

**ARIZONA ARTIST  
ED MELL**

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- Ed Mell was born in Phoenix in 1942.
- He started drawing as soon as he could hold a pencil.
- He was fascinated by his older brother's drawings of World War II combat aircraft and soldiers.
- Mell enjoyed cars and designing model automobiles.
- In high school Mell could usually be found drawing one of his friend's cars or watching car commercials for drawing ideas.

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- Mell graduated from Phoenix College with an Associated Arts Degree.
- Next he attended The Art Center College of Design in Los Angeles to pursue his interest in illustration.
- In 1967, he accepted a position as a junior art director at a major New York advertising firm. However, in only 10 months Mell found that the advertising world smothered his creativity.
- He thought about moving to Los Angeles but his friend, Skip Andrews said there wasn't much work there. Andrews was planning to move to New York. A few months later Mell and Andrews established their own illustration firm, which they named Sagebrush Studios.

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- Sagebrush Studios became an immediate success, with major clients such as Cheerios and RCA, and illustrations appearing in numerous magazines.
- But after three years, Mell was missing Arizona and tired of the fast-paced New York lifestyle and pressures of the advertising business.

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- Mell was offered a job teaching summer classes in silk screening and drawing on the Hopi Reservation back in Arizona.
- When the summer session was complete, he decided to stay in Arizona. A few months later he and Andrews closed Sagebrush Studios.

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- Mell and his younger brother decided to open their own illustration business in Phoenix.
- The Phoenix market for illustration was less than Mell was used to in New York, so during breaks he began sketching landscapes using colored pencils.
- Colored pencils slowly turned into paints and by 1978 Mell was painting the Arizona landscape full time.

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- Throughout the years, Mell has constantly changed the subjects he depicts and the techniques to capture them.
- Beginning specifically with southwest landscapes, he has moved to other southwestern subjects including cowboys, horses, longhorn cattle and cactuses.
- Although best known for his oil paintings, he also creates bronze sculptures. This one called "Jack Knife" is in Old Town Scottsdale.

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- “I was seeing beauty with a fresh eye after five years in LA and five years in New York” Mell said.

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