



SOLDIER STORY

photograph by Shannon Stoney

The site of the Battle of San Jacinto, where Texas won its independence, is more historically significant than the Alamo. But while San Antonio's hallowed ground features cobblestones and a mission bell, Houston's landmark shares the skyline with the cracking towers and gas flares of petrochemical plants off of the Pasadena Freeway. The site of Mexican dictator Santa Ana's capture is tucked in between a paper mill and a big pile of carbon. Instead of competing with the industrial infrastructure, this commemoration takes advantage of it. A mural of Sam Houston and Texas soldiers graces the side of a huge storage tank in a pragmatic gesture that points to a larger truth: Wars are fought not for glory but for the control of natural resources.

—Christof Spieler