

Overall, this month's art walk is teeming with young talent. And perhaps the most outstanding and promising of them all is young **Mitsy Avila Ovalles**, whose show *Woolgathering Aguafiestas* (translation: daydreaming wet-blankets) opened Friday night at **Rowan Morrison Gallery** (330 40th Street, www.rowanmorrison.com). This show of mixed media renders Latino characters from B-level movies, afternoon television and other sundry sources of Mexican pop culture.

Tick and I were enthralled by this show, especially Ovalles' paintings. For example, *Catalina Cruel* depicts an alluring soap opera villainess with an eye-patch who reminded me of Disney's Cruella DeVille.

We also were impressed by *El Licenciado*, a painting that presents the many faces of **Luis de Alba**, a clown-like character who made famous the expression "Turturo" -- a phrase new to my ears.

Even though the cultural references are obscure and not familiar to most gringos, these multi-layered works incorporating embroidery, stencils and careful illustrations reveal an expert hand. Though Ovalles is young and new to the art scene, it made sense to me when I learned later that she was raised among a family of fine-artists and received a degree in fine arts at San Jose State University.

As is her habit, Tick punctuated this month's trek through the art galleries of Oakland with a memorable comment. "Ovalles! She is not your average couch potato."

The next **First Friday Art Walk** in Oakland will be on February 1. For a map and more information, go to www.oaklandartmurmur.com. Please send notes and comments to isabelle.ringer@gmail.com.

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