Severin Roesen (American, born Germany, ca.1815–ca.1872), *Fruit Still Life with Compote of Strawberries*, n.d., oil on canvas, 16 x 20 in.; 40.64 x 50.8 cm; Museum purchase with funds from the Gilbert M. and Martha H. Hitchcock Foundation, 2002.10

**About the Artist:** Upon his arrival in New York around 1848, German born Severin Roesen (ca.1815–ca.1872) quickly adopted characteristically “American” style elements: classical balance, intense realism, and simplicity of form and composition. These he fused into brilliantly colored and brightly illuminated still lifes in which the painted objects appear almost aggressively physical and present. Roesen often reused objects and compositional devices, especially a marble table top on which most of his fruit and flower arrangements are presented.

**Art Chats**

**Hungry for More**

**Look:**

Carefully investigate this arrangement of fruit and identify all the bunches of berries and botanicals you see. Food for thought: still life artists frequently depict rotting fruit and decaying leaves to remind us that good things in life are often short-lived.

Look closely. What evidence do you see that suggests these fading fruits are past their “shelf-life?” Time for a smoothie!

**Discuss:**

Artists have enjoyed creating still life paintings for hundreds of years. Talk about why you think this subject—an arrangement of objects that do not move—would be so appealing to artists.

At home, try creating your own still life painting by first organizing a variety of ordinary objects on your tabletop. Make it interesting by playing with the colors, light, shapes, and textures!