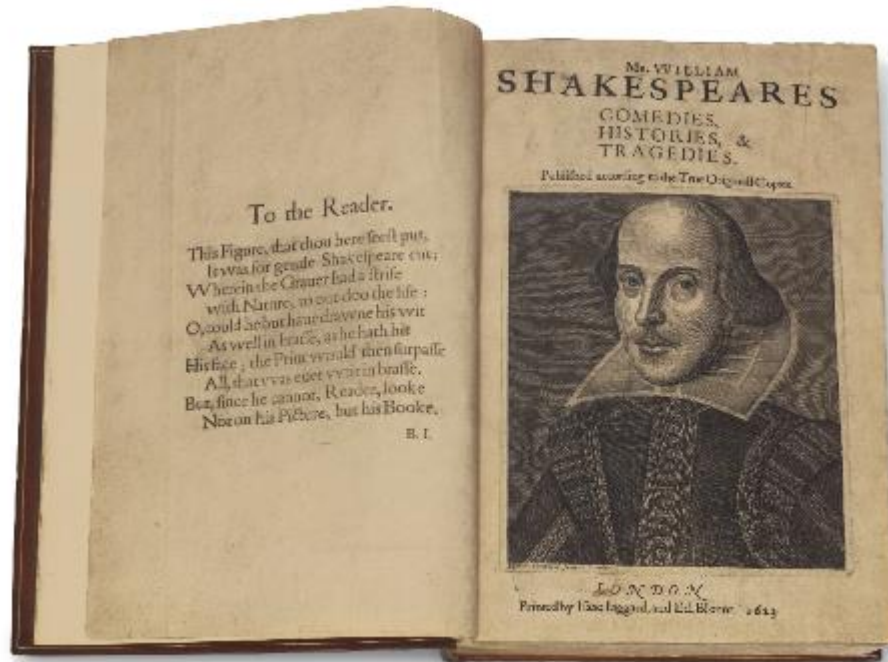


# CHRISTIE'S

RELEASE | NEW YORK | FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 10 JANUARY 2020

## WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S FIRST FOLIO TO BE OFFERED AT CHRISTIE'S EXCEPTIONAL SALE 24 APRIL 2020



William Shakespeare (1564-1616)  
*Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies.*  
*Published According to the True Originall Copies.*  
London: Printed by Isaac Iaggard and Ed. Blount, 1623.  
Estimate: \$4,000,000-6,000,000

**New York** – Christie's is delighted to announce the auction of William Shakespeare's *Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies*, often referred to as the "First Folio," as part of the Exceptional Sale during Classic Week at Christie's New York on 24 April 2020 (estimate \$4,000,000-6,000,000). The First Folio, bringing together for the first time the collected plays of Shakespeare, ranks as the greatest work of the English language and, indeed, of world literature. Already celebrated on its first publication, it has remained a highly sought-after masterpiece over four centuries. Only six complete copies are known in private hands. Shakespeare's First Folio is being sold on behalf of Mills College in Oakland, California.

The First Folio will be toured to London from 13-19 January, New York from 22-27 January, Hong Kong from 17-20 March, Beijing from 1-3 April, and back to New York ahead of the auction on 24 April.

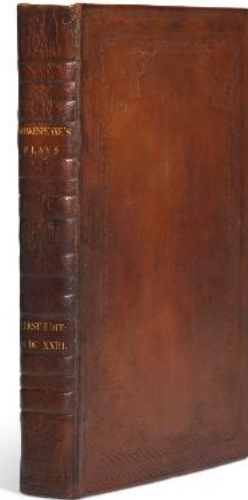
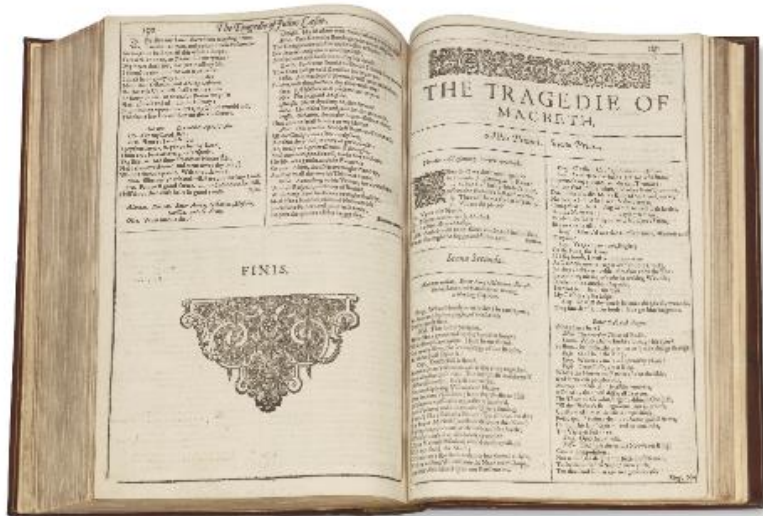
The book was published in 1623 by Shakespeare's friends and fellow actors, John Heminge and Henry Condell, who collaborated after the writer's death to compile this authoritative edition of his work. The First Folio contains thirty-six of Shakespeare's plays, including eighteen that may have otherwise been lost forever — among the rescued works are *Macbeth*, *The Twelfth Night*, *Measure for Measure*, and *Julius Caesar*. Heminge and Condell also shaped the way the world would read Shakespeare's plays by organizing them for the first time into the categories of comedies, tragedies, and histories. The book's large size helped elevate the cultural standing of Shakespeare and drama generally, as it assumed an imposing folio format typically reserved at the time for Bibles, theology, and law books.

This remarkable sale marks the first time in nearly 20 years that a complete copy of the First Folio has come to auction. It presents a rare opportunity for collectors to acquire a well-preserved and complete copy of this monument to world literature.

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**Margaret Ford, International Head of Group, Books & Manuscripts, London** comments, *"To handle a First Folio by William Shakespeare is always a privilege and even - given its tremendous significance and influence around the globe - a humbling experience. This copy is especially exciting as one of the very few complete copies surviving in private hands and knowing that it was once in the hands of the great Shakespeare scholar Edmond Malone, who himself affirmed its completeness already 200 years ago."*



Note to editors:

- The current auction record for a Shakespeare First Folio is \$6,166,000, set by Christie's on October 8, 2001 in New York. This First Folio was sold from the Library of Abel E. Berland.

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## About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had auction sales in the first half of 2019 that totalled £2.2 billion / \$2.8 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and international expertise. Christie's offers around 350 auctions annually in over 80 categories, including all areas of fine and decorative arts, jewellery, photographs, collectibles, wine, and more. Prices range from \$200 to over \$100 million. Christie's also has a long and successful history conducting private sales for its clients in all categories, with emphasis on Post-War & Contemporary, Impressionist & Modern, Old Masters and Jewellery.

Alongside regular sales online, Christie's has a global presence in 46 countries, with 10 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, Hong Kong, and Shanghai.

*\*Please note when quoting estimates above that other fees will apply in addition to the hammer price - see Section D of the Conditions of Sale at the back of the sale catalogue.*

*\*Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Sales totals are hammer price plus buyer's premium and are reported net of applicable fees.*

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Images available on request

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