



Morning Glory by Luis Ramirez

SURFACE TREATMENT

What: *UVAL Members at Edward Jones*
Where: Edward Jones Investments, 1022 E. Griffin Parkway, Suite 103, Mission.
When: Through August 12: Open during business hours.
Contact: 956 584-5554

Invest in Art?

This new venue for art exhibits may be as notable as the art on display. *UVAL Members at Edward Jones* showcases artworks in one of the three public spaces that UVAL has negotiated for exhibit opportunities. Apart from the home base at the Kika de la Garza Fine Arts Center, members can also exhibit work at the Chase Texas Tower and the Mission Chamber of Commerce. The exhibit at Edward Jones Investments will be up through August 12.

Seventeen artists are participating in this showing with works of modest size that fit comfortably in the narrow office hallway. A printed list of participating artists and a price list is available, and the friendly receptionist proved adept at answering questions. There is a casual feeling to the show – the artists and titles are not identified near the works, suggesting that the artworks are part of the regular décor.

These artists seem primarily concerned with mastering and demonstrating techniques and use of materials rather than communicating ideas. As a result, we see interesting technical, aesthetic, and stylistic varieties of expression throughout this collection. A traditional painting of the “Alamo” by Yolanda Rios is presented as it might have been seen during an earlier time and speaks of pride of place, stability, and peace. The partly clouded Texas sky gives no hint of what might come. At the other end of this gamut is Tom Matthews’ contemporary drawing, “Lucky Strikes,” an intimate frottage on

rumpled paper capturing the outlines of an open paper matchbook. One view shows the existence of two matches, then a second view shows only one. Modest in its creation, it none-the-less resonates with meaning. Is the matchbook just a successful product or is it a statement of diminishing possibilities? Falling in between the two extremes of subject is Luis Ramires' surprising work, "Morning Glory." A slightly larger than average painting, this work conveys the energy of the natural world with its acrid greens and cool pinks unfolding very close to us against a dappled dark-green background. *UVAL Members at Edward Jones* reflects UVAL's typical avoidance of controversial content that could trigger feelings of anger or deepen a depressed state of mind. All of these artworks merit a behavioral psychologist's blessing.

Several works read as objective demonstrations of skill. While her subject appears to be pure documentation, Alma Casso's "Lighthouse" presents an impressive command of a polychromatic impasto technique. Louise Strandberg's "Rag Doll" embraces a carefully composed, traditionally smooth painting aesthetic. Linda Lewis's powerfully positioned "Gear" shifts realism into a contemporary medium.

The non-traditional exhibition spaces incorporated by UVAL underline the gradual disappearance of contemporary gallery spaces in our area over the last few years. Increasingly, artists have been faced with a minimum of local exhibition opportunities. Venues such as this one not only help ease the situation for easel-scale artists, but also remind the public that we are still here.

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