



15 x 26

"Tea with Lemon"

Janet Rickus is an exemplar of contemporary realist painters with an established reputation. She was born in 1949 and raised in Chicopee, Massachusetts, but moved as a young girl to West Springfield, where her parents operated a grocery store. She graduated with a BS from Central Connecticut State University in 1971, and began painting still lifes in 1983. In minute detail, with a sumptuous color palette, Rickus presents life-size depictions of fruits, vegetables, and humble household vessels and kitchen linens. With loving treatment of her subject matter, Rickus endows these everyday objects with a certain nobility. Her often idiosyncratic compositions at times subvert the typical representation of objects, such as when she presents carrots vertically alongside slender vases, or balances a small lime atop a rotund melon. Presented in intimate relationship with one another and enjoying pride of place, Rickus' objects exude an elegant geometry and order. With a forthright presentation, and painting strictly in natural light, Rickus rejects the darkly mysterious effects of the chiaroscuro technique, displaying a more modern sensibility. There is a sense of immediacy and familiarity in the paintings that creates an irresistible draw for the viewer.

Throughout her 30-year career, Rickus has exhibited in dozens of group shows. She was honored with an exhibition of her work at the Springfield Museum of Fine Arts in 2001, and her solo shows in New York and Massachusetts have received great critical acclaim. Her work has been featured in prestigious publications, including ARTnews and Art and Antiques. Her painting entitled "Three Pears" was the cover illustration of Harvard professor Marjorie Garber's book, "Vice Versa: Bisexuality and the Eroticism of Everyday Life," and images of her paintings were featured in a presentation by Garber at a colloquium at the Centre Pompidou in Paris. Rickus' artwork is included in a number of private collections, including those of television personality Jane Curtin and the late actor Jason Robards.