



## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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# FOLGER SHAKESPEARE LIBRARY ANNOUNCES 2023/24 SEASON OF THEATER, MUSIC, AND POETRY, WELCOMING NEW AND RETURNING AUDIENCES

*Programming returns home to the historic, intimate Folger stage, a world-renowned center for stories and storytelling*

(Washington, D.C.) – The **Folger Shakespeare Library** announced its exciting lineup of performances and programming for the 2023/24 seasons for **Folger Theatre, Folger Consort, Folger Poetry**, united under the theme “*What’s Your Story?*” Following three years of Folger programs “On the Road,” the Folger’s Elizabethan-style theater and new expansive public spaces will again play host to award-winning performances, concerts, and readings that embody stories of transformation, mirroring its own physical and spiritual evolution.

“If you’re excited to get back into the library—I’m even *more* excited. Our inaugural season inside our renovated historic home will encompass stories of spiritual, physical, and emotional transformation,” says **Karen Ann Daniels**, Folger’s Director of Programming and Artistic Director of Folger Theatre. “I’ve met so many wonderful people from across our DC community who feel deeply connected to the Folger and many who want to get to know us better. It was vital to curate a slate of programming we could invite new-to-us and loyal audiences. At the heart of our work lies the desire to ensure that *everyone* feels welcome in *everything* we do.”

As Artistic Director, Daniels has curated an inaugural season that features fresh and thought-provoking interpretations and influences of Shakespeare by dynamic voices, sure to provide an engaging and transformational experience for diverse audiences. **Folger Theatre’s** 2023/24 season opens this fall with Shakespeare’s bittersweet romance *The Winter’s Tale*, directed by **Tamilla Woodard** (named one of 50 ‘Women to Watch’ by the Broadway Women’s Fund). The second year of **The Reading Room Festival**, a festival featuring new works and conversations inspired by or in response to the plays of Shakespeare, will take place in January 2024. After a celebrated national tour, *Where We Belong*, directed by **Mei Ann Teo**, in collaboration with **Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company**, will begin performances in February. Teo’s work has toured nationally and internationally from Edinburgh to Singapore. This solo piece, written and performed by Mohegan theater-maker and scholar **Madeline Sayet**, follows Sayet’s travels to England to pursue her PhD in Shakespeare, only to discover a country refusing to acknowledge its own role in colonialism. The season concludes in May, with **Mary Zimmerman’s** Tony Award-winning play, *Metamorphoses*. This staging epic work on classic Ovid myths and tales will showcase the rich talents of the DC theater community and is directed by **Psalmayene 24**, the Helen Hayes Award-winning Playwright in Residence at Mosaic Theater.

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**Folger Consort**, the early music ensemble-in-residence at the **Folger Shakespeare Library**, features, as part of its 46<sup>th</sup> season, four concert programs of Baroque, Renaissance, and Medieval music ranging from the 13<sup>th</sup> through the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Folger Consort's annual holiday concert begins the season with festive early German music featuring pieces composed by Heinrich Schütz and Michael Praetorius, among other renowned composers. Early music from France and Spain highlights the remainder of the Consort season, with works by Telemann, Rameau, Compère, and Marais, as well as music from the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*.

"The Folger Consort's 2023/24 season continues to explore new ways of engaging with and experiencing early music," says **David Mozur**, Folger Consort Manager. "Building off this past season's adventures, in the coming year we will see what happens when the Consort collaborates with a comedian, or when sharing the stage with performers from non-European musical traditions. Best of all, we are thrilled to be creating exciting music and welcoming patrons in our historic space once again for the first time since 2018."

Folger Consort is joined by distinguished guest artists in the field of early music, drawing on both local and national talent. The 2023/24 Consort season is programmed by Folger Consort's Artistic Directors and founding members, **Robert Eisenstein** and **Christopher Kendall**. Performances will be in-person at the Folger with a virtual streaming option available for select programs. Each concert is preceded by a virtual **Early Music Seminar** (hosted on Wednesday evenings), where Robert Eisenstein shares historical and musical background information related to the upcoming performance.

The 55<sup>th</sup> season of the **O.B. Hardison Poetry Series** continues its long-standing tradition of welcoming the most incandescent names in poetry to the Folger. The work of established and emerging poets in our 2023/24 season engages audiences with innovative language that answers the question of "what's your story?" Poet Evie Shockley writes in her newest collection, *Suddenly We* "a mythology begins with a question." This season of poetry delves into the question of who we are, what inspires us, and the connections that make us human.

Some of poetry's most innovative and inspiring voices will be heard on the Folger stage again and we are excited to welcome poetry lovers from everywhere for this new season," says **Teri Cross Davis**, Folger Poetry Manager.

The 2023/24 Poetry season features five readings, including its annual tribute to **Emily Dickinson**, the **Anthony Hecht Poetry Prize** reading, and a **Friends of Folger Poetry** reading. Additional readings, which have become Folger staples, will also be presented: *Not Just Another Day Off*, Folger's annual event honoring **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.** will take place in January 2024 and the celebrated **Eudora Welty Lecture** will be hosted in March. A complete schedule of readings, poets, and dates will be announced soon.

Programs will include conversations with the directors, artists, playwrights, and more following theater performances, as well as in-depth discussions with Folger Director **Michael Witmore**. Humanities-focused panel conversations, lectures, and workshops are also slated for the season. A more detailed

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release of reopening events and programming will be announced in full detail at a later date.

Subscriptions to seasons of theater, consort, and poetry are currently on sale and may be purchased at [www.folger.edu/subscriptions](http://www.folger.edu/subscriptions) or by calling the Folger box office at **202.544.7077**. Single tickets for all performances go on sale later this summer.

The upcoming season marks a homecoming as the Folger reopens its historic landmark building to the public following a transformative three-year renovation project. More than 12,000 square feet of new public spaces will welcome visitors, including new exhibition halls (the **Shakespeare Exhibition Hall** shows all 82 of the Folger's Shakespeare First Folios together for the first time), a Learning Lab, collaborative research spaces, and expansive new outdoor gardens and visitor amenities, including a gift shop and a new café in the reimagined Great Hall.

For more information about the Folger's Renovation Project and the building's **November 17, 2023** reopening, visit [www.folger.edu/renovation](http://www.folger.edu/renovation).

### FOLGER THEATRE'S 2023/24 SEASON

#### **The Winter's Tale**

By William Shakespeare

Directed by Tamilla Woodard

October 24 – December 3, 2023

With the magic and fantastical elements of a fairy tale, Shakespeare's astonishing romance is a thrilling journey filled with emotional depth, extreme behavior, complex relationships—and a bear in pursuit. A tribute to the magic of storytelling, ***The Winter's Tale*** presents a rich tapestry of love, strife, hope, human folly, and resurrection. The exhilarating journey, staged by **Tamilla Woodard** (Baltimore Center Stage's world premiere of Donetta Lavinia Gray's *Where We Stand*), brings with it the power of forgiveness, redemption, and revelation.

#### **The Reading Room**

January 25 - 28, 2024

The Reading Room Festival advances the understanding and appreciation of Shakespeare's works by using them as a starting point for new expression by diverse voices and new perspectives. This second year of Folger Theatre's commitment to new works includes public readings of world premiere plays and commissions inspired by the works of Shakespeare. Separate conversations with scholars, artists, and critics will be hosted between readings, as well as moderated conversations with the playwrights, directors, dramaturgs, and audience members following each staged reading. Pays, artists, and on-sale dates to be announced later this year.

#### **Where We Belong**

By Madeline Sayet

Directed by Mei Ann Teo

February 15 – March 10, 2024

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In association with Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company

In 2015, Mohegan theater-maker Madeline Sayet travels to England to pursue a PhD in Shakespeare, where she finds a country that refuses to acknowledge its ongoing role in colonialism, just as the Brexit vote threatens to further disengage the UK from the wider world. In this stirring solo piece, Madeline echoes a journey to England braved by Native ancestors in the 1700s following treaty betrayals—and forces us to consider what it means to belong in an increasingly globalized world.

Following its world premiere in June 2021—presented by Woolly Mammoth Theater Company and the Folger Shakespeare Library—Where We Belong has enjoyed a successful national tour, appearing at Philadelphia Theatre Company, the Goodman Theatre, Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival, Seattle Repertory Theatre, The Public Theater, Portland Center Stage, and the Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

### **Metamorphoses**

By Mary Zimmerman

Directed by Psalmayene 24

May 7 – June 16, 2024

Ovid's classic tales come to astonishing life in Mary Zimmerman's adaptation where Gods and mortals experience love, loss, invention, and transformation. Juxtaposing the mythic and the modern, the stories of Aphrodite, Midas, Orpheus, Cupid, and others are told in whimsical and poignant fashion, reminding us of the joys, follies, and heartbreaks of being human. Nominated for three 2002 Tony Awards, including "Best Play."

## **FOLGER CONSORT'S 2023/24 SEASON**

### **A Baroque Christmas Story**

December 15 – 22, 2023

Celebrate the season with Folger Consort, performing Heinrich Schütz's grand retelling of the Christmas story along with German holiday favorites by Michael Praetorius and others.

**Virtual Early Music Seminar: *A Baroque Christmas Story***  
**December 13, 2023 at 6pm**

### **Music from the Life of Rabelais: Satire & Story-Telling**

January 19 – 21, 2024

The musical world and comedic writings of French Renaissance satirist François Rabelais are brought to life in this program that pairs music by such composers as Josquin des Pres with an on-stage comedian.

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**Virtual Early Music Seminar: *Music from the Life of Rabelais: Satire and Story-Telling***  
January 17, 2024 at 6pm

### **Music of Medieval Spain**

March 22 – 24, 2024

In a musical exploration of medieval Spain's era of Christian, Islamic, and Jewish coexistence during the reign of Alfonso el Sabio of Castile, the Folger Consort performs selections from the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*, Sephardic songs, and music from Arab Andalusia.

**Virtual Early Music Seminar: *Music of Medieval Spain***  
March 20, 2024 at 6pm

### **Ovid's Metamorphoses: Music and Mythology**

April 12 – 14, 2024

The Folger Consort performs French Baroque settings of stories from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* by such composers as Rameau, and 18<sup>th</sup>-century instrumental masterpieces by Marais, Telemann, and more.

**Virtual Early Music Seminar: *Ovid's Metamorphoses: Music and Mythology***  
April 10, 2024 at 6pm

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### **About Folger Shakespeare Library**

**Folger Shakespeare Library** is the world's largest Shakespeare collection, the ultimate resource for exploring Shakespeare and his world. The Folger welcomes millions of visitors online and in person. It provides unparalleled access to a huge array of resources, from original sources to modern interpretations. With the Folger, you can experience the power of performance, the wonder of exhibitions, and the excitement of path-breaking research. The Folger offers the opportunity to see and even work with early modern sources, driving discovery and transforming education for students of all ages.

Following a multi-year **Renovation Project**, the Folger will re-open its expanded building to the public on November 17, 2023. Learn more at **folger.edu**.

### **About Folger Theatre**

The award-winning **Folger Theatre** in our nation's capital bridges the arts and humanities through transformational performances and programming that speak inclusively to the human experience. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Karen Ann Daniels, Folger Theatre continues its legacy through exciting interpretations and adaptations of Shakespeare and expands the

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classical canon through cultivating today's artists and commissioning new work that is in dialogue with the concerns and issues of our time. Folger Theatre thrives both on its historical stage and in the community, engaging audiences wherever they happen to be. For more on Folger Theatre, please visit [www.folger.edu/theatre](http://www.folger.edu/theatre).

### About Folger Consort

About to embark on its 46<sup>th</sup> season as the early music ensemble in residence at the **Folger Shakespeare Library**, **Folger Consort** has delighted audiences with a stunning array of early music spanning roughly 800 years of repertoire. With a variety of world-class guest artists, from virtuoso soloists to large choirs and orchestras, Folger Consort has performed masterpieces of the most renowned composers and hidden treasures from those who might otherwise be lost to history.

With a season of concerts in the intimate setting of the Folger's Elizabethan-style theatre, as well as such grand spaces as Washington National Cathedral and the Kennedy Center, Folger Consort has also toured nationally and internationally to Shakespeare's Globe and other prestigious venues.

Among other awards and critical acclaim for its performances and recordings, Folger Consort has received several awards for Best Classical Chamber Ensemble from the Washington Area Music Awards. **David Mozur** is the Folger Consort Manager. For more on Folger Consort, please visit [www.folger.edu/consort](http://www.folger.edu/consort).

### About The O.B. Hardison Poetry Series

The **O.B. Hardison Poetry Series**, one of the nation's most established poetry reading programs, is noted for featuring an extensive range of outstanding poets. The series was founded in 1970 when the late O.B. Hardison, Jr., a renowned teacher, scholar, and poet, became director of the Folger Shakespeare Library and established many outreach programs to make the resources of the extraordinary research library available to the Washington community. **Teri Cross Davis** is the Folger Poetry Manager. For more on the O.B. Hardison Poetry Series, please visit [www.folger.edu/poetry](http://www.folger.edu/poetry).

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