

The Last Supper

reviewed by [Lil Copan](#) in the [November 2, 2010](#) issue



The New Mexican artist Vicente Telles stands in a line of Southwest religious workers going back to the 1700s. He mixes classic and contemporary understandings comfortably, working with nontraditional forms—such as painting an image of St. Christopher carrying the Christ child as a comic book cover or an image of Jesus the King in a mirrorlike meeting, as on a set of poker cards. Despite his whimsy, each work is punctuated by surprising reverence. The dynamic combination of faithfulness to convention and experimentation with materials can be seen in Telles's signature piece *The Last Supper*. The table scene is treated within a larger theological tradition. Yet rather than working on wood, as is customary, Telles paints on cold-rolled steel. A water-based patina creates a light acid effect on the steel (shown in the detail), and through chemical reaction the effect is reminiscent of early frescoes.

—Lil Copan