

Texas museum wins national awards for exhibition, community art installation focused on propaganda

Project examined effects of WWII felt at home in Texas

JUNE 28, 2017 (AUSTIN, TX) — The American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) has awarded the Bullock Texas State History Museum top honors for two related projects that focused on the effects of historical and modern propaganda in Texas. Earlier this month, AASLH announced it had awarded two Leadership in History Awards to the museum – one for the Bullock’s original exhibition, [On the Texas Homefront](#), and the other for [The Butterfly Project](#), a large-scale installation comprised of thousands of unique butterflies made by school children from all over the state.

Now in its 72nd year, the AASLH Leadership in History Award is the most prestigious recognition for achievement in the preservation and interpretation of state and local history. According to the organization, winners represent the best in the field and provide leadership for the future of state and local history.

On the Texas Homefront, a 2,150-square foot exhibition developed, curated, and designed by the Bullock Museum opened Sept. 17, 2016 and remained on view through Jan. 8, 2017. The effects of Nazi propaganda were not isolated to Europe. Far-reaching implications were felt in Texas, and the exhibition connected the state to world-changing events that took place both here and abroad in the 1930s and 1940s. Borrowing from local and national collections, the museum drew a direct correlation between the historical narrative and modern-day events through artifacts, photographs, artwork, oral history interviews, documents, and local, national, and international news media accounts. The exhibition included a reflective space dedicated to creating messages of hope inspired by The Butterfly Project, a companion art installation in the museum’s lobby.



The *On the Texas Homefront* exhibition examined the effects of propaganda in Texas during WWII. It included a reflective space dedicated to creating messages of hope inspired by The Butterfly Project, a companion art installation in the museum’s lobby.



The Butterfly Project was the result of an educational program launched by the Bullock Museum in conjunction with St. Edward's University that included the work of hundreds of families and thousands of children across the state of Texas.

"We're honored to receive this recognition for our work examining the local impact of Nazi extremism and Texans' response," Interim Bullock Museum Director Margaret Koch said. "Having planned it far in advance of the 2016 evolving political climate, the outstanding response from more than 70,000 visitors who experienced the exhibition proves history is always relevant. We're also very grateful to our advisors at the Texas Genocide and Holocaust Commission and the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum."

The Butterfly Project was the result of an educational program launched by the museum in conjunction with St. Edward's University that included the work of hundreds of families and more than 5,000 students from dozens of schools across the state.

The project was inspired by "The Butterfly," a 1942 poem written by a young man in a concentration camp, and called upon children to take a stand against intolerance by creating a uniquely beautiful butterfly. Using art as a starting point, the museum provided teachers and parents with the tools to have conversations with children about issues of tolerance, morality, and shared responsibility — ultimately creating thousands of vibrant examples of how words of hope, change, and love can counter words of hatred.

Utilizing the power of art to open conversation, the museum provided guidance for parents and teachers when talking with children about Nazi propaganda and the Holocaust. Connecting past events and contemporary issues such as intolerance, bullying, and hate speech, the project highlighted how individual actions can make a significant impact on larger issues.

"This beautiful installation at the entrance to the museum was designed by students of St. Edwards University in concert with museum staff and provided an inspirational message of freedom and hope to our visitors and the thousands of children who participated," Koch said.

The AASLH awards program began in 1945 to establish and encourage standards of excellence in the collection, preservation, and interpretation of state and local history throughout the United States. Presentation of the awards will be made in September during the organization's 2017 annual meeting, which will be held in Austin for the very first time.

For more information about the Bullock Museum's exhibitions, programs and events, visit TheStoryofTexas.com or follow @BullockMuseum on Facebook and Twitter.

Support for the Bullock Museum's exhibitions and education programs provided by the Texas State History Museum Foundation.

ABOUT THE BULLOCK MUSEUM

The Bullock Texas State History Museum, includes three floors of exhibitions, Laser IMAX® and multisensory 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](https://www.thestoryoftexas.com) or call (512) 936-8746.

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