

The fine print

Photography by Kirk Gittings

It takes a certain kind of person to live and revel in the instant of the camera shutter. Photos can tell the stories that are as much a part of the land as the mountains are, a silent homage to a place that will be here longer than we could hope to be.

"You could wait years for the perfect light," Kirk Gittings says, noting that his photograph of the Organ Mountains is a picture he's been waiting for a long time. Kirk's images convey his one-second treasures, caught at just the right moment. They make you thank what powers that be for New Mexico.


Born in Alaska Territory in 1950, Gittings has resided in the Land of Enchantment for 45 years. He has spent the majority of his life shooting New Mexico's dramatic features, and capturing them on film has become his life's pursuit.

"New Mexico has a timelessness in the landscape. Being able to find Civil War-dated campsites, looking at the ground and realizing ancient people were walking the same path, it makes me feel humble and blessed," he says.

Gittings began the study of photography at the University of New Mexico and earned a master's of fine arts degree in photography from the University of Calgary. During the summer he's an instructor at UNM, The Art Institute of Chicago and conducts several photographic workshops in Santa Fe. Despite an amazing career and national recognition for his work, Gittings still thinks of himself as a "local guy."

Gitting's work, *Chaco Body*, captures the Anasazi ruins with poetry by V.B. Price. The book received critical acclaim and was commended for its contribution to regional art. Gittings is currently working with Price on another book, *Mythological Landscapes*, as part of a long-term project.

In Louisville, Ky., a retrospective of his images, *Kirk Gittings 30 YEARS: 30 IMAGES*, will show at the Paul Paletti Gallery through June 27. A testimony to his work and the acknowledgement of his passion and sincere love for New Mexico, all but two pictures in the show are images of our state.

"I never felt like I had to leave New Mexico to make a name," Gittings says. "Focus on that what you love and it will carry through." 

—Juan Suarez



Kirk Gittings

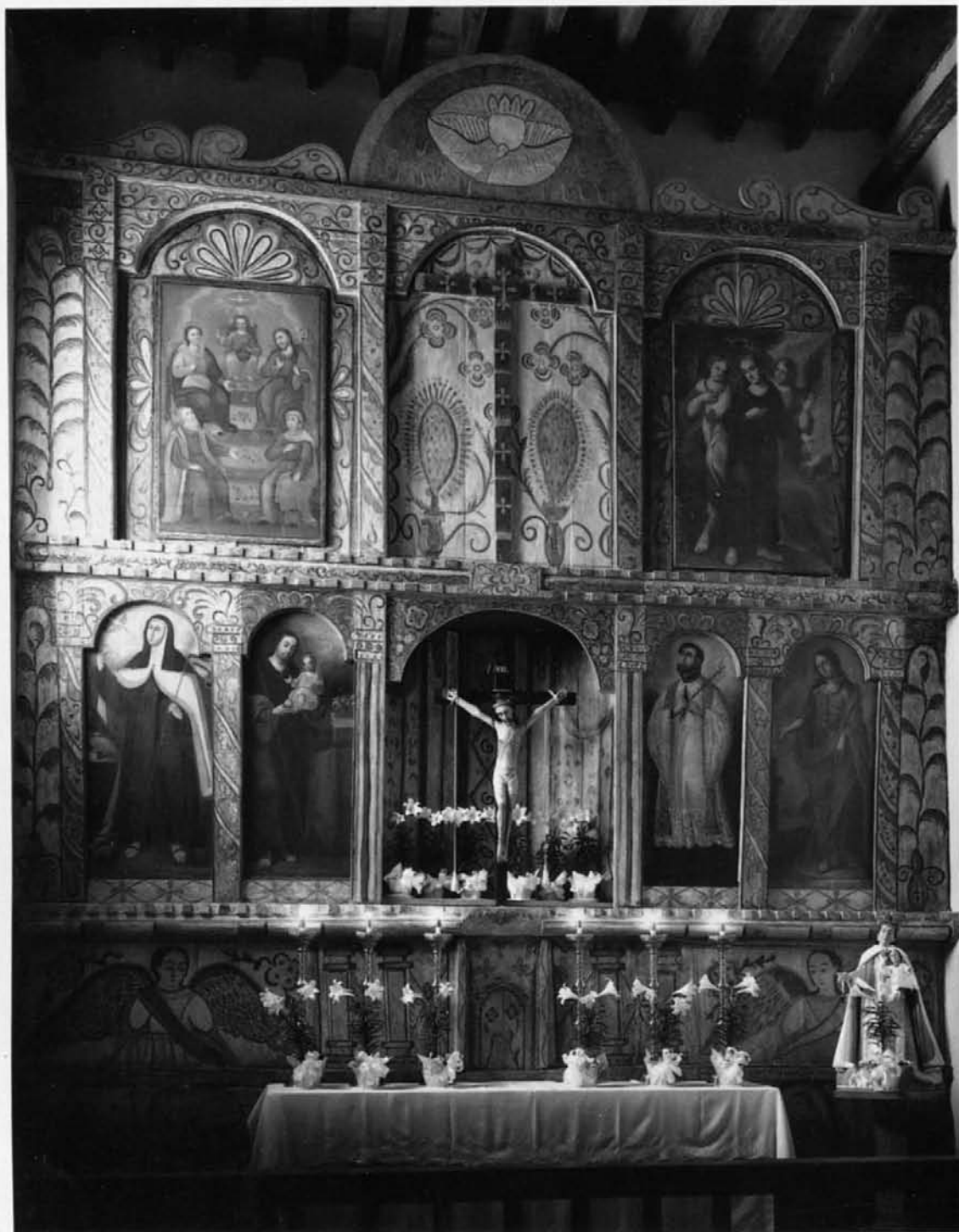




Storm and Organ Mountains



Upper Morada, Abiquiú



Altar screen, Santa Cruz de la Cañada



Grass and basin, Chaco Canyon

Kirk Gittings has been a regular contributor to New Mexico Magazine for over twenty years. If you are interested in New Mexico Magazine, visit their website at:

<http://www.nmmagazine.com/>