



*Passing Angel, 1988.
An old plaster statue
at the Santa Cruz de
la Cañada church in
Santa Cruz, NM,
bathed in morning
light. 16x20 Archival
Pigment Ink Print*

Portrait



of an Artist

Name: Kirk Gittings

Artistic Medium (or media): Traditional, large-format architectural and landscape photography.

Southwest Connection: I've been here almost all my life, except for graduate school, continuously since the third grade.

What do you consider your biggest accomplishment: By far, the recent book about my life and career by Gussie Fauntleroy – *Shelter from the Storm: The Photographs of Kirk Gittings* and the accompanying retrospective exhibit curated by Douglas Fairfield at the Albuquerque Museum.

What do others consider your biggest accomplishment: There is an ironic answer for that. When I was an undergraduate photo student at UNM (1968-72), I dreamed of teaching at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago. In 1978, I made the fateful decision to go into commercial architectural photography, and I let go of that dream. Twenty years later, because of my success in architectural photography, I was invited to be a Visiting Artist and instructor at the school. They have invited me back five times.

Favorite artist - Why: photographers Ansel Adams and Robert Adams, both of whom I knew briefly. These two artists defined a broad poetic vision of the American West from the romantic optimist to the sober pessimist.

Your biggest inspiration: Author V. B. Price, we collaborated on the book *Chaco Body*, my favorite personal project from my long career. V.B.'s dedication to his vision, undaunted by the marketing concerns that haunt most artists, has led him to write a body of work that is both incredibly diverse and critically acclaimed. Yet with all his success he has remained humble and never forgotten his friends and family.

If I wasn't an artist, I'd probably be an : Archeologist

*Photography by
Karen Kuehn*

*Gitting's work can
be seen at the
governors's office
in Santa Fe; Sara
Smith Contemporary
in Corrales and the
Albuquerque Museum
of Art and History.*