

# Art Happenings

## Artist uses his blacksmithing skills to create artwork, that includes desert critters

By Sharon Sullivan

Monticello artist Scott Mitchell says he became a welder in his 20s, for practical reasons before turning to the related field of blacksmithing for purely artistic endeavors. Using a hammer and anvil, Mitchell, 69, crafts snakes out of copper, as well as whimsical lizards, and occasionally spiders. He also makes sculptural wall-hangings and nighttime canyon scene paintings.



You can find Mitchell’s artwork at Moab Made, 82 N. Main St. in Moab and at High Desert Café, 516 N. Main St., in Monticello. Moab Made is a shop that features the works of local artists and artisans.

Mitchell calls his artwork “house jewelry” – some of his pieces include intricate inlay work. They are small, unique works, that are popular with visitors, because they’re small and easy to pack away, he said. There’s a sample of Mitchell’s work at Pagan Mountaineering, 211 N. Main St., where he crafted the business’s door handle in the shape of a snake.

In his nighttime canyon paintings Mitchell plays with the moonlight, by applying multiple thin layers of a glaze that allows the light to flow through differently, he said. His paintings are an acrylic-oil blend, typically. Moab Made has been carrying Mitchell’s work since the shop opened nine years ago.

“Moab Made has been great; it’s perfect for me,” he said. The owner “Rebecca (McAllister) does a really good job,” providing an outlet for local artists.

Artwork at Moab Made is sold on consignment which Mitchell said works well for him because he can determine his own price on items, and placing pieces on consignment allows for more creativity, by offering the opportunity to submit a one-of-a-kind “funky, one-off” type of piece, he said.

Tamar Phillips, Artist liaison for both Moab Made and Arteesian, (a second Moab shop featuring the work of local artisans) said it’s always a treat to open up a new box of creations from Mitchell. Items range from cute little copper twist micro snakes to foot-long uber-detailed, silver inlay snakes, tarantulas and lizards,” she said.

And if snakes aren’t your cup of tea, said Phillips, Mitchell also makes “beautiful hammered copper bracelets, original mini art,



metal-crafted wall art pieces, and even a CD of his own music,” all sold at Moab Made. The CD, titled *Moon House*, is a folk-rock instrumental recording that includes flute, mandolin, guitar and drums.

## Leaving a Trace: An Original Musical Theater Spectacular on the Slickrock!

Tickets are now on sale for **LEAVING A TRACE!** Created by the Moab Theater Project, *LEAVING A TRACE* is a large-scale, site-specific, musical theater production created by local artists that explores Moab’s layered history, changing ecology, and deep-rooted community stories. Performances will be held at the Sand Flats Recreation Area on **September 25, 26, and 28 at 6pm**. Tickets are limited and can be purchased for \$18 each at <https://tinyurl.com/moab-trace>.

Told with humor, heart, and a touch of desert magic, the story follows four playful park rangers who accidentally disrupt the fragile desert ecosystem, unleashing an unforgettable journey through deep time, slickrock potholes, desert town halls, campfire tales, larger-than-life puppets, and ancient rock layers brought to life by spectacular Rock Witches. The show invites audiences to reflect on the traces we leave behind—ecologically, culturally, and spiritually—and asks how we might live in “right relation” with our place and each other. The cast includes over 50 local cast members and

musicians, and is operating under a special recreation permit from the Bureau of Land Management.

**This is not your typical theater production!** The audience will meet at the Slickrock Bike Loop Trailhead in Sand Flats Recreation Area and be guided to six different scene locations. Audience members should expect to walk approximately 1.2 miles on uneven terrain during the course of the 2.5 hour immersive experience. Attendees are invited to bring a blanket or portable chair for enjoying each scene, along with a water bottle, and a headlamp to make their way back to their vehicles once the performance has ended.

If walking this distance or if ticket prices are inaccessible, Leaving a Trace will also hold a FREE, accessible version of the performance at the Red Rock Arts Festival on Saturday, September 27th. See [www.redrockartsfestival.com](http://www.redrockartsfestival.com) for more details. A radio drama version of the production will also be released on KZMU in October 2025.

Moab Theater Project

PRESENTS

LEAVING A TRACE

A Musical Theater SPECTACULAR on the Slickrock

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DETAILS & TICKETS at TINYURL.COM/MOAB-TRACE

In Partnership with Moab Arts and KZMU

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