

## ROBIN WINFIELD

*Copacabana*, 2011  
Fujiflex crystal archival print and acrylic, 24 x 28



COURTESY: THE ARTIST

## KAREN VARGAS

### The Old Martinez Hall

“We all come down together”  
This is what I told you and you agreed  
As we sat on a stump and sang drunkenly  
“A la Puerta de Toledo” in the front yard  
Of the funeral director’s home  
In the old dirt plaza  
Of the Ranchos Church  
Throwing back tequilas  
With one priest and two nuns  
Lifting our heavy dresses up  
To dance light patadas  
In a burst of clean palmas  
That moved our small procession  
Across the main road at sunset  
To the Old Martinez Hall  
For Alegrías and Tangos  
Surrounded by little girls  
Proud bouquets of flowers  
A bottle of wine and a lit candle  
At every table  
We gathered coins and  
Standing ovations  
Cantadora, you sang  
A song by Camarón  
For the niñas to dance Sevillanas  
Surrounding you  
In bright colors and patterns  
Of pretty dresses and footwork  
Sharp little attitudes  
Your voice was  
A gust of wind through young leaves  
You were a wise old tree  
Madre

**Karen Vargas** is a native of Northern New Mexico. She says, “I wrote this poem to commemorate a time when my family and our friends sang and danced for many years at the old dance hall across the highway from Ranchos de Taos Plaza, site of the San Francisco de Asis Mission Church,” built between 1772 and 1816. Vargas’s poetry and short stories have been published in *Epoch*, *Chokecherries: A S.O.M.O.S. Anthology*, *La Palabra: The Word is a Woman* series, and a number of other books and literary journals. She has received a Taos Resident Writer’s Award and a Voices of Our Nation’s Arts Foundation Residency.