

10-1-2016

# Idaho Center for the Book Newsletter: First Folio 2016

Idaho Center for the Book

Anthony Doerr

Eric Rasmussen  
*University of Nevada-Reno*

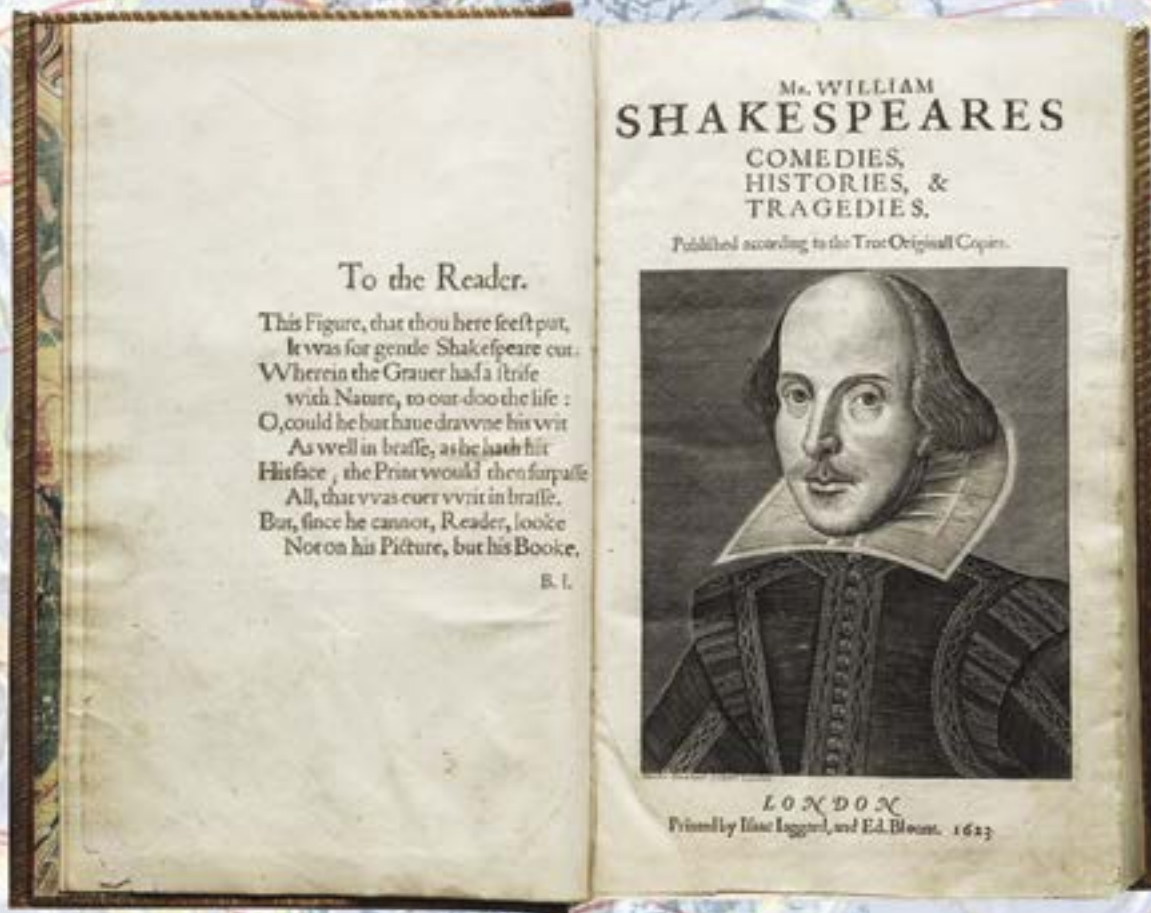
Doug Copsey  
*Idaho Shakespeare Festival*

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This newsletter was originally published by the *Idaho Center for the Book* (volume 23, issue 2) and includes the following articles:  
Doerr, A. (2016). The Endurance of Shakespeare's Magnificent *First Folio*. *Idaho Center for the Book*, 23(2).  
Rasmussen, E.. (2016). A New Shakespeare *First Folio* Every Six Years?. *Idaho Center for the Book*, 23(2).  
Copsey, D. (2016). Providence for the Festival: Scenes from Idaho Shakespeare Festival's First Forty Years. *Idaho Center for the Book*, 23(2).  
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# FIRST FOLIO IDAHO

2016



*with remarks by*  
**DOUG COPSEY**  
**ANTHONY DOERR**  
**& ERIC RASMUSSEN**

**BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY \* AUGUST 20 ~ SEPTEMBER 21 2016**

*Published by Idaho Center for the Book*



# FIRST FOLIO IDAHO

## 2016

## *The Endurance of Shakespeare's Magnificent First Folio*

by **Anthony Doerr**

Somewhere in the high desert, traveling toward Boise, inside a specially-constructed case, accompanied by a personal courier, sits a book. It's 393 years old, 630 pages long, and on the open market it's worth more than \$5 million.

It contains only words, yet what words it contains.

O *Romeo, Romeo! Wherefore art thou, Romeo?*

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

*This above all: to thine own self be true.*

*We are such stuff as dreams are made on, rounded with a little sleep.*

While William Shakespeare was alive, his plays existed only in actors' memories, in handwritten scripts, and as quartos, single-play pamphlets that were often discarded or fell apart. Half of his plays had never been printed at all. But after he died in 1616, a couple of his fellow actors decided to assemble thirty-six of his scripts and publish them with more style: in a collated and sturdy "folio."

The 750 folios they managed to produce, each slightly different, sold for about a pound each—\$200 in today's money. Today, almost four centuries later, 235 of those so-called *First Folios* survive, and the Folger Library in Washington, D.C., owns 82 of them. This year they're sending one to every state in the Union, including Idaho.

Which means that sometime before August 20th, under a veil of secrecy that Shakespeare himself would have admired, a courier is going to arrive in Boise, carry one of those folios into Boise State University's Arts and Humanities Institute Gallery in the Yanke Family Research Center on ParkCenter Blvd, let it acclimatize, and open it to the page in Act III of *Hamlet* where a suicidal Hamlet debates if it'd be better to be or not to be.

And then you can go see it for free.

It is not overstatement to say that if you miss seeing this, you'll miss seeing one of the most important artifacts in Western civilization. Without the *First Folio* we wouldn't have *Macbeth*, *Julius*

*Caesar*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Tempest*, or *Antony and Cleopatra*. We wouldn't have the words softhearted or lackluster or equivocal or fashionable, or hundreds of the other terms Shakespeare made up.

History, remember, is mostly a story of erasures. Homer wrote an epic poem before the *Iliad* called *Margites*, but no copies survive. Sophocles wrote 120 plays; only seven still exist. Melville wrote a novel or a story (we're not sure which) called *Isle of the Cross* and sent his only copy to a publisher who promptly lost it. Some of Hemingway's work didn't even survive that long: a suitcase containing the draft of a novel was lost in a train station never to be seen again.

It is only because of the efforts of farsighted caretakers in every tradition—monks, archivists, shamans, librarians, collectors—that certain stories have survived their passage through the gauntlets of time. The 1,000-year-old Buddhist text *Diamond Sutra*, perhaps the oldest printed book in the world, survived only because someone walled it up in a cave in China. The Celtic *Book of Kells*, written around 800 AD, still exists only because of the vigilance of the monks who protected it. Someone

gathered up the pages of Anne Frank's diary from where they were strewn across the floor of the annex when the Nazis took her away, and decided they were worth saving.

If Shakespeare's plays had been lost, the entire shape of Western storytelling would be different. Could Keats have been Keats if he hadn't read Shakespeare? Would Dickens have been Dickens? Would Hollywood be Hollywood?

History itself might have arrived at another destination. Would the actor John Wilkes Booth, deeply affected by his appearances in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, have shot Abraham Lincoln? Would Nelson Mandela, who shared a mass-produced edition of Shakespeare with his fellow political prisoners at Robben island, each signing their name by a favorite passage, have inspired so many?

No one knows how many souls were involved in protecting the particular *First Folio* that's coming to Idaho as it rattled down the pegboard of time. The book is older than George Washington, older than Napoleon, older than Isaac Newton. It has survived plagues, fires, freezes, the Revolutionary War, the blitz of London, the threat of nuclear annihilation and the ravages of moisture and mold.

To set your eyes on it is not only to celebrate Shakespeare on the 400th anniversary of his death (and during the 40th season of the Idaho Shakespeare Festival) but also to celebrate the tens of thousands of humans who have sheltered, protected, and reanimated books through the centuries.

More than four hundred years have passed since *Hamlet* was first performed, yet when we read the first line—"Who's there?"—the biggest question in every person's life—who am I?—comes to us again, as bright and relevant it was on the night it was first performed.

What you can see for four weeks at the Yanke Family Research Center late this summer is not just the first *First Folio* to come to Idaho. You can see a testament to the staying power of stories, the closest thing to immortality many of us will ever glimpse.

2015 Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Anthony Doerr lives in Idaho.



# A new Shakespeare First Folio every six years?

by Eric Rasmussen

The unexpected recent discovery of a Shakespeare *First Folio* in the public library of a northern French town has raised questions about how many were originally printed (estimated to be 750), how many still exist (now 233), and how often such books come to light. If recent history is any guide, the answer to the last question appears to be once every six years.

In 2002, Lilian Frances Cottle of Tottenham, North London died intestate and a tattered copy of the *First Folio* was found among her effects. In 2008, an unemployed, self-described 'fantasist' named Raymond Scott walked into Washington, D.C.'s Folger Shakespeare Library with a copy that he claimed to have acquired from one of Fidel Castro's bodyguards. The *First Folio* in question turned out to have been stolen from Durham University, and the flamboyant Scott—who arrived at his trial in a horse-drawn carriage, dressed in all white, holding a cigar in one hand and a cup of instant noodles in the other, while reciting lines from Shakespeare's *Richard III*—was convicted of the theft and imprisoned.

And in the most recent discovery, exactly six years later, Remy Cordonnier, a librarian in St. Omer, France, identified a mis-catalogued collection of Shakespeare's plays as an original *First Folio*. The book had been housed in the library of the Jesuit College of St. Omer for centuries before being inherited by the town's public library. But because it was lacking the title-page and had no identifying title on the binding, it had long been assumed that it was a relatively worthless reprint, until Cordonnier took an interest in the volume and called me in to authenticate it.

For more than a century, considerable effort has gone into determining how many copies of this rare book

still exist. In 1902, the British scholar Sidney Lee published a book—*Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies: A Census of Extant Copies*—that rightly claimed to be the "first systematic endeavour to ascertain the number and whereabouts of extant original copies of the Shakespeare *First Folio*." Lee located 152 copies and was later knighted for his efforts.

The tireless legwork of British folio-hunter Anthony James West in the 1990s led to the discovery of 80 more copies. In our 2012 census, *The Shakespeare First Folios: A Descriptive Catalogue*, West and I gave an extensive account of the 232 copies known at that time, relying whenever possible on firsthand inspections by ourselves or our research associates.

Curiously, though, several copies recorded by Lee have disappeared since 1902. During the Great Depression, a copy was filched from Williams College by a New York shoe salesman (who ultimately returned it in a drunken stupor because he was worried that it might fall into the hands of Adolf Hitler). Another copy stolen from Manchester University in 1972 has never been recovered.

Although the theft of institutional copies is generally well publicized, a few privately owned *First Folios* have quietly vanished. Despite two decades of searching, our research team could find no trace of the copy that had belonged to Major-General Frederick Edward Sotheby of Northamptonshire (which had been in the Sotheby family since 1700). The title-page from the copy owned by Ross R. Winans, Esq., of Baltimore somehow found its way into the *First Folio* now at Carnegie Mellon University, but the Ross folio itself has vanished.

The copy owned by Lord Zouche of Parham was sent to the British Museum for safekeeping in 1900, and the librarian confirmed to Sidney Lee that Zouche's "folio Shakespeare is here with his

books of which we are taking care." They did not, it seems, keep a watchful eye over it: the copy has since gone missing.

And six years after Lee published his census, the novelist Thomas Hardy wrote to inform Lee that "Mr [Alfred Cart] de Lafontaine, my neighbour in Dorset, is the fortunate possessor of a 1st Folio Shakespeare, which he would like to show you. Your opinion upon it will be highly valued by him, & of great interest to me."

In 1899, the same Alfred Cart de Lafontaine had given a talk about the recent restoration of his manor to the Dorset Natural History and Antiquarian Field Club. His audience, gathered "under the shade of a fine cedar," heard Lafontaine detail the work he had done to the house and gardens; he described the long gallery or library, and singled out its two most precious items: "a pair of boots worn by King Charles I when a boy" and "also a very fine folio Shakespeare."

Despite these written records, Lafontaine's copy has never been traced.

So while the discovery of the St. Omer copy has added to the number of known copies, one can only regret that at least a half-dozen have somehow slipped through our fingers.

Then again, there's always the chance that six years from now, one of them will turn up.

[Editor's Note: Will 2016 turn out to have been that rarest of birds, the multi-Folio-discovery year? We eagerly look forward to hearing Dr. Rasmussen's thoughts on the subject and all things Folio, on September 1.]

Folio expert Eric Rasmussen, Professor and Chair of English at University of Nevada-Reno, is the keynote speaker for the First Folio! programs in Idaho.



IMAGES *First panel: Opening page of The Tempest, first published in First Folio. Second panel: Folio open to "To be or not to be" soliloquy from Hamlet; various bindings of Folios at the Folger. These images appear courtesy of the Folger Shakespeare Library. Third panel, above: One Capital Center, ISF's first stage (Idaho Statesman Photograph Collection, Boise State University Special Collections and Archives); below: Doug Copsey as Oberon and Jim Bottoms as Puck, A Midsummer Night's Dream, 1977 (unknown). Fourth panel, above: Romeo and Juliet, 1987 (David Blaine Bogie); below: architects' rendering for the new ISF amphitheater, 1997 (Angell and Rawlinson). Courtesy of Idaho Shakespeare Festival and Boise State University Special Collections and Archives.*





## *Providence for the Festival:*

### *Scenes from Idaho Shakespeare Festival's First Forty Years*

by Doug Copsey

The Idaho Shakespeare Festival turned 40 this summer. In that time, it has grown from humble beginnings in downtown Boise to a nationally recognized and respected regional theater company. That our city has been included in a national tour of the *First Folio* on that anniversary would seem to be, to some measure at least, a mark of that success. And just as the Bard offered up his stories for the *Folio*, it seems fitting to offer up a few tales of our own. The following are three excerpts from my history of ISE, *With Our Good Will*, published by Caxton Press.

#### *Summer, 1977*

On Sunday morning, July 24, 1977, One Capital Center began its transformation. Piece by piece the giant set was hauled in on Sterling Landscape trucks, carried down the steps and bolted into place. More cloth *mache* was applied and painted to mask any gaps between platforms. The eleven stories of concrete rising above it gave our set a whole new dimension of size, creating an enormity we hadn't expected, and actors couldn't resist trying out entrances from the upper level.

At the same time, another crew began driving fence posts and stapling the four by eight foot painted fence panels into place along the sidewalk. Wielding the infamous post-pounders—heavy

metal tubes with handles welded on each side—soon became a challenge, and everyone had to take a turn...It was a nasty, exhausting job made fun by a little impromptu competition, and those who excelled did so in part because the rest of the company cheered them on. A new kind of energy took over as everyone realized that all their hard work was finally paying off and this wild and crazy scheme was actually going to happen.

By afternoon truckloads of Sterling Landscape trees began arriving at the parking lot. One by one the heavy peat pots were wrestled down the steps and placed around the mountainside that was now firmly attached to the side of the building. Passersby stared in wonder at this ragtag group who appeared to be audaciously defacing Boise's newest downtown office building, no doubt wondering whether they ought to call the police. The fence, with its painted advertising, helped allay their fears. If all those businesses were lending their names to whatever was going on it must at least be legal. And we had reserved one panel on each side to announce The First Annual Main Street Bistro Summer Theater Festival with performance dates and the box office number.

**Michael Hoffman:** *Just bringing trees into the space, that little bit of forest, created something really magical in terms of the design.*

Late that evening everything looked to be in place. We all sprawled on the lawn to admire our handiwork...The barren patio had taken on a completely different look, and as exhausted as we were we couldn't resist running a few scenes and testing our voices to see just how much projection was really needed to reach the back of the lawn. As we had hoped, the fence helped in that regard, reflecting the sound back on the audience furthest away from the stage and improving their ability to hear. However, one thing immediately became clear—we were going to need a lot more trees.

But our troubles were not over. The day before we opened I received a call from Skip Oppenheimer.

**Skip Oppenheimer:** *Some building code guy came into my office saying we had some signs that were in violation. And I said, "What signs? We don't have any signs."*

Doug Oppenheimer and I went to the City Attorney, who explained that the ads on the fence constituted billboards, and billboards were expressly forbidden in downtown Boise. We begged for an exception to be made, but our pleas fell on deaf ears. Unwilling to give in, we went right to the top, appealing to Mayor Dick Eardley himself. He listened graciously, and promised to let us know within the next 24 hours.

Our final dress rehearsal that night was a bit strained. Had we come this far only to be stopped by a zoning ordinance? Without the fence, the Bistro could not sell food and drinks, nor could our patrons enjoy their own picnic dinners. Without the fence, anyone sitting more than halfway up the lawn would not be able to hear the actors. Without the fence, we were doomed.

By noon the next day we still had not heard from the Mayor's office. I informed the cast that we would go on as planned, and get in at least one performance before they shut us down. Then, late that afternoon, the call came in. Mayor Eardley had decided that no exceptions could be made, the fence must come down. I was stunned silent. After a moment, the caller asked how many performances we had planned. I told him the play would run Wednesday through Saturday for the next two weeks. There was a pause while he consulted with someone away from the phone, then he came back on line and informed me we had exactly two weeks to remove that illegal fence.





## Spring, 1984

In Act I, Scene ii of *Julius Caesar*, a soothsayer admonishes Caesar to “beware the ides of March.” Though the “ides” specifically refers to March 15, the soothsayer’s warning had already proven prophetic to ISF in March of 1981 when we lost our original downtown site at One Capital Center. At the March 7, 1984, board meeting, President Chuck Robertson announced that we had lost our lease at the Plantation site after only three seasons. It was not completely unexpected. The housing development had been moving closer and closer to us, and was now on the verge of engulfing the site itself. What was not expected was how bad the financial situation at the Festival had become.

**Chuck Robertson:** *Mark (Cuddy) called me one night and said he needed to talk, so Bea (Black) and I met with him and the story was incredibly bleak. I don't remember how many dollars we were in debt at that point, but Mark was the sole paid employee. He told us the Festival was out of money, he was out of money personally, the board was dissolved, and we had to decide right then if the Festival was go or no-go. I wrote him a check so he could live for a while and we could sort out some of these problems, and we agreed that Bea and I would be the board. The three of us were what we had. Mark went at it full time and we got a group of people together as a board, but the one thing we did that was really important was to decide that it couldn't go away.*

Once again the opportunity to buckle under was presented to the Festival, bolstered by the weight of additional debt. But this time there was no discussion of packing our bags and going home. The spring season at the Morrison Center’s Stage II was set, as was the summer repertory, which included a world premier of our first commissioned play, *Robin Hood*, and Mark had traveled over 5,500 miles across the western states auditioning some 700 actors for the company. The word was out in arts communities across the country that the Idaho Shakespeare Festival was a dynamic new company that not only produced vibrant outdoor theater, but was an exciting and beautiful place to spend a summer.

But as we learned during our first move in 1981, in times of crisis help often comes from unexpected sources...our Board of Directors had begun to learn how to function as a fund raising

arm of the company. One of those corporate supporters was Ore-Ida, whose headquarters was in ParkCenter. They had been generous with their contributions over the past few years, thanks in large part to Susan Gerhart, their Manager of Public Relations.

**Susan Gerhart:** *When they came to me to ask if Ore-Ida would contribute to the search, and it came to me that we had this site next to one of our buildings. Normally when you give for bricks and mortar projects we had to go to Heinz, and it took a long time. I went to my boss, Don Masterson, General Manager of Human Resources, and he thought it would be a great use of the property. We took it to the Management Board, they approved it and that was that.*

Sue offered the free use of Ore-Ida’s two parking lots, which they only used during the day, to Festival-goers. An agreement was signed in May, 1984, and once again we were pulled back from the brink by the support of the community.

**Mark Cuddy:** *So many decisions were made quickly. Boom, it was suddenly profit to non-profit. Boom, we're out of one site and we have to find another site. Boom, here's a new Artistic Director. It just feels like there was this path, there was sort of providence for the Festival. It was going to happen.*

## Spring 1998

The new amphitheater’s design pays homage to Shakespeare’s Globe Theater in London. The ring of steel poles that encircle the theater is 100 feet in diameter, the same size as the original Globe. The plans called for wooden poles, but structural engineers determined that steel towers placed in buried concrete footings would be safer and longer-lasting. The board agreed, despite the increased cost, but when they began to excavate for the footings, another problem surfaced.

**Andy Erstad:** *We ran into a layer of logs that had been submerged and silted over. We had to sub-excavate*

*and remove a lot of material and dirt that we hadn't planned on removing, and then fill it back in.*

The logs were scooped out and replaced with sand and cobble stones excavated from the shallow drainage pond just behind the theater. Landscape architect Don Belts and his partner, Eric Jensen, had been a part of the design team from the very beginning.

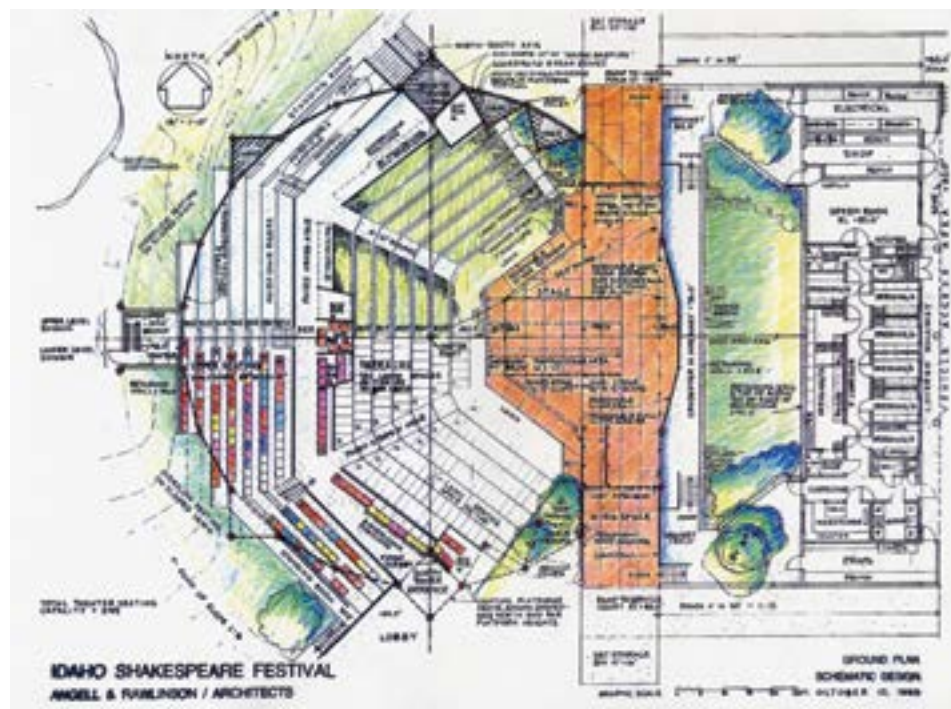
**Don Belts:** *The rumor had always been that the swampy, narrow depression where the theater was supposed to be situated was an old barrow pit for work on Highway 21. It was perfect for the extra fill material we needed, which ended up making a decent pond out of it, and an excellent water feature for the site.*

In the midst of this turmoil, Charlie and Mark had to keep the company going. That spring, as acting company auditions were held and designers began work on sets and costumes for the inaugural season in their new home, a tremendous excitement set in. The theater may not be complete, but it would open, and the community that had seen ISF through good times and bad would be there to watch it take shape, piece by piece.

**Charlie Fee:** *We went in to that first season with an amphitheater and a stage. We hadn't finished a hell of a lot of stuff. No dressing rooms, no public bathrooms, no box office, no concessions, nothing. Just dirt around an amphitheater. We had spent most of what we had raised to get that far, but everything was going to be okay. All that had to happen was we had to get an audience in there...you could already feel how great it was going to be.*

For the whole, fascinating story, pick up a copy of *With Our Good Will, 30 Years of Shakespeare in Idaho*, at the Festival’s concession store, in area bookstores, or at [Caxton Press.com](http://Caxton Press.com).

Doug Copsy is an actor, director and author, and the founder of Idaho Shakespeare Festival.



SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

20

### Special Events and Programs

The Folio will be displayed at Boise State University's Arts and Humanities Institute Gallery, in the Ron and Linda Yanke Family Research Park, 220 East Parkcenter Blvd. Lectures and programs will be held in an adjacent event space or classroom; film screening locations are noted. Limited free parking available. Regular exhibition hours are **Monday through Friday 10-7, Saturday, Sunday and Labor Day 12-5** (except where noted.\*)

**GRAND  
OPENING  
CARNIVAL  
& RIBBON  
CUTTING**

1-5 PM

august

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

**PRESENTATION  
ISF FOUNDER  
DOUG COPSEY  
& ISF MEMBERS**

7-9 PM

**LECTURE  
MATTHEW  
HANSEN**

7-9 PM

**FILM SCREENING:  
"10 THINGS I HATE  
ABOUT YOU"  
1999**

**BOISE STATE  
SPECIAL EVENT  
CENTER, 7-9 PM**

**LECTURE  
JESSICA  
WINSTON**

7-9 PM

**TEACHER  
WORKSHOP**

1-5 PM

28

29

30

31

1

2

3

**FILM SCREENING:  
"ROMEO & JULIET"  
1996**

**THE FLICKS  
7 PM**

**KEYNOTE LECTURE  
FOLIO EXPERT  
ERIC  
RASMUSSEN**

7-9 PM

**\*LIMITED HOURS**

**GALLERY OPEN  
1-7 PM ONLY**

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

**\*LABOR DAY  
GALLERY OPEN  
12-5 PM**

**LECTURE**

**PETER REMIEN**

7-9 PM

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

**LECTURE**

**GORDON  
REINHART**

7-9 PM

**FILM SCREENING:  
"A MIDSUMMER  
NIGHT'S DREAM"  
1935**

**BOISE PUBLIC  
LIBRARY  
6 PM**

**LECTURE**

**CURTIS  
WHITTAKER**

7-9 PM

**FAMILY  
DAY**

1-5 PM

18

19

20

21

**CLOSING EVENT  
& PERFORMANCE**

**IDAHO DANCE  
THEATRE**

7 PM

For more details and updates on special events and programs, please visit

**<http://archives.boisestate.edu/shakespeare2016.php>**

september





BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY



**First Folio! The Book that Gave Us Shakespeare**  
*on tour from the Folger Shakespeare Library*

Presented by Albertsons Library

e<sup>3</sup> Arts and Humanities Institute

Boise State University

August 20 ~ September 21, 2016

**Project Director** Gwyn Hervochon

**Gallery Director** Stephanie Bacon

**Associate Directors** Heather Grevatt, Nick Miller

**Program Advisors** Leslie Durham, Matthew Hansen

**Community Steering Committee**

Amy Fackler, Joanne Hinkel, Hannah Read Newbill, Terri Schorzman

**Contributing Departments**

Albertsons Library, the College of Arts and Sciences, the Honors College; Special Collections and Archives; and the Departments of Art, English, History, Theatre Arts and World Languages

Boise State University Bookstore; Campus Operations; Campus Security; Communications and Marketing; Conference Services; Facilities, Operations and Maintenance; Office of the President; Office of Risk Management and Insurance; Printing and Graphic Services; Transportation and Parking; University Advancement

**Contributing Organizations**

Boise City Department of Arts and History, Boise Police Department, Boise Public Library, Boise State Public Radio, Idaho Center for the Book, Idaho Humanities Council, Idaho Shakespeare Festival

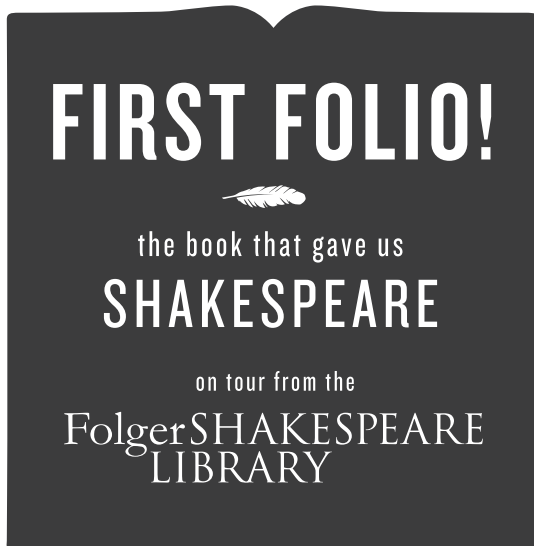
**Special Thanks**

Barbara Beagles, Tracy Bicknell-Holmes, Jennifer Black, Perrine Blakley, Randy Bunnis, Heather Calkins, Jim Duran, Bill English, Lt. Rob Gallas, Joe Golden, Jason Herbeck, Sue Hexum, Kimberly Holling, Ann Hottinger, John Kaplan, Melinda Keckler, Kelsey Keyes, Richard Klautsch, Dan Kolsky, David & Nancy Leroy, Lisa McClain, Alessandro Mereaglia, Janice Neri, Cheryl Oestreicher, Rosemary Reinhardt, Margaret Satterlee, Amber Sherman, Carole Skinner, Gregory Taylor

☞ Special Thanks to **Exhibition Design** students Melissa S. Anderson, Morgan Braun, Lauren Cavazos, Audrey Payne Chapman, Kate M. Claussen, Ron Garnys, Cassie Green, Brittany Lindström, Khara Oxier, Tyler Penner, Cameron E. Quade, Everett Smith, Lauren Tomlinson; and to **Visual Art MFA** students Veiko Valencia and Kris Hargis

☞ Special Thanks to all our staff and volunteers

*This project could not have been brought to fruition without the mentorship, advocacy and concrete help of many individuals and alliances, departments and programs. A thousand large and small contributions made this program possible, and all those who contributed, whether or not they are named here, have our gratitude.*

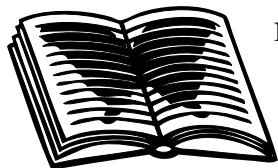


*First Folio! The Book that Gave Us Shakespeare* is a national traveling exhibition organized by the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, DC, and produced in association with the American Library Association and the Cincinnati Museum Center. *First Folio!* has been made possible in part by a major grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, and by the support of Google.org, Vinton and Sigrid Cerf, the British Council, Stuart and Mimi Rose, and other generous donors.



Idaho  
Center  
*for the* Book\* \*\*  
newsletter

Vol. 23/No. 2/October 2016



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Director: Stephanie Kathryn Bacon

\*Book, construed to include all forms of written language

\*\* An Affiliate of the Center for the Book  
in the Library of Congress since 1994



Right: Portrait bust of Shakespeare, from the Reading Room  
at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington DC.  
Front cover: Title page from Shakespeare's *First Folio*, 1623.  
These images appear courtesy of the Folger Shakespeare Library.