

Exhibition exploring early inhabitants of Texas unveiled at Texas State History Museum

Becoming Texas: Our Story Begins Here explores more than 16,000 years of Texas history

DECEMBER 10, 2018 (AUSTIN, TX) — The Bullock Texas State History Museum in Austin, Texas, unveiled today a groundbreaking and comprehensive original exhibition that utilizes the most contemporary research to reconsider when the story of Texas began. *Becoming Texas: Our Story Begins Here* explores more than 16,000 years of history on the land we now call Texas.

"We're so excited to bring the history of Texas alive through this dynamic and interactive long-term exhibition," said Bullock Museum Director Margaret Koch. "We're very grateful to all of those who have supported the project through the years, including the citizens of Texas and our incredible Texas State History Museum Foundation, whose members worked tirelessly to find funding for this incredible experience."

Becoming Texas begins with a small stone weapon discovered at the Gault archaeological site north of Austin in 2011 that challenges traditional ideas of when humans first arrived in the Americas. As the exhibition moves visitors through thousands of years of human habitation, they explore the seasonal lives of American Indian tribes, hear the languages of early inhabitants, touch objects created specially for the Bullock Museum by indigenous artists, and understand what it took to survive and provide food for a family in early Texas through multimedia experiences.

One-of-a-kind artifacts gathered from across the country highlight the cultural interactions between American Indian groups and Europeans after their arrival in what we now call Texas.



Becoming Texas explores more than 16,000 years of Texas history through rare artifacts, original multimedia experiences, and hands-on interactives for all ages.

Gold and silver, rare maps, recently restored mission gates, alongside paintings and historic documents, tell of early relationships between American Indians and Spaniards. *Becoming Texas* also demonstrates early French ambitions in Texas, marking the first time the unique 300-year-old French shipwreck *La Belle*, excavated off the Texas coast, is on view alongside thousands of artifacts recovered from its hull.

Through early maps and documents, including the original American copy of the Adams-Onís Treaty signed by John Quincy Adams establishing the northeastern border of Texas, visitors witness the global politics and shifts in power that dramatically

changed relationships between people and their environment. These artifacts combine with interactive games and an immersive landscape theater to give visitors a sense of what life on the ground was really like before we became the Texas of today. Personal accounts and artifacts telling the stories of the modern-day descendants of early Texans conclude the exhibition, connecting these early inhabitants to the generations of Texans who followed.

“Our understanding of the history of Texas is always changing with each new discovery. It’s been influenced by who records it, and what memories are passed down through generations. In this exhibition, you’ll see how the people of the past, from so many diverse cultures, often faced the same challenges we do,” said Koch. “You’ll witness the stories of tragedy, resilience, combat, and alliances that set the foundation for the state we would become. The amazing Story of Texas is a global one, a human one, and through the artifacts gathered in this gallery, we hope visitors find the stories of their ancestors.”

For more information about the Bullock Texas State History Museum or *Becoming Texas: Our Story Begins Here*, visit TheStoryofTexas.com or call (866)369-7108.

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The Bullock Texas State History Museum is a division of the Texas State Preservation Board. Additional support for educational programming provided by the Texas State History Museum Foundation.

ABOUT THE BULLOCK MUSEUM

The Bullock Texas State History Museum includes three floors of exhibitions, IMAX® and 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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