



Ripley's Believe It or Not acquires dragon made of 272,000 matchsticks

ORLANDO, Fla. —There be a dragon at the Ripley Entertainment warehouse in Orlando.

This dragon doesn't breathe fire, but it is made out of something that makes fire.

Standing 5 feet tall and weighing 50 pounds, the two-headed dragon is made of 272,000 matchsticks.

"Making anything out of matchsticks is pretty strange, pretty weird," said Edward Meyer, Ripley Entertainment's vice president of exhibits and archives. "And it belongs in a Ripley's Believe It or Not museum."

The dragon is the newest addition to the Ripley's Believe It or Not collection.

The wooden sculpture, which has a 10-foot wingspan, is the work of Patrick Acton, a master matchstick artist from Iowa. Acton spent 10 months and about 2,000 hours making the two-headed dragon, which also lights up and moves when it is triggered by a sensor. The dragon is made of matchsticks and 9 gallons of glue.

"The way you make a dragon out of matchsticks is you take two matchsticks, you glue them together and you have it started," Acton said.



Acton has been making matchstick art for more than 40 years. He's made matchstick versions of the Space Shuttle Challenger, the Twin Towers and the U.S. Capitol building.

For the dragon, Patrick started with the most difficult part first: the two heads, then the muscle tone in the legs.

"The rest was pretty easy," Acton said.

Ripley's hopes to display the dragon at Ripley's Believe It or Not location in Orlando. Then, it's off to China, Meyer said.



"The Ripley aspect is that it has two heads and it's made of matchsticks," Meyer said. "Where else are you going to find a two-headed dragon?"