THE FOLGER SHAKESPEARE LIBRARY
RENAISSANCE FORUM AWARDS

PROGRAM

Dinner
in the Reading Room

Performance from the
Student Shakespeare Festival
by the Fillmore Arts Center

Renaissance Forum Awards
Peggy O'Brien - CFB, Ed.
Ronald F. Stowe - RDS, L. I.
Rep. Sidney R. Yates
Sen. Claiborne Pell

Dessert
in the Great Hall
Mr. Gundersheimer, Members of the Renaissance Forum, Ladies and Gentlemen, Senator Pell is deeply distressed that he is unable to be with you tonight and asked me to convey how greatly honored he is to receive this Renaissance Forum Award. I must tell you that it is very daunting for me, a lowly staff member, to be speaking to you with so many distinguished members of Congress present, not the least of whom is one of my heroes, Representative Yates.

Claiborne Pell has said many times that the strength of our nation is determined not by the amount of gold in Fort Knox nor the number of missiles in our silos, but by the education and character of our people. Through the humanities - whether symposia, lectures, books, film, exhibitions, preservation - we are able to understand and build upon the ideas that have shaped this great country. Humanities education brings history alive for our young people while developing their ability to analyze, think creatively and critically, and to communicate. We have just witnessed the value of the Folger Library’s contributions to the field. Not satisfied to restrict its priceless collection to the shelves, it shares its wealth through a wide variety of programs from live performance to school-based curricula... and this enriches us all.

Senator Pell’s vision from the beginning was to use federal funds as a catalyst for increasing funding in the private sector. And in this, we have been extraordinarily successful. Tonight, with this lovely dinner, we are reminded again of the rewards of public-private partnerships. Collaboration is vital to the health of our nation’s arts and humanities, and no one sector can support them alone. Business leadership is a critical component. To the corporate patrons here, I commend you for your personal commitment to the Folger’s education and cultural programs, and I hope that you will continue this important joint investment in transmitting our cultural heritage to the next generations.

Again, on behalf of Senator Pell, thank you for this splendid award.