

## The Friday Forum

3.30pm–5.00pm AEST, 26 May 2023

Via Teams and in person at level 3, 250 Victoria Parade, East Melbourne

### Shakespeare's First Folio—Four Centuries On

*A panel discussion marking the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's First Folio.*

This year is the 400th anniversary of the first printed edition of Shakespeare's collected plays (1623). Published seven years after his death, the First Folio cemented Shakespeare's status as the pivotal figure in the English literary tradition. Widely considered the most influential book in the English language apart from the Bible, and today valued at around \$10 million a copy, the First Folio remains a focus of key debates in book history, theatre and performance studies, textual editing and literary education. It also lies at the heart of a longstanding controversy about the 'true' authorship of Shakespeare's plays. Our discussion brings together experts in theatre history, textual scholarship and Shakespeare criticism to thrash out the First Folio's significance for Shakespeare studies today.



**Panel:**

David McInnis (University of Melbourne), Johanna Harris (ACU),  
Sophie Tomlinson (University of Auckland), Hugh Craig (Newcastle  
University).

<https://www.deviantart.com/reaperc/art/Shakespeare-Graffiti-in-Japan-303699419>

**Co-chairs:**

Lisa O'Connell (ACU) and Peter Holbrook (ACU). Bios below.

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## Biographies

### Panel

[Hugh Craig](#) is emeritus professor at the University of Newcastle. He works in stylometry (the application of statistics to literary style). He has published on Shakespeare authorship problems and on broader stylistic trends in early modern English plays. His current project is a stylometric study of the Folio, in collaboration with Professor Gabriel Egan.

[Johanna Harris](#) is an Associate Professor in ACU's Western Civilisation Program. Her teaching and research focus on the literature, religion, and politics of the early modern period. She is currently working on two major editing projects for Oxford University Press: the correspondence of the prolific puritan writer Richard Baxter (1615-1691), and a volume of the meditational prose and poetry of Thomas Traherne for *The Oxford Traherne*.

[David McInnis](#) is Associate Professor of Shakespeare and Early Modern Drama at the University of Melbourne. He is author of *Shakespeare and Lost Plays* (Cambridge UP, 2021), *Mind-Travelling and Voyage Drama in Early Modern England* (Palgrave, 2013), and editor of Dekker's *Old Fortunatus* for the Revels Plays series (Manchester UP, 2020).

[Sophie Tomlinson](#) lectures in English and Drama at the University of Auckland, specialising in Jacobean, Caroline, and Restoration theatre. Her books include a foundational study of women's participation in 17<sup>th</sup>-century theatrical culture, *Women on Stage in Stuart Drama* (Cambridge, 2005), and scholarly editions of John Fletcher's *The Wild-Goose Chase* (1621) and Lording Barry's *The Family of Love* (1608).

### Co-Chairs

[Peter Holbrook](#) is Professor of Literature at the Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences at Australian Catholic University. He has written mainly about Shakespeare, often Shakespeare's relationship to other authors. He is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities and was Chair of the International Shakespeare Association, which is based in Shakespeare's birthplace of Stratford-upon-Avon. He has written widely for newspapers and magazines in Australia on a variety of writers and topics, including the future of literary culture.

[Lisa O'Connell](#) is Associate Professor of English Literature in the Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences, Australian Catholic University. She is the author of *The Origins of the English Marriage Plot: Literature, Politics and Religion in the Eighteenth Century* and co-editor of *Libertine Enlightenment: Sex, Liberty and Licence in the Eighteenth Century*. She specialises in 18th-century British literature and currently works on the history and theory of the novel and its relation to early global literatures.

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