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## For Immediate Release

### **MMFA to Exhibit Shakespeare's First Folio in October Only site in State of Alabama selected for national traveling exhibition**

**Montgomery, AL, September 27, 2016**— The Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts in affiliation with the Alabama Shakespeare Festival is honored to be the only site in the State of Alabama to host the *First Folio! The Book that Gave Us Shakespeare*, a national traveling exhibition of the Shakespeare First Folio. The Folger Shakespeare Library, in partnership with the Cincinnati Museum Center and the American Library Association, is touring a First Folio of Shakespeare in 2016 to all 50 states, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico.

Montgomery was selected through a collective application process by the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts and the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, with additional support from Huntingdon College, Auburn University at Montgomery, and the Alabama Public Television.

"We are honored to be selected as one of the institutions to help share this extraordinary part of the world's cultural heritage from the Folger Shakespeare Library's collection," said Mark Johnson, MMFA Director.

"For most people this will be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to come within inches of one of the most influential books in history. We are delighted to share this experience with the MMFA," said Geoffrey Sherman, ASF Producing Artistic Director.

Visitors to *First Folio!* will come face-to-face with the original 1623 book, opened to the page showing one of the most quoted lines in the world: "To be or not to be..." from *Hamlet*. The Museum is also presenting a collection of costumes, props, and designs from the Alabama Shakespeare Festival's 2010 production of *Hamlet*. In addition, the MMFA will also display engravings based on paintings featured in the 18th-century Boydell Shakespeare Gallery.

We invite the public to come and help celebrate the opening of *First Folio! The Book that Gave Us Shakespeare*, on Thursday, October 6, with a free reception at 5:30 P.M., followed by a dramatic reading of Hamlet's above-referenced soliloquy by Geoffrey Sherman, at 6 P.M.

Other events centered around the exhibition in October include:

**Teacher Workshop: *First Folio!*** (MMFA Galleries)  
**Saturday, October 1, 10 A.M. to 2 P.M.**

**Short Course: *Shakespeare Today*** (MMFA Galleries)

**Tuesdays: October 4, 11, 18, and 25 at 12 noon**

Co-hosted by the Alabama Shakespeare Festival and Huntingdon College, and with an appearance by the Montgomery Chorale.

**College Night: *First Folio!*** (MMFA Wilson Auditorium)

**Thursday, October 13, at 6 P.M.**

Co-hosted by Huntingdon College

***Shakespeare Celebration!*** (ASF and MMFA)

**Saturday, October 15, 12 noon to 7 P.M.**

The Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts in collaboration with the Alabama Shakespeare Festival will present a day for families to view the *First Folio!* exhibition with family-oriented activities on the grounds of the theatre including performances, creative children's activities, artisan demonstrations, theatrical fighting presentations, and talks on Shakespeare.

*First Folio! The Book that Gave Us Shakespeare, on tour from the Folger Shakespeare Library, has been made possible in part by a major grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities: Exploring the human endeavor, and by the support of Google.org, The Lord Browne of Madingley, Vinton and Sigrid Cerf, the British Council, Stuart and Mimi Rose, Albert and Shirley Small, and other generous donors. MMFA exhibition sponsors include Winifred and Charles Stakely; William Thames, Sr.; Dr. Laurie Jean Weil and Dr. Tommy Wool; and co-sponsor River Bank and Trust.*

The Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts is located at One Museum Drive. The Alabama Shakespeare's location is One Festival Drive. For hours of operation and other information, visit [mmfa.org](http://mmfa.org) or [asf.net](http://asf.net).

The MMFA, a department of the City of Montgomery, is supported by funds from the City of Montgomery and the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts Association. Programs are made possible, in part, by grants from the Alabama State Council on the Arts. Exhibition programs are supported by the Poarch Band of Creek Indians.

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