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Bullock Museum celebrating 15 years in the heart of Texas

Award-winning museum to publish new book on Texas history

MAY 26, 2016 (AUSTIN, TX) — For 15 years, millions of visitors from all over the world have discovered Texas history through exhibitions, programs and films at the Bullock Texas State History Museum, located in downtown Austin, Texas. On June 5, 2016, the museum will commemorate 15 years in the heart of Texas with a special public celebration featuring free admission, live music and fun family activities from noon to 5 p.m. Special membership offers, unique events and a soon-to-be published book on Texas history are highlights of the ongoing celebration.

The Bullock Museum has experienced tremendous growth due to an increasingly robust schedule of exhibitions, artifact installations, films and education programs. Last year, the museum had a record-breaking, award-winning year. More than half a million people visited the state's official history museum, which garnered statewide and national recognition through numerous prestigious awards for the launch of both the highly anticipated La Belle shipwreck exhibition and a new website featuring the Texas Story Project.

"This is an incredibly special time for the Bullock Museum," Director Dr. Victoria Ramirez said. "In addition to extraordinary growth in attendance, the museum is experiencing a renaissance in many ways. Renovations to the café, store, first floor of exhibitions and the IMAX® Theatre are planned over the next two years. Programs, film offerings and exhibitions are expanding. The museum is truly re-envisioning itself."

La Belle: The Ship That Changed History, an exhibition produced by the Bullock Museum last year featured an



The Bullock Texas State History Museum is celebrating 15 years in the heart of Texas this year. The museum has experienced extraordinary growth in attendance, programs, films and exhibitions. Details at TheStoryofTexas.com/15.

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in-gallery, live-action rebuild of the remaining portion of French explorer Robert La Salle's ship that sank off the coast of Texas in 1686. Now a permanent centerpiece of the museum's Texas History Galleries, the shipwreck has been featured in national and international print, online and television news media. It earned both the Texas Association of Museums President's Award and the Local History Leadership in History Award of Merit from the American Association for State and Local History.

Also in the last year, the museum added an online Texas story archive called the Texas Story Project to its website, TheStoryofTexas.com. The project won the Texas Association of Museums Mitchell A. Wilder Publication Design Award and the American Alliance of Museums Gold Muse Award for online presence.

"We know that all Texans have a story, and the museum is collecting them through an online, living archive," Ramirez said. "Not only native Texans, but anyone who has been inspired by Texas, can log on and share their piece of history. We have had entries from every corner of the state. Some will make you laugh. Some will make you cry. All will make you appreciate the diversity and richness of Texas culture."

In the coming year, the Bullock Museum will feature special exhibitions such as *State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda*, *Common Ground: The Music Festival Experience* and *Pride and Joy: The Texas Blues of Stevie Ray Vaughan*, and will host a premier national collection when *American Flags* is on view in late 2016. The museum's IMAX® Theatre will install new technology, and family programming will be expanded through a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

"We are really excited about this year," Ramirez said. "The museum will explore the power of propaganda, celebrate the life and work of a Texas music icon and will have the first theater in the state to feature IMAX® with Laser technology."

The anniversary offered an opportunity to honor some of the nearly 1,000 members who joined during the museum's inaugural year and are still members today. A special open house for members, artifact lenders and donors was held May 13, 2016. In addition to membership support and ticket revenue, the Bullock Museum's exhibitions and education programs are supported by private donors to the Texas State History Museum Foundation.

"The museum is fortunate to have so many longtime supporters. Many people don't realize that much of the Bullock's operating revenue comes from earned and private sources. We are making many new connections as well, which will allow us to expand offerings for the public in the future," Ramirez said.

A highlight of the Bullock's anniversary commemoration is the publication of a premier book of the most significant Texas artifacts spanning 4,000 years of history. *Seeing Texas History: The Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum* will be published by University of Texas Press and will be available in November. Compiled and edited by Director Dr. Victoria Ramirez, the book is a rich treasury of popular and important artifacts from some of the 50-plus special exhibitions that have been on view at the museum over the last 15 years.

Named for the state's 38th Lieutenant Governor, Bob Bullock, who championed the preservation and exhibition of Texas history, the museum honors Bullock's vision with three floors



Construction of the state's official history museum was completed in 2001 and the Bullock Museum opened to the public in April of that year.

of gallery space featuring original artifacts, a dynamic schedule of exhibitions, two theaters and a vibrant film and program schedule that celebrates Texas history and culture.

The June 5th event is a special H-E-B Free First Sunday for the Bullock Museum with a celebration featuring live music, hands-on activities, and sweet treats. Visitors can encounter characters from Texas's past in the galleries, take part in

the museum's Butterfly Project, and enjoy games for all ages. The Lone Star Plaza will feature live musical performances by Rosie Flores at noon and Don Leady and His Rockin' Revue at 1:45 pm.

Find out more about the history of the Bullock Museum and 15th-anniversary events and programs at TheStoryofTexas.com/15.

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H-E-B Free First Sundays presented by H-E-B. Support for the Bullock Museum's exhibitions and education programs provided by the Texas State History Museum Foundation.

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ABOUT THE BULLOCK MUSEUM

The Bullock Texas State History Museum includes three floors of exhibitions, IMAX® and 4D special-effects theaters, a café and museum store. The Museum collaborates with more than 700 museums, libraries, archives and individuals to display original historical artifacts and host exhibitions that illuminate and celebrate Texas history and culture. For more, visit TheStoryofTexas.com or call (512) 936-8746.

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