**Press Release**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**“SHAKESPEARE BY THE BOOK”—A SHAKESPEARE FOR EVERY TIME**

**(Charlottesville–March 22, 2016)** The University of Virginia Library presents “Shakespeare by the Book: Four Centuries of Printing, Editing, and Publishing,” an exhibition commemorating William Shakespeare’s legacy in the four hundredth year since his death, with over 100 items drawn mostly from the Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library. The exhibition will be on display until December 31, 2016.

"Shakespeare by the Book" takes visitors on a journey from the editions of Shakespeare that first appeared after his death, through twentieth century bibliographical research, celebrated stage performers, and miniaturized volumes, up to modern artists' books. It features contentious eighteenth century arguments about authenticity, Victorian-era prudishness, and comments on our current technological age.

Among the many items featured are a 1619 quarto edition of *King Lear* and a 1632 Second Folio with a tribute to Shakespeare by twenty-one-year-old John Milton—Milton's first published poem. There is Alexander Pope’s fanciful eighteenth century revision of the plays, and Samuel Johnson’s edition that restores the “vulgar” language from the First Folio. Photos of acclaimed Shakespearean actors Edwin Booth and Ellen Terry are displayed with the editions of the plays published under their names to capitalize on their fame. A portrait of African-American actor Ira Aldridge in costume as Othello documents his rise to world-wide renown on the British stage.

The exhibition recognizes UVA’s contribution to Shakespeare studies with the Hinman Collator, designed by UVA graduate Charlton Hinman and used to compare and date copies of the First Folio. Sumptuous illustrations commissioned by Thomas Boydell from preeminent artists of the late eighteenth century testify to Shakespeare’s writings as inspiration for the visual arts, and highlights also include finely detailed, leather-bound miniature editions as well as witty current-day presentations of Shakespeare’s writing, translated into smartphone texts and a watch that flashes his sonnets in Morse code. Also not to be missed is a "listicle" of some of the best editorial insults from generations of Shakespeare editors.

Taken as a whole, the exhibition explores what Shakespeare has meant to different generations since his death, and demonstrates how they drew inspiration from his work even as they reinvented him in their own image. Above all, the multiplicity of editions in various forms shows that Shakespeare is not only for all time, but for every time.

From October 1–26, 2016, "Shakespeare by the Book" will become the backdrop for the visiting Folger Shakespeare Library exhibition, *First Folio! The Book that Gave Us Shakespeare* (**www.folger.edu/first-folio-tour**). An original 1623 copy of the First Folio will be on display. The First Folio, of which only 233 survive today, is the most important source for Shakespeare's plays, preserving 18 plays that had never before been printed.

You can read more about the exhibition at *Notes From Under Grounds* (**http://smallnotes.library.virginia.edu/2016/02/25/shakespeare-by-the-book/**), the blog of the Small Special Collections Library.

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For more information, contact Molly Schwartzburg, Curator at the Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library, at (434) 243-4805 or mas5by@virginia.edu

Photos of items in the exhibit can be downloaded from "Gallery Highlights" on the exhibition site: shakespeare.lib.virginia.edu. For higher resolution photos, contact Jeff Hill at (434) 982-2749 or jph9e@virginia.edu