

Media Relations

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UNH and Currier Museum of Art Celebrate 400 Years of Shakespeare, Featuring Exhibition of 1623 First Folio



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The University of New Hampshire, in conjunction with the Currier Museum of Art in Manchester, is sponsoring a series of events in the winter and spring of 2016 to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the death of William Shakespeare. Key among the activities is an exhibition of an original First Folio of Shakespeare's plays, published in 1623, at the Currier Museum from April 9 to May 1, 2016. The exhibit and all related events are free and open to the public.

The national traveling exhibition "First Folio! The Book that Gave Us Shakespeare" is an initiative of the Folger Shakespeare Library in

Washington, D.C., in partnership with the Cincinnati Museum Center and the American Library Association. During 2016, the First Folio will tour all 50 states, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico. The locations include 23 museums, 20 universities, five public libraries, three historical societies and a theater. The Folger and its partners reviewed hundreds of potential applicant sites before making their final selections. The Currier Museum is the only host site in New Hampshire.

"The First Folio is the book that gave us Shakespeare. Between its covers we discover his most famous characters — Hamlet, Desdemona, Cordelia, Macbeth, Romeo, Juliet and hundreds of others — speaking words that continue to move and inspire us," said Michael Witmore, director of the Folger Shakespeare Library. "Shakespeare tells the human story like no one else.... We are delighted that we can share this precious resource...."

The First Folio contains 36 of Shakespeare's 38 plays, including 18 plays that were first published in that volume. The Folger Shakespeare Library holds 82 copies of the First Folio, by far the largest collection in the world and more than a third of the 233 known copies in existence today. One of the most valuable printed books, a First Folio sold for \$6.2 million in 2001 at Christie's and another one for \$5.2 million in 2006 in London.

“Bringing the First Folio to the Currier is a wonderful opportunity for New Hampshire residents, students and scholars alike to see firsthand the publication that made the argument for Shakespeare’s genius,” said Douglas Lanier, UNH professor of English, who co-sponsored the Currier host site application.

The UNH Department of English and the Currier Museum of Art have developed additional programming around the exhibit to enhance the exhibit experience and celebrate Shakespeare’s life, work and enduring influence on the occasion of the quadricentennial.

Events taking place at UNH in Durham include:

Film screening of “Shakespeare Behind Bars,” directed by Hank Rogerson

March 23, 2016, 7 p.m., Memorial Union Building Theater I

This award-winning documentary will introduce you to the inspiring work of Curt Tofteland, founder and director of Shakespeare Behind Bars, a Shakespeare performance program for prisoners based in Ohio.

Lecture by Curt Tofteland, founder and director of Shakespeare Behind Bars

March 30, 2016, 7 p.m., Memorial Union Building, Theatre II

Tofteland, a pioneer in Shakespeare in the prisons programs, will speak about his work and about Shakespeare as a tool for social rehabilitation and personal discovery.

UNH Shakespeare Festival

Early April 2016 (date tba)

Join us on the lawn of Thompson Hall for performance of Shakespearean excerpts by students of the UNH Theater Department.

Events taking place at the Currier Museum in Manchester include:

Shakespeare Family Day

April 9, 2016, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Events include a “make-your-own-folio” art activity and a family-friendly Shakespeare performance.

Art Talk

April 10, 2016, 2 p.m.

A discussion between University of Massachusetts-Lowell Professor Kevin Petersen and UNH-Manchester Professor Susanne Paterson about Shakespeare’s enduring place in American culture, with special emphasis on popular culture and film. The talk will be followed by a Collection Connections focus tour.

First Folio Late Night

April 21, 2016, 6–9 p.m.

Conversation with St. Anselm College Professor Landis Magnuson and UNH Professor Douglas Lanier about the First Folio as a historical document and a living text. Theatre KAPOW will perform scenes from Hamlet and A Midsummer Night’s Dream, and there will be live music from the Manchester Community Music School.

For more information about the exhibition, “First Folio! The Book that Gave Us Shakespeare,” and for events taking place at the Currier Museum of Art, visit <http://www.currier.org/>.

For more information about events taking place on the UNH Durham campus, visit <http://cola.unh.edu/shakesquad>.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 13,000 undergraduate and 2,500 graduate students.

Image to be downloaded:

<http://www.unh.edu/news/releases/2016/02/images/img-0skakes.png>

Caption: The University of New Hampshire, in conjunction with the Currier Museum of Art in Manchester, is sponsoring a series of events in the winter and spring of 2016 to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the death of William Shakespeare

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