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**Booth Western Art Museum to Host
8th Annual Southeastern Cowboy Gathering**

Ed Mell: New West Visionary exhibition opening to coincide with annual event

CARTERSVILLE, GA – The Booth Western Art Museum will host the 8th Annual Southeastern Cowboy Gathering, March 10-13, 2011, in Cartersville, GA. Scheduled events include a concert by featured entertainer Asleep at the Wheel; chuck wagon and Dutch oven cooking contests; mandolin, fiddle, guitar and banjo contests; finals of the Georgia Youth Cowboy Poetry Contest; children's activities; and an evening lecture by featured artist Ed Mell. The event will take place at the Booth Western Art Museum and the Grand Theatre, both located in historic downtown Cartersville.

The Gathering begins Thursday, March 10, with an Opening Reception for ***Ed Mell: New West Visionary*** from 5:00 to 7:00 pm. Guests are encouraged to tour the exhibit in the Temporary Exhibition Gallery, as well as enjoy refreshments in the Booth Café. At 7:00 p.m., Mell will present a lecture in the Booth Theatre on his artistic style and career highlights. He will be available to sign copies of the official Gathering poster in the Museum Store following his lecture.

Born and raised in the West, Ed Mell has a true passion for the West and the flora and fauna which make up its beautiful landscapes. He credits artist Maynard Dixon as a major influence in his career, which can be seen in the abstracted forms that often dominate an Ed Mell painting. He is best known for dramatically geometric views of Western vistas, often combined with powerful weather events. However, his work also includes landscape, floral, and figurative subjects that incorporate elements of abstraction and cubism, all of which will be featured in his exhibition at the Booth Museum.

On Friday, March 11, guests are invited to participate in a gallery walk with Ed Mell at 11:00 am or 1:30 pm, as he discusses his exhibit on display at the Museum, ***Ed Mell: New West Visionary***. Also on Friday, at 11:00 am, there will be a lecture and movie clips from the movie *Tombstone* in the Booth Theatre. At 1:30 pm, *My Darling Clementine* will be shown in the Booth Theatre.

Throughout the day Saturday, there will be a variety of events for the entire family. As part of the Southeastern Chuck Wagon Cook-Off, teams of cooks will prepare beans, meat, potatoes, bread and desserts just as they did during the cattle drives of the 1800s. Those interested may purchase tickets in advance for \$12 to sample the menu items. Other activities include a fiddle, mandolin, guitar and banjo contest, adult Cowboy Poetry workshop, and children's activities throughout the Museum.

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A Saturday night concert at the Grand Theatre will feature famed western-swing band, Asleep at the Wheel. The group, which celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2010, has released more than 25 albums over the years and received eight Grammy Awards. Their critically acclaimed musical play *A Ride with Bob* has further catapulted them into popularity, making them much in demand at concert venues and festivals around the country. Tickets for the 7:00 pm evening performance are \$25 for not-yet members and \$20 for Booth Museum members. Members of Asleep at the Wheel will be available to sign CDs and meet fans in the Encore Room adjacent to the Theatre following the show.

The weekend wraps-up Sunday, March 13, beginning with Cowboy Church in the Booth Ballroom at 11:00 a.m. This is a non-denominational church service that will feature cowboy prayers and Western spiritual music. After the service, from Noon to 4:00 p.m., a Dutch Oven Cooking Contest will take place on the Museum's festival grounds. Top cooks will compete for prizes and bragging rights in three categories: bread, main dish and dessert, and will serve samples to the public. Also during this time the Georgia Youth Cowboy Poetry Contest Finals will be held in the Booth Theatre. The top 10 Georgia Youth Cowboy Poetry Contest finalists in four age divisions, representing grades five through twelve, will compete for cash prizes. Children's activities will also be offered throughout the Museum.

The Southeastern Cowboy Gathering is designed to celebrate our rich Western heritage and is a unique opportunity for residents of the Southeast to explore the West without leaving the South. To purchase tickets for any of the weekend's events, simply call the Museum at 770-387-1300 or visit the front desk.

For more information on the 8th Annual Southeastern Cowboy Gathering, visit www.boothmuseum.org and click on Events, or call 770-387-1300.

About the Booth Western Art Museum

The Booth Western Art Museum, an Affiliate to the Smithsonian Institution, is a 120,000 square foot museum located in Cartersville, Georgia, where guests are invited to explore the American West through contemporary Western artwork. The Museum also houses a Presidential Gallery, Civil War art gallery, and Sagebrush Ranch, an interactive children's gallery. Open since August 2003, the Booth Museum is the only museum of its kind in the Southeast and is the second largest art museum in the state of Georgia. To learn more about the Booth Western Art Museum, visit www.boothmuseum.org.

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