

April 2012

Janet Fish

DC Moore

The prevailing ethos of this show, representing more than ten years of Janet Fish's work, was celebratory abundance. Light glitters off glasses and bowls as friends and family gather to eat, drink, and toast all that life has to offer. This spirit was underscored in the assured opulence of the painter's brushstrokes, outlining exterior and interior surfaces of objects and figures, always emphasizing shimmering reflections.

Lorna and Jane (2006), for example, depicts the aftermath of a party. The picture's perspective pushes back from the foreground of gift bags and glassware to the view through the window behind the head of a mustached guest. A vase overflowing with flowers occupies most of the left side of the painting, and the rest is taken up by a table topped with sparkling stacked plates and bowls, bottles of rose and yellow-green liquids, candles, and a wreathlike form squiggling around it all. Two smiling women in the middle lean toward each other, as two men behind them fade into the background. Apart from the small area of twilight sky glimpsed through the window, there's not much in the way of unoccupied space; the painting's well-ordered clutter contributes to its heady rush of pleasure.

Watermelon, Bananas, Suzani (2009) positions three pinkish red slices of watermelon just below a bowl of flaccid bananas pointing in their direction. The various reds and greens, punctuated by the bananas' burst of yellow, create a complementary-color riot, again with little breathing room.

Some of the decadence of Dutch still



Janet Fish, *Monkey Business*, 2005, oil on canvas, 90" x 80". DC Moore.

lives is recalled in Fish's *Monkey Business* (2005). A touch of chaos is intimated by a windblown curtain on the right, the shards of a broken blue glass bowl in the center of the table, and an overturned vase of flowers spilling across

the foreground. Scampering out of the picture plane in the upper left is the tail and hindquarters of a monkey.

This virtuosic and inventive artist, at the top of her game, was hosting here what amounts to one of the liveliest and most convivial painting parties in town.

—Amanda Church