

Gallery Happenings

Gallery Moab Celebrates Dark Skies in December

by Thea Nordling

Gallery Moab, an artist-owned and operated cooperative gallery, is dedicated to supporting local artists and building community through the arts. We feature original art and hand-made crafts, all created by local artists with deep connections to our unique landscape.

Utah is gifted with some of the finest dark skies in the world, with a high concentration of national and state parks and certified International Dark Sky Parks and Communities. Our canyon country landscape, spectacular by day, is a whole different world, equally stunning, by night. In December we feature the night photography of Robert McKendrick to celebrate the awe-inspiring beauty that spreads through the sky once the sun goes down.



Robert McKendrick

McKendrick describes himself as “a passionate nightscape photographer whose work captures the tranquil beauty of the natural world after sunset.” Featured in the eBook “Milky Way NightScapes,” by Royce Bair, he brings a unique sensitivity to his art, using light to reveal hidden landscapes under the night sky. His dedication to night photography allows him to slow down, embrace stillness, and connect deeply with the landscapes he captures. McKendrick says that photography is more than just an art form; it’s a way to truly see and appreciate the world, honoring the quiet grandeur of nature.



Currently, McKendrick’s work is displayed in Gallery Moab, where he shares his love for the night with a broader audience. This recognition in Moab—a gateway to some of the most breathtaking desert landscapes—holds special meaning for him. Each photograph in his collection reflects his profound appreciation for nature’s silence, untouched beauty, and timelessness, inviting viewers to step into the peaceful moments that often go unseen.

All are invited to a reception Thursday, December 12, 4 – 7 p.m. to meet McKendrick and learn more about the equipment and techniques he has developed for capturing the awesome beauty of the night sky. Enjoy refreshments, and mingle with local artists and art lovers.

Gallery Moab is the perfect place to look for holiday gifts that celebrate nature. Our talented artists and artisans express themselves through many different mediums and styles, including paintings in oil, acrylic, watercolor and pastel, photography, cards, prints, ceramics, wood carvings, metal sculptures, fused glass, fabric creations and jewelry. We offer something to appeal to any taste and budget. One of the artists is always on hand to help you find that one-of-a-kind gift or memento of your vacation. Open Sunday & Monday 12:00 – 3:00 p.m.; Tuesday through Saturday 12:00 – 6:00 p.m. Call 435-220-0891 and we will gladly open by appointment during other hours.

Happy holidays to our community and visitors. Thank you for your encouragement and support this year. Drink a toast to creativity, and join us 2025!



We look forward to your visit!

Gallery Moab
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Visit us on Facebook and Instagram.



Spot the King of Planets

Adapted from an article by Dave Prosper and updated by Kat Troche.

Jupiter is our solar system’s undisputed king of the planets! Jupiter is bright and easy to spot from Earth, helped by its massive size and reflective cloud tops. Jupiter even possesses moons the size of planets: Ganymede, its largest, is bigger than the planet Mercury. What’s more, you can easily observe Jupiter and its moons with a modest instrument, just like Galileo did over 400 years ago.



NASA’s Juno mission captured this look at the southern hemisphere of Jupiter on Feb. 17, 2020. This high-resolution view is a composite of four images captured by the JunoCam imager and assembled by citizen scientist Kevin M. Gill. Credit: NASA, JPL-Caltech, SwRI, MSSS | Image processing by Kevin M. Gill, © CC BY

Jupiter’s position as our solar system’s largest planet is truly earned; you could fit 11 Earths along Jupiter’s diameter, and in case you were looking to fill up Jupiter with some Earth-size marbles, you would need over 1300 Earths to fill it! However, despite its size, Jupiter’s true rule over the outer solar system comes from its enormous mass. If you took all the planets in our solar system and put them together, they would still only be half as massive as Jupiter. Jupiter’s mass has shaped the orbits of comets and asteroids. Its gravity can fling these objects away or draw them in into itself.

Jupiter is easy to observe at night with our unaided eyes. It can be one of the brightest objects in our nighttime skies, bested only by the Moon, Venus, and occasionally Mars. That’s impressive for a planet that is still over 365 million miles (587 million km) away. While the King of Planets has 95 known moons, only the four large moons that Galileo originally observed in 1610—Io, Europa, Ganymede, and Callisto—can be easily observed with



Look for Jupiter near the Eye of the Bull, Aldebaran, in the Taurus constellation on December 15, 2024. Binoculars may help you spot Jupiter’s moons on either side of the planet. Credit: Stellarium Web

modest equipment. Most binoculars will show at least one or two, and small telescopes will show more details like Jupiter’s cloud bands.

NASA’s Juno mission is one of just nine spacecraft to have visited this impressive world. Juno entered Jupiter’s orbit in 2016 to begin its initial mission to study this giant world’s mysterious interior. Juno’s mission has since been extended to include the study of its large moons, and since 2021 the plucky probe, increasingly battered by Jupiter’s powerful radiation belts, has made close flybys of the icy

moons Ganymede and Europa, along with volcanic Io.

Find the latest discoveries from NASA’s missions to Jupiter at science.nasa.gov/jupiter/

NASA’s Night Sky Network (NSN) distributed this article.

The NSN program supports astronomy clubs across the USA dedicated to astronomy outreach. Visit nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov to find local clubs, events, and more!