

Art dealer, museum activist dies at 56

By Robert Nelson
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Art dealer and influential arts activist Ed Hill died Sunday after an eight-month battle with an inoperable brain tumor. He was 56.

Hill may be best known for his fiery crusade against the El Paso Museum of Art's old management. Beginning 15 years ago, Hill peppered local newspapers with scathing letters concerning the museum, and sat on numerous boards and committees designed to evaluate and redirect the museum.

"Some people thought he was socially abrupt, but most of what he did came from basic honesty and an enormous sensitivity," his friend, Katherine Brennan said. "He was a passionate man

who was passionate about art. He wanted the museum to be the best it could be," she said.



Hill

it came to representing the arts."

Hill also was a nationally respected print-maker and art dealer. He was involved in moving numerous classics, including paintings by Picasso and Goya. He owned the Ed Hill Gallery, which he started in 1971.

Ruben Guerra, executive president of the Friends of the El Paso Museum of Art, the museum's support organization, said, "He was a real tiger when

His most substantial legacy, though, was his work as an arts educator in the city, Brennan said.

"He was an educator of El Pasoans," Brennan said. "He stretched our mental capacity to view art."

After graduating from Austin High School, Hill went on to major in English at UTEP, graduating in 1962. He was co-founder of the Committee for a Better Museum in 1984 and served on the Cultural Planning Council

and the El Paso Museum of Art Citizen's Review Committee.

"We deeply regret his passing," said Becky Duval Reese, director of the museum. "He was an important, vocal force in the community."

Survivors include his parents, Una and Maurice Hill; his brother, Newton; and his son, Matthew.

Funeral will be at 10 a.m. Thursday at the First Presbyterian Church, 1340 Murchison.