

Puddle (left) was an early attempt to express this idea. Here the artist suggests two simultaneous worlds by contrasting the **negative space, vertical lines, and dots** reflected in the puddle with the **diagonal lines and textures** in the road. Which area do you think represents two dimensions and which suggests a third dimension? In later works Escher added an additional dimension—fish swimming below the surface of the water.

What do you see here—a hole in the ground, or a reflection in water?

M. C. Escher (1898-1972). *Puddle*, 1952. Woodcut, 9 1/2" x 12 3/4". Private Collection.

◀ Through the Looking Glass

One of the most famous reflected images in art history is the mirror (left) featured in a wedding portrait by 15th-century Flemish (Flanders was an area in northern Europe) artist Jan van Eyck (yan van ike). The **depth, modeling, and detail** Van Eyck was known for can be seen in the tiny but complete world reflected in this mirror.

In Van Eyck's time, two peo-

ple could marry by exchanging vows in front of two witnesses. The artist has used legal script to sign and date the wall above the mirror, “Jan van Eyck was here, 1434.” In the mirror, the artist and another witness stand before the bride and groom. This work, *The Arnolfini Marriage*, not only records the wedding, it serves as a marriage certificate.

The painting is composed

around its **focal point**—the mirror. This round globe not only echoes the scene, but **extends the space** of the painting beyond the room in which it takes place. Many details also serve as symbols. The couple's pose emphasizes the importance of the wed-

ding ritual; the burning candle is part of the ceremony, the dog stands for faith; and the sculpture in back is the patron saint of childbirth. (Most experts agree that the bride is *not* pregnant; the clothing and posture of the time make her appear to be so.)

Painted Reflections >

Contemporary American artist Lidya Buzio works with reflected images in an unusual way. She creates them herself. Born in Uruguay, Buzio grew up with the simple, classic shapes of early South American pottery. The artist began working in clay, decorating her pots with painted designs. After moving to New York City, she incorporated the buildings and bits of blue sky she saw around her into her pottery. She painted the unfired surface, then fired and waxed it.

In their works, both Janet

Fish and Lidya Buzio suggest worlds contained within worlds. The images in Fish's paintings are taken from everyday life but are so **distorted, fragmented, and repeated** that they lose any feeling of solid, unchanging reality. In contrast, the **simplified planes and geometric shapes** in Buzio's urban scenes have a classic and timeless quality. They appear to be reflections of the real world around them, but they aren't. Buzio's painted images reflect scenes that are only in the artist's imagination.

Is this jar's surface so shiny you can see a building reflected in it?

Lidya Buzio, b. 1948. *Tall, Green Rooftopscape*, 1986. 18" high. Burnished earthenware. Private Collection.



ARTIST OF THE MONTH

Kris Green: PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Eighteen-year-old Kris Green calls his Scholastic Art Award-winning drawing (below) a "self portrait." Like Janet Fish, Kris has combined a number of objects to create a still life with personal meaning. Kris is a senior at Carver Contemporary High School in Houston, a performing-arts school for gifted and talented art students. After graduation, he plans to pursue an art career. When he is not creating art, Kris plays varsity baseball.



We select our Artist of the Month from among Scholastic Award winners. To enter, ask your teacher to write to the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards, 555 Broadway, New York, NY 10012-3999 for entry deadlines and rules books. *Scholastic Art* magazine does not have a separate competition.

■ **How did you first get involved with art?**

I've been drawing from the day I could pick up a book and look at the pictures. In school, I took any art class I could. And now I'm studying art at a performing-arts magnet school.

■ **How did you come to do this award-winning still life?**

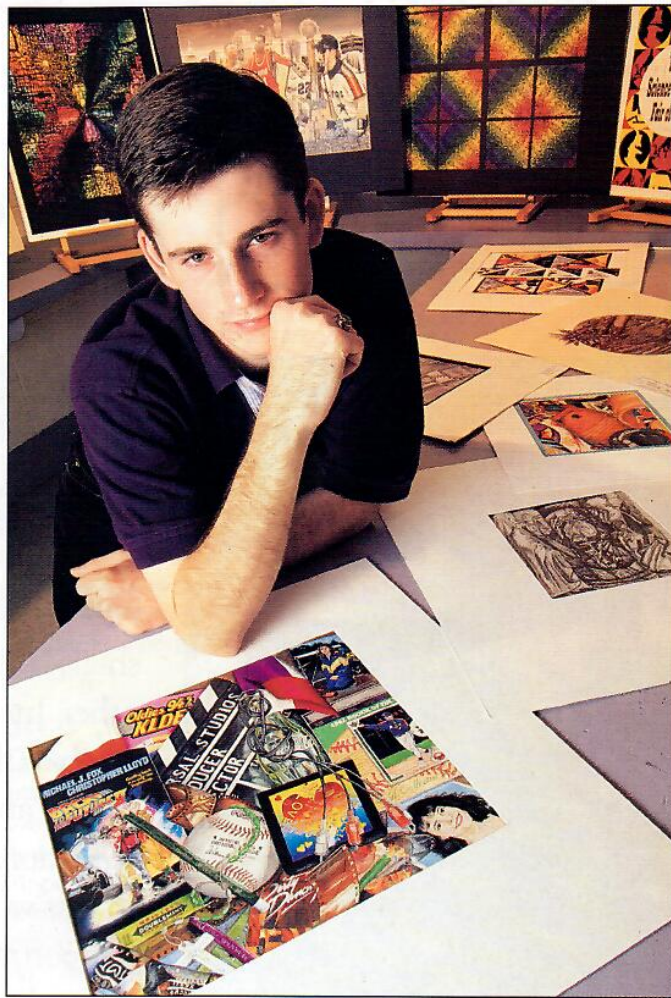
It started as a class assignment. We were to develop a self-portrait using only objects and images. We had to collect seven to ten objects that said something about who we were. I used prisma color (colored pencils) to make the objects look as real as possible.

■ **Where did the idea for the drawing come from?**

I tried to think about what was important to me. I used a baseball and a baseball card because baseball is my favorite sport. I put in the Universal Studios sign and threaded film throughout the picture because I love movies. *Back to the Future* is my favorite film. The rosary beads represent my religion—Catholicism. And all the other objects are from my room. Everything was carefully arranged, not just thrown on the table. I'm a neat, organized person and I wanted the picture to show that orderly quality.

■ **How did you get everything to look so real?**

With a lot of hard work. After blocking in the composition, I approached the drawing with the idea of capturing every detail. So I took each object and worked on it individually. That way, I could concentrate on every part of each object. Adding highlights, shadows, and shading gave the picture a sense of depth. For instance, I wanted the film at the bottom to seem to come out at you. I didn't want any one object to



dominate, so all the shapes and colors balance each other out. Each object leads your attention on to the next one.

■ **How did you do the drawing?**

Once I picked out the objects I was going to use, I set up various arrangements and did quick thumbnail sketches. I decided on the final composition, then traced my rough sketch onto a piece of paper especially made for colored pencil. I then sat in front of the still life and drew everything in exact detail, just as it appeared in front of me.

■ **Then what did you do?**

When the drawing was done, I started with one object—in this case it was the Oldies. I removed all the other objects, fin-

ished this one and colored it in. I wanted to finish one object before going on to the next, so no one part of the drawing would be completely done. Seeing the whole object while I was drawing it allowed me to make it look more lifelike. When every object was done, I set the still life back up. I used highlights and shadows to tie the drawing together.

■ **What was the hardest part of doing this detailed drawing?**

The hardest part was when I took an object out of the still life to draw it. I always had to remember the object I was working on was only part of the whole composition.

■ **How long did the project take?**

It was very tedious and time

consuming. It took nearly 80 hours to complete the drawing. And each image became more of a challenge as I went on.

■ **Do you like to work realistically?**

Yes. I have a realistic outlook, so I express myself best using detailed, realistic images. I've really never been able to paint or draw loosely. And I've never worked abstractly.

■ **Do you have any advice for other students interested in art?**

I love creating art. It's hard for people who aren't involved in it to understand that art is your life. It will take a lot of your time but will give you a great future. There are no limits in art. As an artist, you can create whatever you want.

“I love creating. . . . There are no limits in art. As an artist, you can create whatever you want.”

PAINTING YOUR OWN IMAGE



Janet Fish expresses herself through the objects she chooses to paint—mirrors, glasses, vases,

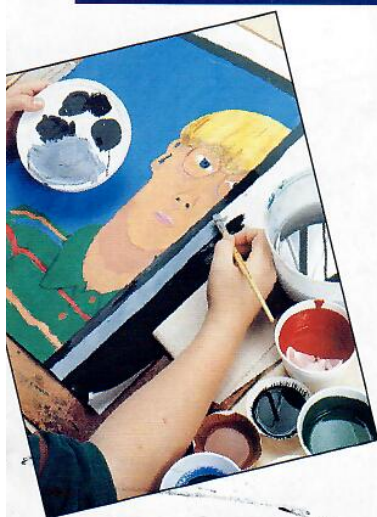
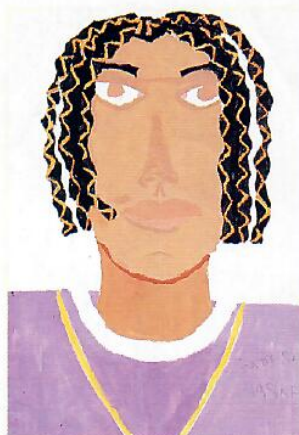
shells—all reflected in one another. In many of her still lifes (such as those on pages 2 and 6), the artist also includes tiny reflections of her own features. In this workshop, you'll paint a self-portrait that reflects something about yourself you'd like to communicate to others.

Use reflected images to create an unusual self-portrait.



Materials

- Drawing board
- 18" x 24" Sulfite drawing paper
- No. 2 school pencil
- Palette (or flat surface to mix paint)
- Vinyl eraser
- Hand-held mirror/other clearly reflecting surfaces (hub caps, toaster, spoons, sunglasses, water, black television screen, etc.)
- Primary, secondary, black, white tempera color
- Container to hold water
- Toweling
- Variety of round and flat paint brushes
- Plastic wrap to cover palettes



Starting Out

First, decide what you want to tell people about yourself in your portrait. Choose a reflecting surface that is curved or has an interesting shape. As you look at your reflection in this surface, think of how you want to compose your self-portrait. Do several careful, accurate contour drawings of your head and shoulders. Consider **cropping**, slight **distortion**, and incorporating **background areas** and/or **edges** of your mirror or reflecting surface.

Step 2

Choose the drawing you think will work best as a painting and, using a few *light lines*, transfer it to the heavy paper. This drawing

will be used as a guideline, so concentrate on *essential shapes*, *accurate proportion*, and *correct placement*. Details will be added when painting.

Step 3

Lay out your colors, water, and palette. Try and limit colors to two or three basic hues plus black and white. In painting a self-portrait, skin tones will be the most important color you use and also the most difficult to mix. Begin with white paint and keep adding darker colors until you get the correct shade. Skin tones (from deep brown to light pink) are **warm**. You can keep your entire color scheme **warm** (red, yellow, orange) or work with **contrasts** by using **cool colors** (blue, green, purple).

Portraits by : Sierra Ashley; Benjamin J. Boyles; Lindsay Rosenow; Tiana Dianne Ashley; Dusty Drehmer.

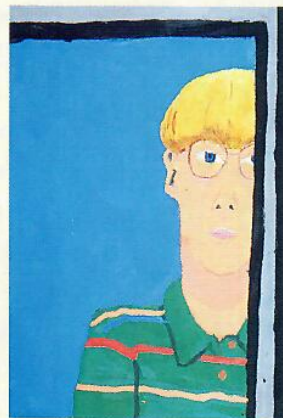
Prepared by Ned J. Nesti Jr., Art Instructor, Morrison (IL) High School; assisted by Gordon N. Bottum, Irene E. Feltes, Andrea M. Johnson, Brandon S. Renkes.

Photos by Larry Gregory.



Some Solutions

When composing your self-portrait, think first about format. Will your face be **tightly cropped** to fill the page, or will the shape of the reflection frame it? Will the composition be **symmetrical** (same on each side) or **assymetrical** (sides are different but visually balanced)? Will your point of view be from below, above, or eye level? Will you use **flat, solid shapes with definite edges**? Will your **brushstrokes be loose and expressive**? How will you use **negative space, distortion, or background objects**? Will your colors be of equal **intensity** (brightness), **value** (tints are light; shades are dark), and **temperature** (warm or cool), or will you use colors that **contrast** in all these areas?



CREATING A JANET FISH STILL LIFE

How would you take the following still-life objects—fruit, vase, flowers, shells, table, and window—and tie them all together into a painting? That's what Janet Fish has done in the work on the right, *Hunt's Vase*. Fish's use of **reflections**, which pull the viewer's eye from one object to the next, is one of the devices that make this painting so effective. Can you find other design elements the artist used in creating *Hunt's Vase*, as well as some elements that she purposely did NOT use?

	YES	NO
Warm colors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diagonal lines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tints	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organic shapes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
One focal point	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mirror images	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cool colors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shades	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rough textures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cast shadows	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Horizontal lines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eye-level angle of vision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Geometric shapes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shiny textures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Symmetrical composition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Angle of vision from below	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vertical lines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asymmetrical composition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Smooth textures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Angle of vision from above	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Janet Fish, b. 1938. *Hunt's Vase*, 1984. 58" x 36". Private Collection.