

Gallery Gourmet

Continued from Page GALLERY 1E



Mighty Fine Arts Gallery

Portrait of Frida Kahlo by Rosemary Meza-DesPlas, *Steady, As She Goes*

Rosemary Meza-DesPlas at Mighty Fine Arts

Rosemary Meza-DesPlas has been incorporating human hair into her work for several years. She hand-sews it onto paper and canvas, where it makes a stitched brown line that often terminates in bristly, untied ends. As an art material, hair is overloaded with connotations, and Ms. Meza-DesPlas uses it for elegant and funky effects.

In her exhibition at Mighty Fine Arts, "Woman Under the Influence," she's created a series of portraits of well-known female artists presented in their role as a wife. Running throughout the portraits are lines of hair, used either to create realistic physical details, evocative props that surround the figures or elaborate patterns that cover the canvas. Pastels, watercolors and acrylic paint shape each image.

The subjects she has chosen — Alice Neel, Louise Bourgeois, Lee Krasner, Ana Mendieta, Frida Kahlo and Georgia O'Keeffe — are recognizable either by face or by the elements of their work included in the portraits. Ms. Meza-DesPlas has divided them into two categories: good wives and bad wives. Given what we know of their well-documented lives and often volatile relationships with their artist husbands, the portraits allow us to

consider the shifting social rules that go into such categorical determinations.

Each portrait also comes with a commercially produced name patch, the type young girls might buy for their jackets or backpacks. The assertive patches keep things on a first-name, personal basis, a position that has always been a strong point of this artist's growing body of work.

Charles Dee Mitchell

Through Oct 26 at Mighty Fine Arts Gallery, 419 N. Tyler. Hours: noon to 5 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays and by appointment. Free. 214-942-5241. www.mfagallery.com.