

## **Amy Pollien**

### ***Trout with Dahlias***

The animals, flowers, and surroundings in this painting represent late spring/early summer in the garden, when the first large blooms are just open and water is still abundant. I have a small collection of dahlia tubers that I set out in April and they grow quickly; the earliest varieties are two “cactus” types: Bora Bora and Sunset, included here. They are combined with other early blooms such as pink cosmos and the first of the State Fair zinnias. It’s wonderful to see the dahlia buds slowly opening as the days get long in anticipation of the first floral still life set-ups of the summer.

The silver teapot belonged to my great aunt Bernice. She made a point of bringing out “the good stuff” every day and the teapot’s incised surface and lid show the dents and scuffs of regular use. I love her pieces for their imperfections and she left me several from her estate with the hope that they might be featured in paintings. She lived in a huge drafty Federalist farmhouse in Vermont with two German Shepherds, china cupboards packed with silver and porcelain, and the occasional newborn calf or piglet in a box by the kitchen woodstove.

I set the teapot and flowers on an antique mirror to create the illusion of a pond. The mirror is very old: the silver backing is flaking off, the glass is deeply rippled, and the wooden frame has long since fallen away. It’s no longer very useful as a mirror but the placid, slightly clouded surface looks exactly like the vernal pools that dot our property from February to June. I assume the fish I see in these pools find their way down stream to Kitteridge Brook, frequented by fly fisherman, later in the summer as the marsh dries out in July and August.