

# Media Release



## Paul Kelly to headline the NSW State Library's Shakespeare-aganza

*He was not of an age, but for all time!* Ben Jonson

**23/3/2016**

To commemorate the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of William Shakespeare's death on 23 April 2016, the State Library of NSW is staging a major Shakespeare 400 celebration to be headlined by acclaimed Australian singer/storyteller Paul Kelly.

"As the home of Shakespeare in Australia, the State Library is thrilled to be joining the international celebrations to recognise the life and work of the renowned poet and playwright," says NSW State Librarian & Chief Executive Alex Byrne.

"The anniversary offers a unique opportunity for us to highlight the Bard's ongoing literary and cultural significance, and how his work continues to influence us today," says Dr Byrne. "We're delighted Paul Kelly will be sharing his contemporary response to Shakespeare's genius for the first time at the Library on 23 April."

Paul Kelly will launch his new Shakespeare inspired album *Seven Sonnets & A Song* in the atmospheric Mitchell Reading Room on Saturday evening 23 April.

Complementing this landmark launch, the Library will present a dynamic series of events for all ages, including: a silent film festival, Shakespeare trivia night (21 April), a sonnet slam and a free Shakespeare 400 Fan Day (23 April) featuring roving performers from Bell Shakespeare, a fairy grotto and drawing workshops with award-winning children's author Leigh Hobbs!

In addition, Australia's only copy of Shakespeare's first collection of works (published posthumously in 1623) known as the First Folio, will go on display in the State Library's Amaze Gallery from 1 April, along with other extraordinary Shakespeariana from the Library's rich collections.

"There are no manuscripts of these plays available in the Bard's own hand so the First Folio is the closest a reader can get to the original source," says Maggie Patton, the State Library's rare books expert.

"It's hard to imagine that 16 of Shakespeare's early plays – published in the First Folio thanks to the Bard's fellow actors – may have never been published and that works like *Anthony & Cleopatra*, *The Tempest* or *Twelfth Night* might have been lost to generations of audiences."

To celebrate Shakespeare 400, the State Library's stunning Shakespeare Room - one of the most unusual public places in Sydney – will be open every day from 18 to 23 April, from 10am to 4pm.



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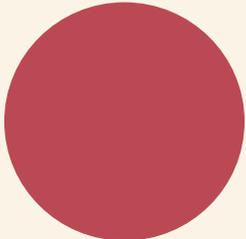


The Tudor-style memorial library, with its spectacular plaster ceiling modelled on Cardinal Wolsey's closet at Hampton Court Palace, was constructed in 1943 in the State Library's historic Mitchell wing.

For more information go to [www.sl.nsw.gov.au/Shakespeare400](http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/Shakespeare400) or follow #shakespeare400. Tickets to the Paul Kelly album launch on sale in April.

**Dr Alex Byrne and Maggie Patton are available for interviews.**

For more information, interviews or images, please contact:  
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Shakespeare