

Southwest Art Scene

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Las Cruces Museum of Art — 491 N. Main (Downtown Mall). Hours are 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday, plus 5 to 7 p.m. during the

Bat's brother Ed died in gun battle

For nearly a century and a half, we have heard quite a bit about Bartholomew "Bat" Masterson. Yet not so much about his brothers Ed and Jim, who were also well-known lawmen in Dodge City, Kansas. Ed wasn't quite as good with a gun as his brother Bat, a fact that led to his early death.

Bat actually had four brothers and two sisters, raised by Irish parents who moved the family from their original farm in Quebec to various part of the United States, ending up in Wichita, Kansas. Edward was born in 1852, and Bartholomew was born a year later, and James two years after that. The youngest two brothers, George and Tom, never did much to gather any claim to fame, staying on the family farm in Wichita.

In 1872 Bat convinced older brother Ed to leave the boring life of the farm, trying their hand at buffalo hunting. They followed the great herds from Kansas down to the panhandle of Texas, finding adventure enough. Too much adventure for Ed, who returned to the farm for a while. Ed not only later rejoined Bat in Dodge City, but also talked younger brother Jim into accompanying him.

It didn't take long for the brothers to become prominent citizens. Jim became part owner of a saloon/dance hall that became a popular stopping place. Ed, the soft spoken, steadier one of the brothers was appointed assistant marshal of Dodge. Not long after being deputized, Ed got his first action by arresting the town deadbeat, Bobby Gill, for disturbing the peace, probably due to his overindulging in bad whiskey.

Dodge City's mayor, James "Dog" Kelly, (the nickname came from some greyhounds of his that once belonged to George Custer) requested that Ed Masterson be made city marshal. Six months earlier Ed had been an inexperienced deputy. Now by luck and good politicking he was marshal of Dodge City.

The marshal's services were not in much demand until the Texas cowboys finished their cattle drives. At that time of the year his workload increased dramatically. The visiting cowboys, con men, restless soldiers from Fort Dodge and numerous robberies on the streets all made his job very hectic. His brother Bat, who was sheriff of surrounding Ford County, had warned Ed that his easy-going manner and his gentleness would never inspire fear among the swelling population of bad characters in town.

Ed never showed off with his pistol, never feeling the need to. His way was to try to talk any troublemaker into submission. Then on April 9, 1878, about

First Friday Ramble. Information: (575) 541-2137 or las-cruces.org/museums.

Showing **Feb. 1-March 30**: "Dusk to Dusk: Unsettled, Unraveled, Unreal," organized by the Samek Art Gallery at Bucknell University, with works loaned from the Ekard Collection. The exhibit explores human angst in the transition between the 20th and 21st centuries. The

Taking a Look Back

by John McVey Middagh

10:30 p.m., he tried to disarm two drunk cowboys, Jack Wagner and his boss Alf Walker. Never drawing his gun, Ed pushed both cowboys against the wall. Bat had started running across the street to help but his action provided the chance the cowboys needed. Ed was then distracted, turning long enough to give the cowboys time to draw their guns. Wagner fired point-blank into the side of Ed, who stumbled off mortally wounded, dying about an hour later. Bat shot Jack Wagner, who died the next day. Bat shot again, wounding Walker, who was taken back to Texas where he recovered to make another cattle drive to Kansas.

After Ed's death, Mayor Kelly named Charlie Bassett as marshal, making Wyatt Earp, James Earp and Jim Masterson his deputies. Jim Masterson would later become city marshal. Wyatt Earp always served as a deputy while in Dodge.

Ed Masterson may not have been the gunfighter his brother Bat was, and that may have been why the City of Dodge liked him so much. The day after his death all the businesses in town closed and most doors were draped with black cloth. His body laid in state with the Dodge City Fire Company. Many wagons and buggies joined the procession to the "Boot Hill" cemetery, where a choir stood next to his coffin singing, "Lay him low in the clover or the snow; what cares he, for he cannot know." Brother Bat rode alone behind the casket and 60 volunteer firemen in full uniform followed behind him.

Ed was first buried at the well-known "Boot Hill" before being moved to Fort Dodge. Years later all but military personnel were moved to a new city cemetery. Whether Ed's grave was moved is unknown and his gravesite remains unknown.

Jim Masterson remained a lawman the rest of his life, and died at age 39 in Guthrie, Okla. Bat Masterson later achieved fame as a journalist and prize-fighting fan, as well as a participant in some nefarious business ventures, dying in New York City in 1921.

John McVey Middagh is a former saddle shop owner. You can reach him at jmiddagh@yahoo.com.



Ed Masterson

exhibit is made up of 37 works by 28 artists.

Gallery tours are 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. the first and third Saturday of every month.

"Artventurous" free art appreciation activities are 10 a.m. to noon every Saturday.

'Mathematical Imagery in Fractals' — Works by the Mesilla Valley Fractal Artists are featured **Feb. 1-28** at Funky Karma Incense and Tea Shop, 3207 S. Main, as part of "For the Love of Art Month." Hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday. Reception is 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, **Feb. 9**. Information: (575) 933-9797.

Mesilla Valley Fine Arts Gallery — 2470-A Calle de Guadalupe in Mesilla, across from the Fountain Theatre. Hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. Information: (575) 522-2933 or mesillavalleyfinearts.com.

Featured in February are works by photographer Weeden Nichols and graphic designer Mary Zawacki. New to the gallery is painter Jane Peacock.

The gallery will celebrate its 25th anniversary with an open house 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, **Feb. 16**. Four \$25 gift certificates will be given away. Light refreshments served.

Multi-Day Art Workshops — Doña Ana Arts Council offers community art workshops at DAAC Arts & Cultural Center, in Bulletin Plaza, 1740 Calle de Mercado, Suite D. Class size limited; call for times. Registration: (575) 523-6403 or daarts.org.

• "Paint with Depth and Texture in Oil is Tuesday through Thursday, **Feb. 5-7** with artist Krystyna Robbins. Cost: \$420 (\$300 DAAC members).

• "Puppy Love (or Kitty Love): How to Paint Your Pet" is **Feb. 12-14**, with Denver artist Andy Mallen, oil or acrylics. Cost: \$200 (\$160 DAAC members). Space is limited.

NM Watercolor Society exhibit — The society's Southern Chapter hosts its "For the Love of Antique Trains" exhibit through the month of February at Las Cruces Railroad Museum, 351 N. Mesilla. The exhibit features paintings of antique toys and trains. Opening reception is 5 to 8 p.m. Friday, **Feb. 1**. Information: nmwatercolorssociety.org.

Nopalito's Galeria — Las Cruces Arts Association and the Gypsy Sage Artists present

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