

**Cathy Joritz**

***Nuestra Señora de la Purisima Concepcion***  
**Beyond the Walls of San Jose de Gracia, Trampas, New Mexico**

Central to the giant 17<sup>th</sup> century altar screen of the Church *San Jose de Gracia*, the beautiful and simply painted *Nuestra Señora de la Purisima Concepcion* stands modestly with her hands together in prayer. Her flat, two-dimensional appearance is almost cartoon-like and, despite being surrounded by other painted Christian deities, she stands alone, confined and isolated by the wooden arch, which frames her. The ability to visually release Mary from her earthly retablo and staid appearance belongs to this computerized century. This paper will focus primarily on a series of contemporary, digitally revised, feminist interpretations of the painted retablo of the *Nuestra Señora*. It will provide background information about the original altar screen that is the source material for this series and offer analysis of the imagery I have created. This paper will explore and compare the characteristics, intentions and purposes of traditionally created retablos with modern “digital retablos”, questioning too, if the latter can even be referred to as such. Finally, this paper considers how modern image-making techniques, such as digital collage and animation, can offer fresh perspectives of the Virgin Mary, re-vision her in ways that affirm women in their identity and struggles and deploy her in ways that only digital art can.