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# Cities and Towns Define Themselves with Public Art

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Small towns in America look a lot alike, but if you've ever been to [Fort Stockton, Texas](#), you'd remember it. That's because you'll find "the world's largest roadrunner" there. A roadrunner is a bird -- a ground-based cuckoo that prefers to skitter across the desert, rather than fly. This one measures 3.5 meters tall and 7 meters long from his beak to the tip of his tail. He even has a name: "Paisano Pete." Naturally, you see lots of little Paisano Petes as souvenirs in gift shops around town.

Creations like Pete are not official symbols. They are informal, artistic, even humorous emblems of their towns that we enjoy and remember. There's the big building in High Point, North Carolina, that's painted like a giant chest of drawers. And carved codfish all over Cape Cod, Massachusetts.

On the sidewalks of Binghamton, New York, you'll see beautifully crafted and painted carousel horses, a tribute to the merry-go-rounds that were built there. The gritty little steel city of Steubenville, Ohio, boasts several murals with images of Dean Martin. The late singer and movie star was born in Steubenville. On the streets of politically attuned Washington, D.C., you still see painted elephants -- the Republican symbol -- and donkeys -- for Democrats -- from an artistic fling of a couple of years ago. For less clear reasons, Chicago for a time was a city of painted cows, Baltimore of painted fish, and Seattle of painted pigs.

And now the seashore town of Hermosa Beach, California, is making art out of its sewer covers, embedding sunbursts and ocean waves in cast iron alongside the word "sewer." Who would have guessed that a big cement bird and a sewer lid could be tourism magnets?