

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Folger Shakespeare Library Celebrates William Shakespeare's 451st Birthday

Shakespeare's Birthday Open House

The Folger will host its annual open house and birthday celebration on **Sunday, April 19, from 12–4pm**. This free, family-friendly event throws open the doors of the Folger for jugglers and jesters, stage combat demonstrations, Elizabethan crafts, a scavenger hunt of the Folger's new exhibition, and more fun activities.

Seize your chance to perform Shakespeare on the Folger stage, revel in five-minute versions of Shakespeare's plays from the Nickel Shakespeare Girls, and enjoy musical performances by WETA Classical Players.

The DC Public Library is partnering with the Folger to bring its portable reading room to the Folger's Elizabethan Garden for the first time, and children will be able to apply for library cards and check out books. Volunteers will read to children from Shakespeare works and related books throughout the afternoon, with Queen Elizabeth I putting in a special appearance.

Shakespeare's Lounge will feature engaging talks about rare book conservation and the upcoming 2016 celebration of *The Wonder of Will*. In connection with the Folger exhibition about the quest for longitude, geographer Andrew Johnston from the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum will speak on navigation.

Folger staff and scholars will be on hand to answer questions about Shakespeare, and docents will lead tours of the Folger, including the historic Reading Rooms. Birthday cake will be served and mementos will be on sale at the Folger gift shop.

These food trucks will be on site: DC Slices, DC Empanadas, Pleasant Pops, and Captain Cookie & the Milkman.

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About Folger Shakespeare Library

Folger Shakespeare Library is a world-class center for scholarship, learning, culture, and the arts. It is home to the world's largest Shakespeare collection and a primary repository for rare materials from the early modern period (1500–1750). Folger Shakespeare Library is an internationally recognized research library offering advanced scholarly programs in the humanities; an innovator in the preservation of rare materials; a national leader in how Shakespeare is taught in grades K–12; and an award-winning producer of cultural and arts programs— theater, music, poetry, exhibitions, lectures, and family programs. By promoting understanding of Shakespeare and his world, Folger Shakespeare Library reminds us of the enduring influence of his works, the formative effects of the Renaissance on our own time, and the power of the written and spoken word. A gift to the American people from industrialist Henry Clay Folger, the Folger Shakespeare Library—located one block east of the U.S. Capitol—opened in 1932. Learn more at www.folger.edu

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