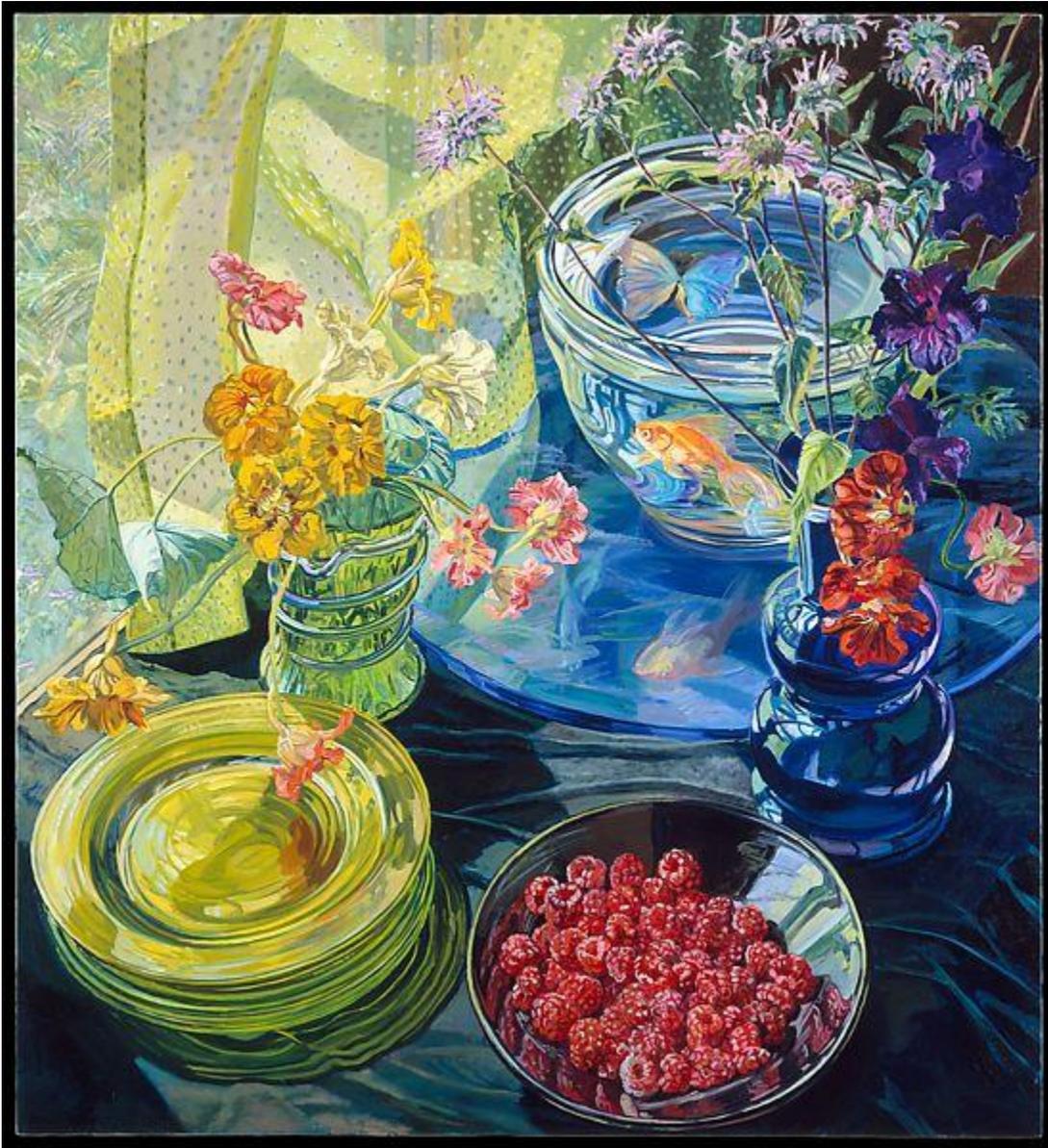


**Janet Fish, *Raspberries and Goldfish*, 1981**



**\*\*First Question First\*\***

What is *your* immediate reaction to this artwork?

Trust it. Write about it. Use the guide sheet for help.

Continue reading for another perspective and journal questions.

## **Janet Fish, *Raspberries and Goldfish*, 1981**

“Am I going to feel like this for the rest of my life?” The human mind seems to have an awful proclivity to generalize the present and project it forward. It is not enough that we’re in pain now, in this moment. No. Inevitably, words like “forever” and “always” visit their own suffering on us. The early days of loss are especially a vulnerable time. Our minds are fogged and exhausted, leaving us without our usual objective awareness to counteract the chattering mind.

Bringing ourselves back to this very moment might be the greatest gift we can give ourselves during these ultimately bleak spin-outs. Whether it is counting our breath or playing “I spy with my little eye,” we do ourselves a kindness every time we manage to quickly drop those thoughts that want to jump the fence into tomorrow’s unknown.

From wherever we are currently sitting waits a still-life to be seen and, perhaps, appreciated. One life-engaging practice to bring ourselves back into the present is to focus our eyes on what is before us. Notice how the light plays over each object, how the colors interact with one another. How are the lines intersecting? Are the forms pleasing?

Q.) Focus on an area before you . . . a corner of the kitchen table, objects on the windowsill, “clutter” on your couch. Write what you see as though you are entering a new world. Let your eye meander and wonder. Try seeing with the aesthetic eye rather than the critical mind. Live these next minutes in this stilled life. A respite “always” available.