

The Book that Gave Us Shakespeare

By Tracy Bicknell-Holmes

August 2016

"What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculty! In form and moving how express and admirable! In action how like an angel! In apprehension how like a god! The beauty of the world, the paragon of animals!" (Hamlet, Act II, Scene II)

Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player, that struts and frets his hour upon the stage, and then is heard no more; it is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." (Macbeth, Act V, Scene V)

Imagine 400 years ago, when paper, quill and ink were precious and few people learned to read or write. It was a time when most people learned what was happening through word of mouth, and theater was a powerful venue for both entertainment and learning. Most plays were written to be performed and were not published. In that time lived a playwright named Shakespeare. A master of drama so eloquent with the English word that when he died, a small group of devoted friends decided that his plays should be published in a book and shared so that his work lived on. That was the genesis of the Shakespeare First Folio, the time in which the book was printed, 1623.

It was no easy task. There was no library of Shakespeare's plays. Individual scripts had to be hunted down one by one and collected from the actors who performed them. Eighteen of Shakespeare's plays probably would have been lost completely without the First Folio, including Hamlet, Julius Caesar, MacBeth, The Comedy of Errors, The Tempest, As You Like It, and Antony and Cleopatra.

I doubt Shakespeare conceived of his plays having an impact beyond the lives of the people who viewed them, yet imagine what we would have lost without the First Folio! So many quotes from Shakespeare's works have become a part of our culture, that you, like me, probably grew up knowing many of them long before you knew the source of those quotes.

"To be or not to be: that is the question" (Hamlet, Act 3 Scene 1)

"What's done is done." (Macbeth, Act III, Scene II)

"This above all: to thine own self be true." (Hamlet, Act I, Scene III).

"The fault, dear Brutus, lies not within the stars, but in ourselves..." (Julius Caesar, Act I, Scene II)

"Neither a borrower nor a lender be..." (Hamlet, Act I, Scene III)

"But, for my own part, it was Greek to me." (Julius Caesar, Act I, Scene II)

"All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players."

(As You Like it, Act II, Scene VII)

How amazing that a few friends recognized the genius of Shakespeare and made the effort to share his works with us through the Shakespeare First Folio.

One of these books is coming to Boise State University and you can see it.

Through a collaboration of Boise State University's Albertsons Library, the Arts and Humanities Institute and many other partners, ***First Folio, the Book that Gave Us Shakespeare*** will be on exhibit from **August 20 through September 21, 2016** at the Yanke Family Research Park. Throughout the exhibit there will be lectures, events and opportunities to learn more about the Bard and his plays. Please join us for this once in a lifetime opportunity.

EXHIBIT: First Folio: The Book that Gave Us Shakespeare August 20 – September 21, 2016

Ron and Linda Yanke Family Research Park
220 E. Parkcenter Blvd.
Boise, ID 83706

Gallery Hours, Sunday August 21- Wednesday September 21:
Monday-Friday, 10am – 7pm
Saturday-Sunday and Labor Day, 12-5pm

***Please Note Reduced Gallery Hours: Monday August 22, 10am-4pm and Friday September 2, 1-7pm

Parking for First Folio! The Book that Gave Us Shakespeare and all associated events is complimentary.

For a complete list of events see:

[Boise State Special Collections and Archives First Folio Events Schedule](#)

All events are located at the Yanke Family Research Park unless noted otherwise

KEY EVENTS:

Grand Opening Carnival
Saturday, September 20, 2016
1:00-5:00pm
Ribbon cutting at 1:00pm

First Folio in Idaho Keynote Speaker Eric Rasmussen (University of Nevada Reno)
“The Saint-Omer Shakespeare First Folio Goes Viral.”
September 1, 7:00 p.m.

Rasmussen is the author of *The Shakespeare Thefts: In Search of the First Folios*—an enthralling account of the highlights of two decades of research by Rasmussen and his team of First Folio hunters, locating and studying 232 surviving copies *in situ* worldwide. Copies will be available for purchase or bring your own for the book signing. (sponsored by the Idaho Humanities Council)

“Our Revels Now Are Ended.” Closing Event
September 21, 7:00 p.m.

What did it take to bring the First Folio to Boise? Join a panel of Folio event coordinators on the final evening of the First Folio in Idaho as they discuss the nearly 2 year process from application to exhibit.

Includes a special, remount performance of ***Friends and Lovers by Idaho Dance Theatre***. Shakespeare's language is brought to life in voice and movement in this beautiful and moving work choreographed by Marla Hansen.

FOR KIDS:

"To Bee or Not To Bee" (Puppet Show)

September 2, 10:30 a.m. and September 3, 2:00 p.m.

Boise Public Library, Main Library @ 715 S. Capitol Blvd.

Boise Public Library's original puppet show created to celebrate the First Folio in Idaho

IDAHO SCHOLAR TALKS (sponsored by the Idaho Humanities Council):

"Ha Ha Hamlet: Parodies, Pop-Culture, and the Prince of Denmark"

Dr. Matt Hansen (Boise State University)

August 25, 9:00-11:00am

"Mind Your F's and Q's!: Exploring Early Editions of Romeo and Juliet."

Dr. Jessica Winston (Idaho State University)

August 26, 7:00 p.m.

"The Economy of Nature: Human and Non-Human Forces in Shakespeare's King Lear and Timon of Athens."

Dr. Peter Remien (Lewis-Clark State College)

September 9, 7:00 p.m.

"All the World's A Stage Direction: Shakespeare's First Folio for Actors"

Professor Gordon Reinhart (Boise State University)

September 12, 7:00 p.m.

"Shakespeare's Typeface: Fonts from the First Folio to the 21st Century."

Dr. Curtis Whittaker (Idaho State University)

September 16, 7:00 p.m.