

Nacogdoches researchers prepare to repatriate Caddo artifacts

BY KATE ARCHER KENT

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A research associate at the Center for Regional Heritage Research at Stephen F. Austin State University is wrapping up 3-D scanning and analysis of dozens of prehistoric Caddo artifacts that will be returned to the Caddo Nation this fall. At least 130 museums have human remains and funerary objects affiliated with the Caddo Nation of Oklahoma, according to its cultural preservation office.



Zachary Selden, Ph.D., creates 3-D renderings of Caddo bowls and jars using a high-tech imaging device.

SFA's Zachary Selden is working closely with the Caddo Nation on 70 vessels that are about to be repatriated. Selden says the artifacts are from SFA's archeology department and the Gregg County Historical Museum in Longview. He's creating a growing virtual repository of Caddo artifacts.

"What we're trying to do is create a database of those vessels because at some point they will be repatriated, put back in the ground, and made unavailable for study," Selden said.

The Caddo Nation's Historic Preservation office didn't respond to interview requests. Selden said he's collaborating with the office to ensure that the collections are thoroughly and respectfully documented before they are handed over and reburied in a private ceremony.

"The Caddo have been incredible as far as a colleague in this entire process. Since we're using a non-destructive or non-invasive approach, I think they're more amenable to that," Selden said.

Selden submitted a grant last week to be able address another Caddo collection at SFA that could be added to virtual artifact repository that he's creating.

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