The Bryan Collection, one of the world’s largest collections of historical artifacts, documents, and artwork relating to Texas and the American West was assembled by J.P. and Mary Jon Bryan, the collection spans more than 12,000 years, with pieces ranging from ancient Native American cultural artifacts to modern twenty-first century objects. With approximately 70,000 items in total, the collection includes 20,000 rare books; more than 30,000 documents in Spanish, German, French, and English; three dozen saddles; over 250 antique firearms; several hundred Spurs; a large collection of fine art, religious art, folk art, and portraits; exceedingly rare maps and artifacts, such as “cowboy” chaps; Native American stone tools and arrowheads; and a Spanish mission bell. The Bryan Museum presents a chronological history of Texas and the American West with a special emphasis on the Spanish influences in the region.

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

• **Mid-18th century hand-held fan** celebrating the LaSalle Expedition to establish a colony on Matagorda Bay. Verso features Guillaume de L’Isle’s 1718 map of Louisiana and Texas.

• **Published journal of Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca**, who was shipwrecked on Galveston Island. This journal is the second edition published in 1555. It is the first printed book about Texas.

• **1700s mother-of-pearl and tortoise shell chest** that carried the first Spanish land grants to California. The silver lock plate bears the coat of arms for the Bourbon monarchs of Spain.

• **Crucifix that belonged to Emperor Maximilian I of Mexico**. Given to Emperor Maximilian before his journey to Mexico by Pope Pius IX. It remained in his possession until he prayed with it before his execution.

• **18th century painting of Mater Dolorosa (Our Lady of Sorrows)**. Painted on a forty-pound slab of copper, it is wonderful example of the painters of the Mexican Renaissance.
KEY ARTIFACTS

- **Arms and armor used by Conquistadors** from the 15th and 16th centuries.

- **18th Century Spanish Mission Bell**

- **Personal effects of Stephen F. Austin** including his personal dictionary from 1824, calling card bearing his name, and his cattle horn powder flask.

- **Wall of original land grants from Mexico and the Republic of Texas.** This collection includes two of the few land grants awarded to women during this era.

- **1813 ammunition mold found near the site of the Alamo.** Engraved with the date and Spanish markings, this mold may have been used in the Battle of Medina.

- **Receipt signed by William Barret Travis.** Signed for goods received at the Alamo just three days before the siege began.

- **1847 Colt Walker Percussion Pistol**, serial number 38. Stamped with “Company B” in four different locations, this revolver was used by the Texas Mounted Soldiers in the Mexican American War.

- **Wall of Texian Loan Documents**, all signed by Stephen F. Austin in his capacity as a Commissioner of Texas. These documents were used to raise funds for the newly formed Republic of Texas.

- **The “Sword that Captured Santa Anna”**. Joel Robison’s U.S. Army Pattern 1832 Artillery Foot Short Sword that he carried when he, and a small group of men, captured Mexican President/General Santa Anna following the Battle of San Jacinto.
KEY ARTIFACTS

• Santa Anna’s Walking Cane featuring reclining nude figure of Bacchus, God of wine in Roman mythology, on a detachable pommel, which reveals a glass vial with cork stopper when removed. Also has a steel blade embedded in cane’s shaft.

• 1909 General Sam Houston Gold Medal presented to Alphonso Steele, survivor of the Battle of San Jacinto. It is one of only two ever made.

• Plan of the City of Houston commissioned by the Allen Brothers in 1836 from Tom and Gail Borden. The brothers printed 36 of these plans to send to potential investors and developers. This copy was a gift to General Sam Houston. Only three copies have survived.

• Jefferson Davis’ 1851 Colt Navy Revolver. This gun was the personal side arm of the Confederate President.

• Ornate silver trowel and case presented to William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody in 1895 in England during the run of his famous wild west show.

• Personal items belonging to Vivian White, one of the most famous cowgirls of all time. She competed in professional rodeos as a bronc rider and was the first woman to be inducted into the Cowboy Hall of Fame.

• Black Stelzig saddle with silver accents by Ed Bohlin. Made in Houston, Texas in the early 1950s, it features elaborate silver work and has beautiful tapaderos with silver ornamentation.

• Mexican pitiado saddle built for the former President of Mexico, José Lopez Portillo. It features elaborate decorative stitching, silver accents, and two large tufts of raw angora wool.