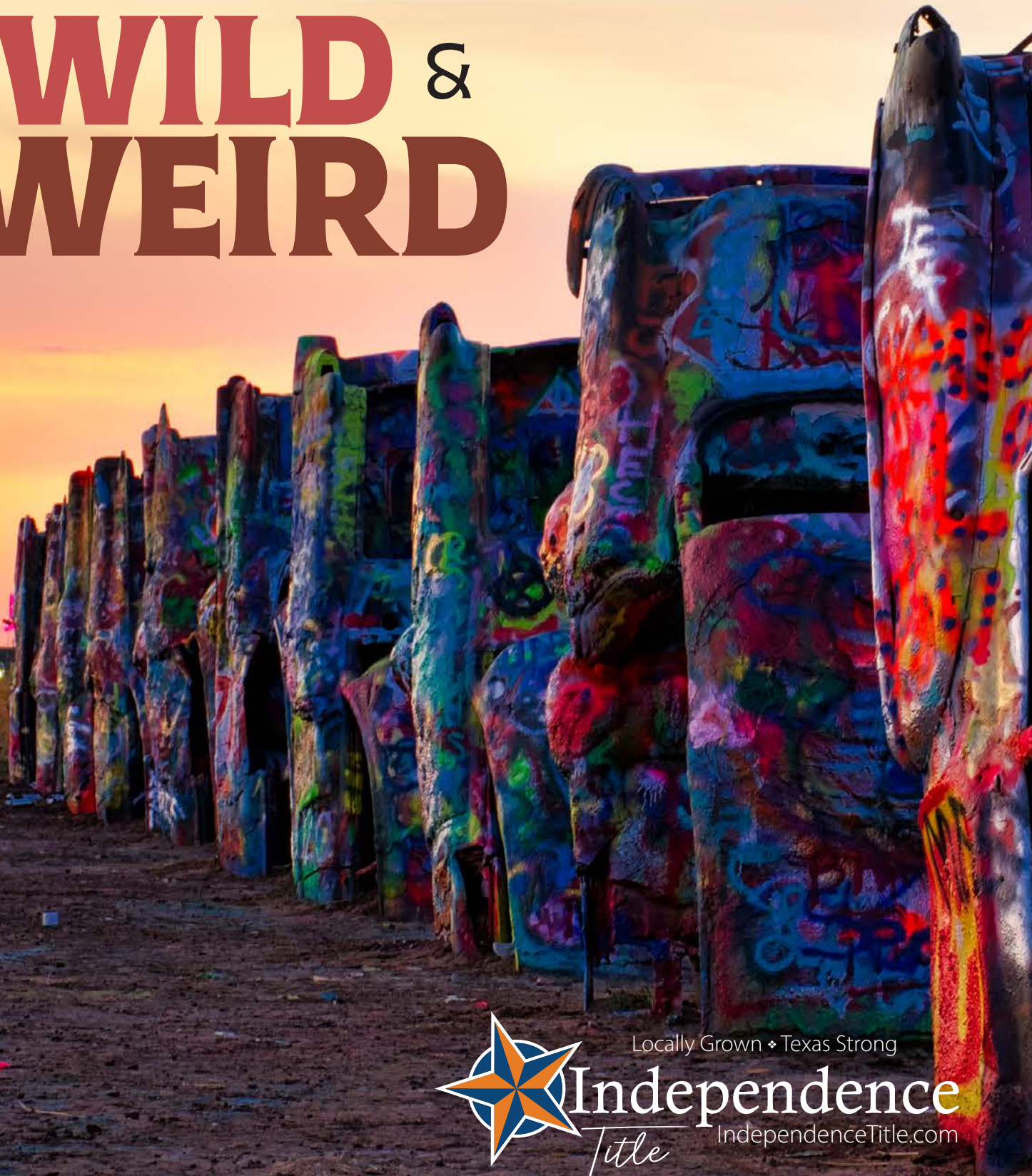


TEXAS
**WILD &
WEIRD**



Locally Grown ♦ Texas Strong

Independence

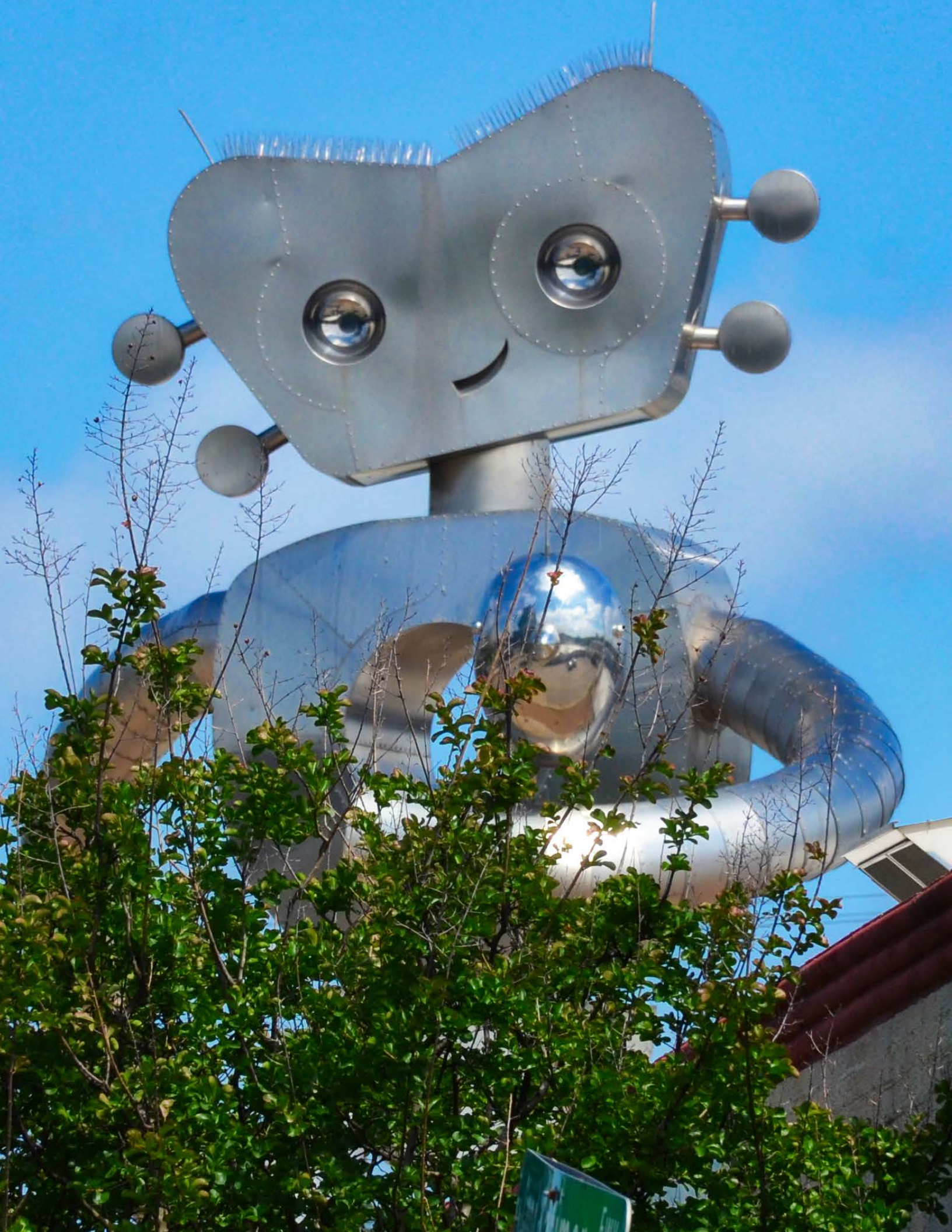
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TEXAS **WILD** & **WEIRD**

The Lone Star State isn't just about cowboys and oil fields - it's a treasure trove of quirky roadside attractions and offbeat wonders. Marvel at bizarre art installations, or explore eerie ghost towns frozen in time. From oversized sculptures of everyday objects to peculiar museums dedicated to the strangest subjects, Texas offers a delightful dose of the weird and wonderful.







ATTRACTIONS

Austin Moonlight Towers Austin, Texas

The Austin moonlight towers were built in the 1890s to hold up large electrical lights and illuminate the city at night before more modern street lighting was available. The 17 remaining moonlight towers are considered iconic landmarks that harken back to Austin's early days as a city.

Beer Can House Houston, Texas

A unique work of folk art, the Beer Can House is an unconventional dwelling completely covered in flattened beer cans, bottles, and assorted beer-related items.

The Berlin Bear San Antonio, Texas

The quirky gift from West Berlin for the 1968 World's Fair still stands in Hemisfair Park.

The Big Tree Rockport, Texas

Thought to be one of the largest live oak specimens in the US, The Big Tree is a beloved local landmark and a must-see destination for visitors to the area.

Bottle Cap Alley College Station, Texas

An alley "paved" with hundreds of thousands of weathered metal bottle caps from surrounding bars and restaurants.

Casa de Azucar El Paso, Texas

"The Sugar House" is a house adorned with an incredibly detailed set of confection-like cement decorations.

Cadillac Ranch Amarillo, Texas

Cadillac Ranch is an iconic public art installation located along Interstate 40 in Amarillo, Texas. It features 10 Cadillacs buried nose first in the ground at an angle corresponding to the Great Pyramid of Giza.

Combine City Amarillo, Texas

In a spoof of Cadillac Ranch, retired combine tractors are sunk at an angle in a remote farm field.

Contrabando Redford, Texas

It is an abandoned movie set in the desert of West Texas. Among the movies filmed here are Dead Man's Walk and Streets of Laredo, both made-for-TV movies from the 'Lonesome Dove' series by Larry McMurtry.

Dietz Doll House Redford, Texas

Louis Dietz built this Victorian playhouse, known as The Dietz Doll House, in 1910 for 5-year old Alice O'Brien, an orphan from New York Foundling Hospital. When she outgrew the little house, it became the entrance to the family home. There, Louis built furniture and other wooden items including rocking horses and animals on wheels, as well as carved fruit that appeared almost real enough to eat! Today, the Doll House exhibits a variety of donated toys representing that turn-of-the-century period and beyond.

Eye Sculpture Dallas, Texas

A 30-foot tall eyeball plopped down in the middle of downtown Dallas.

Hot Wells Hotel & Spa San Antonio, Texas

In the late 19th and through the 20th centuries, Hot Wells served as a bathhouse powered by sulfuric hot springs. Though it no longer serves as a bathhouse due to multiple fires over the years, visitors can still walk the historic grounds.

Jesus in Cowboy Boots Paris, Texas

Erected in 1888, the statue is actually a gravemarker for a Civil War veteran who moved from New York to Texas and became a prominent businessman.

The Kettle House Galveston, Texas

An iconic and somewhat mysterious fixture on the island for decades, the unique building dubbed "The Kettle House" was created by Alabama-born WWII veteran Clayton E. Stokley. You can even book a stay on Airbnb.

Largest Virgin Mary Mosaic in the World San Antonio, Texas

Located at the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center, this mosaic covers the side of a four-story building.

Last Remaining Boundary Marker for the Republic of Texas Carthage, Texas

While the Republic of Texas only lasted ten years, Texans still love to point out that we were once a nation! The last known remaining boundary marker is 10 miles southeast of Deadwood, on Farm to Market Road 31.

The Leaning Tower of Texas **Groom, Texas**

The Leaning Tower of Britten is a leaning water tower that serves as a roadside attraction and decorative item along historic U.S. Route 66 in Groom, Texas.

Lhakhang Cultural Exhibit **El Paso, Texas**

A Bhutanese temple gifted from the isolated Himalayan kingdom is now a surprising cultural gem located at the University of Texas at El Paso.

Man with a Briefcase **Fort Worth, Texas**

This 50-foot-tall, 24,000-pound brushed aluminum-plated icon of a businessman holding a briefcase has towered over Burnett Park since 2002. The sculpture, the work of artist Jonathan Borofsky, captures the essence of worldwide business culture. What it means that the Man With a Briefcase is, in fact, there only in his absence is for the viewer to decide.

McNutt Sculpture Garden **San Antonio, Texas**

This hidden sculpture garden full of Wild West art is one of San Antonio's best-kept secrets.

Miraflores **San Antonio, Texas**

An abandoned, decaying sculpture garden built by an eccentric physician in the 1920s, it now looks more like a forgotten cemetery.

Ms. Pearl **Cedar Creek, Texas**

The world's largest squirrel statue clutches a pecan bigger than your head.

Newby-McMahon Building **Wichita Falls, Texas**

Reportedly the result of a fraudulent investment scheme by a con artist, in the 1920s it received the nickname "The World's Littlest Skyscraper" after being featured in Ripley's Believe it or Not!

Newman's Castle **Bellville, Texas**

Newman's Castle is the private residence of Mike Newman, who owns a bakery in the small town of Bellville. The impressive home has a working drawbridge and trebuchet, a gator-filled moat, a great hall, towers, courtyard, and training grounds. Visitors are taken throughout the entire castle, and encouraged to touch and play with all the curiosities they find.

Old Tunnel Bat Colony **Fredericksburg, Texas**

This abandoned railroad tunnel is home to a colony of three million Mexican free-tail bats. Each night, from May to October, just before and during sunset, the bats pour out of the tunnel in massive droves, spiraling to upwards of 10,000 feet. The bats will travel up to 60 miles in search of insect prey.

The Orange Show **Houston, Texas**

The Orange Show is a folk-art environment—and monumental work of outsider architecture—in Houston's east end. It was built singlehandedly between 1956 and 1979 by the late Jefferson Davis McKissack, a Houston postal worker. The outdoor 3,000-square-foot complex is mazelike in design and includes an oasis, a wishing well, a pond, a stage, a museum, a gift shop, and several upper decks. It's constructed of concrete, brick, steel, and found objects, including gears, tiles, wagon wheels, mannequins, tractor seats, and statuettes.

Ozymandias on the Plains **Amarillo, Texas**

Just off the highway heading south on I-27 out of Amarillo, two gigantic legs in athletic socks can be seen. You wouldn't know it, but they are in fact the shattered likeness of an Egyptian king. The sculpture has been vandalized numerous times, most notably with the addition of socks to the legs. Occasionally the sock vandalism is sandblasted off of the sculpture, but always seems to reappear.

The Palace Light Bulb **Fort Worth, Texas**

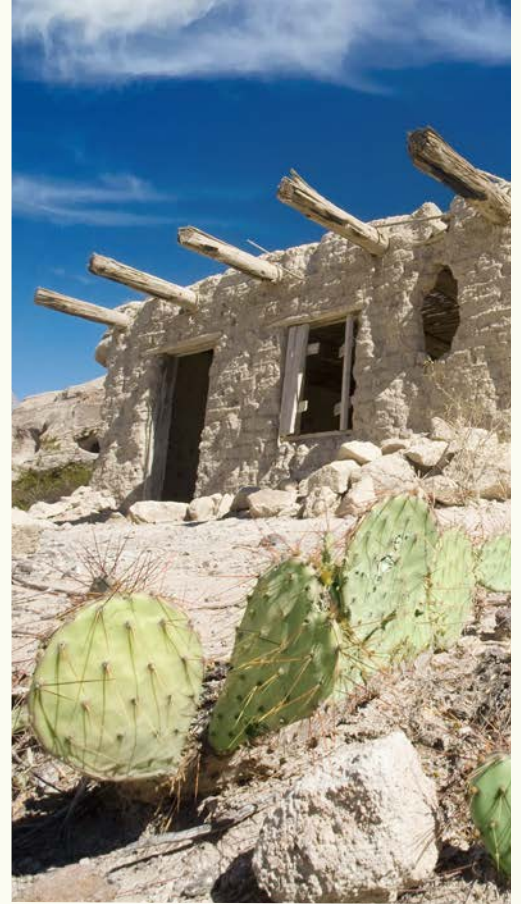
Located in the Stockyards Museum of Fort Worth, the Palace Lightbulb is the world's second-longest burning light bulb.

Robert Bruno's Steel House **Ransom Canyon, Texas**

A wacky, UFO-shaped house 20 minutes outside of Lubbock. The steel abode is the labor of love of Robert Bruno, an unconventional sculptor who handcrafted it from 1973 until his death in 2008.

Stonehenge II **Ingram, Texas**

The late Alfred Shepperd, his friend, and his neighbor Doug Hill initially built this 60% scale replica of Stonehenge on Shepperd's farmland. It represents what Stonehenge might have looked like before weather and erosion toppled some of the original structure in Salisbury, England. Two years after building Stonehenge II, they added a pair of Easter Island moai figures to the site. The entire structure has since moved to its current location in front of the Point Theater and Hill Country Arts Foundation in Ingram, Texas.



Terlingua Ghost Town **Terlingua, Texas**

An abandoned quicksilver mining town surrounded by the Big Bend parks.

Texas Eiffel Tower **Paris, Texas**

In Paris, Texas they have their own Eiffel Tower, it just has a cowboy hat on it! Unveiled in 1995, the 60-foot tall replica monument was built by a local iron union, the Boiler Makers Local #902.

The Texas Woofus **Dallas, Texas**

A mythical chimera was first sculpted in 1936 as a mix of the main animals of Texas livestock. Originally created in 1936 for the Texas Centennial Exposition in Dallas, the Woofus features the mane and neck of a horse, a turkey tail, a pig body, duck wings, a sheep's head, and, of course, a pair of Texas longhorns.



Thanks-Giving Square Dallas, Texas

A serene temple with stunning stained glass. Visitors from all faiths are welcome to enter the chapel, which also hosts intimate prayer services, concerts, weddings, and special events. The Hall of Thanksgiving, which is below the chapel, tells the story of the American Thanksgiving tradition, and you can see artifacts on display like the Book of Prayers and Presidential Proclamations.

The Traveling Man Dallas, Texas

A trio of three statues in the Deep Ellum neighborhood that tell the story of a giant robot, The Traveling Man.

VW Slug Bug Ranch Texas Panhandle

Just a few miles east of Amarillo, Texas, and its celebrated Cadillac Ranch, travelers may stumble upon a much smaller and lesser-known installation created with five now-considerably-decayed Volkswagen beetles. The cars are partially buried at approximately 45-degree angles, their noses facing downward into the dirt, left to disintegrate over time.

World's Largest Cowboy Boots San Antonio, Texas

In 2016, the Guinness Book recognized the giant pair of "ostrich skin" boots as the world's largest cowboy boot sculpture. While everything might not be bigger in Texas, this sculpture certainly is.

World's Largest Killer Bee Hidalgo, Texas

In October of 1990, the first colony of Africanized "killer bees" was found just outside Hidalgo, Texas. Though their unwelcome arrival into the United States set the media abuzz with panic, the southern Texas city had an unusually sweet reaction. Hidalgo was the only place that honored their arrival with a bit of fanfare. Rather than shy away from the sting of all the bad press, the city's mayor decided to celebrate its connection with the dreaded insects by erecting a 2,000-pound, lifelike statue of a massive Africanized honey bee. The city even sells posters and postcards that feature the feared bug.

World's Largest Pecan Seguin, Texas

This 16-foot-long nut sits in all its glory by the Texas Agricultural and Heritage Center, proving to visitors that everything is bigger in Texas.

World's Largest Spur Lampasas, Texas

This giant spur, made of steel, copper, and iron, weighs about 10,000 pounds. It stands 35 feet high and 20 feet wide and is placed on a concrete slab weighing 40,000 pounds. At night, neon lights outline the rowel at the top of the spur.

World's Longest Car Wash Katy, Texas

At 255 feet—just 15 yards shy of an entire football field—the massive car wash at the Buc-ee's convenience store in Katy, Texas, is truly the leader of lathering and the sorcerer of scrubbing.



MUSEUMS

Adrian E. Flatt, M.D. Hand Collection Dallas, TX

This collection of bronze hands comes from astronauts, presidents, baseball greats, and more.

Barney Smith's Toilet Seat Art Museum The Colony, TX

The Barney Smith Toilet Seat Art Museum showcases the life's work of Barney Smith, who created over 1400 art pieces out of toilet seats over many decades.

Boston Terrier Museum Floydada, TX

The museum opened in 2007, brimming with collectibles and images of nothing but Boston terriers. Porcelains, walking sticks, books, vintage ads, trophies, Christmas ornaments, curtains, doorstops, pull-toys, and paintings all jam an old abandoned pharmacy building in downtown Floydada, in honor of the little tuxedoed dog.

Buckhorn Saloon & Museum San Antonio, TX

Just two blocks from the Alamo, it features one-of-a-kind animal exhibits, a historic saloon, café, gift shop and the Texas Ranger Museum.

Devil's Rope Museum McLean, TX

Kept in what used to be a brassiere factory, the Devil's Rope Museum is an unusual collection of barbed wire, fencing tools, and ranching heritage containing pieces from private wire collectors, extensive research material regarding more than 450 barbed wire patents, and artifacts relating to the Texan stretch of Route 66. The exhibits include samples of historical documents and photos, barbed wire sculpture, and more than 2,000 samples of the variations found by collectors.

Dr Pepper Museum Waco, TX

The museum, listed in the National Register of Historic Places as the "Home of Dr Pepper," has three full floors of exhibits, a gift store filled with Dr Pepper memorabilia, and a working old-fashioned soda fountain.

Museum of the Weird Austin, TX

Artist-entrepreneur Steve Busti created the museum, located in the back of his store, the "Lucky Lizard." It exhibits many of the same types of curiosities one might have encountered in a turn-of-the-century dime museum, such as a Feejee mermaid, a Cyclops pig, a hand of glory (supposedly the dried and pickled hand of a hanged man), and a two-headed.

Museum of the Gulf Coast Port Arthur, TX

Relying solely on donated and some loaned items, currently around 35,000 in all, the museum is a treasure trove of local history. It touches upon everything from prominent musicians, actors, and sports legends from the southeast Texas and southwest Louisiana region to the cannibalistic practices of the area's early inhabitants. It offers hands-on educational resources for the young and young at heart, as well as displays of seashells, carved ivory, and local fauna.

National Museum of Funeral History Houston, TX

The National Museum of Funeral History contains a collection of artifacts and relics that aim to "educate the public and preserve the heritage of death care."

Old Time Wooden Nickel Company San Antonio, TX

Inside the museum, visitors can see original wood nickel printing presses, related tools and antiques, and hundreds of wooden nickels on display. Some date back to 1948, when Elbee Co. first opened its doors and started manufacturing wooden nickels as novelty items.

Texas City Museum Texas City, TX

Inside, you will find displays on all aspects of the history of Texas City, a port town on the coast of Galveston Bay. The spacious museum includes an exhibit on the Civil War steam ferryboat, the USS Westfield, an authentic Civil War cannon, pirate memorabilia, and a display on the pilots of the 1st Aero Squadron, created in Texas City in 1913. The collection also chronicles famous Texas City residents, from musicians to world record holders, and landmark events such as the disastrous Texas City explosion of 1947, the largest industrial accident in U.S. history.

The Petroleum Museum Midland, TX

The Petroleum Museum is a bastion of all things oil, from the Petroleum Hall of Fame to the largest collection of oil rigs in the world.

The Salt Palace Grand Saline, TX

Constructed entirely of rock salt, the Salt Palace houses a small museum that includes salt mining memorabilia, photographs, and a film of the Morton Salt mining operations 750 feet underground.

Million Barrel Museum Monahans, TX

The Million Barrel Museum's main attraction, located in Monahans, is its cement oil tank, which is the size of three football fields. Built in the late 1920s during a big oil boom in the region, the reservoir was designed to store the mass quantities of crude coming in from the oilfields in an era with few pipelines or existing oil tanks.





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