

## News From The Random House Publishing Group

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#### MODERN LIBRARY TO PUBLISH THE ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY'S COMPLETE WORKS OF SHAKESPEARE NEXT YEAR

Publication to Coincide with the RSC's Year Performing the Entire Shakespeare Canon

New York, July 11, 2005 – The Modern Library imprint has joined forces with the Royal Shakespeare Company to publish, in Fall 2006, a new complete landmark edition of the playwright's works, it was announced today by Gina Centrello, President and Publisher of the Random House Publishing Group.

Edited by the acclaimed Shakespearan scholar Jonathan Bate, with textual editing by Eric Rasmussen, THE RSC SHAKESPEARE: The Complete Works will be the first edition since 1709 to present a modernized and editorially corrected version of the First Folio—the first published text of the collected plays assembled by Shakespeare's fellow actors. It will provide general readers, academics, and performers with the most up-to-date theatrical methodology and Shakespearean scholarship.

The Royal Shakespeare Company announced separately today their plan to perform all of Shakespeare's plays during their 2006-2007 season using the new Modern Library RSC texts.

"The First Folio is unquestionably the most important literary work in the English language," said Bate, who has been called "the foremost Shakespeare scholar of his generation" by *The Times* (London) and is a governor and board member of the RSC. "But because of the tendency of editors to mix Folio and Quarto texts, it has not been edited, annotated and modernized as a complete book for nearly three hundred years. This absence in the otherwise crowded market of Shakespeare texts is extraordinary."

Eric Rasmussen, one of the foremost living bibliographers of Shakespeare, said, "The Folio is the original Complete Works, so it is the appropriate text for our edition. Our aim is to offer what we think of as a modernized, ideal First Folio--modernized because actors, directors and students habitually work with modernized spelling and punctuation; ideal because we will correct manifest

printers' errors. We will respect the Folio editors more fully than has often been the case in the past."

Jane von Mehren, Publisher of the Modern Library, said "The pairing of the Modern Library with its longstanding tradition of literary excellence and the RSC, which is acclaimed for its groundbreaking theatrical productions, gives us a remarkable opportunity to make this volume a valuable and lasting contribution to the fields of Shakespearean study and performance."

Random House acquired world rights to the edition in a deal with Andrew Wylie of the Wylie Agency. Palgrave Macmillan will publish in English under license worldwide, excluding North America. Both publishers are working in full collaboration throughout the development of this major publishing project.

Jonathan Bate is Professor of Shakespeare and Renaissance Literature at the University of Warwick. He has held visiting posts at Harvard, Yale and UCLA and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, a Fellow of the British Academy, an Honorary Fellow of St Catharine's College, Cambridge, and a Governor and Board member of the Royal Shakespeare Company. Widely known as a critic, award-winning biographer and broadcaster, Bate is the author of several books on Shakespeare, including *Shakespeare and Ovid* (1993) and *The Genius of Shakespeare* (1997), which was described by Sir Peter Hall, founder of the RSC, as "the best modern book on Shakespeare."

Eric Rasmussen is Professor of English and Director of Graduate Study at the University of Nevada. He is a co-editor of the *Norton Anthology of English Renaissance Drama* and of the forthcoming New Variorum Shakespeare edition of *Hamlet*. He has edited *King Henry VI Part 3* for the Arden Shakespeare series, the works of Christopher Marlowe for Oxford's World's Classics series, *Cynthia's Revels* for the *Cambridge Works of Ben Jonson*, and *Doctor Faustus* for the Revels Plays series. He is General Textual Editor of the Internet Shakespeare Editions Project and he writes the annual review of editions and textual studies for *Shakespeare Survey*.

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Carol Schneider  
V.P., Executive Director, Publicity and Public Relations  
The Random House Publishing Group  
1745 Broadway - 17-4  
New York, NY 10019  
212/572-2245  
[cschneider@randomhouse.com](mailto:cschneider@randomhouse.com)