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Folger Shakespeare Library: Renaissance Forum Awards (1995): Correspondence 02

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The Honorable Claiborne Pell  
335 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510-3901  

Dear Senator Pell:

I am writing to you in my capacity as chair of the Renaissance Forum Campaign Committee of the Folger Shakespeare Library to ask you to be an Honorary Patron of the Renaissance Forum’s Awards Evening. The Awards evening is scheduled for November 2, 1995 from 6:30 to 9:30 at the Folger Shakespeare Library.

At this event, the Library recognizes outstanding achievement in humanities education and art and the corporations that support these activities. Proceeds from the event help support the Library’s cultural and educational outreach programs. Honorary patrons join with members of the Renaissance Forum in inviting corporations to participate in the Awards Evening, and their names will appear on an invitation sent to 500 Washington-area corporations in September. The members of the Renaissance Forum include nationally acclaimed leaders in the literary and dramatic arts, humanities education and government as well as the CEOs of companies which support the Folger Library’s outreach programs.

Founded in 1932, the Folger is an independent research library holding the world’s foremost collection of Shakespearean and the largest collection of early publications in the English language outside London. It also holds an internationally important collection of books and manuscripts from the Continental Renaissance and New World. Governed by the Trustees of Amherst College as a sister institution to the College, the Folger operates on a budget of $5.5 million. The library’s endowment supports 45% of budget, earnings 15% and gifts and grants 35%. The budget for public outreach programs relies almost entirely on gift and grant revenue to supplement earned income and enable it to offer free admission and low-priced tickets. Through the Renaissance Forum the Folger is attempting to build corporate support for educational and cultural programs presently sustained by grants from federal agencies.

The Folger provides public access to its cultural resources through a wide range of cultural and educational programs. Over 130,000 visitors attend exhibitions, plays, concerts, literary readings, and lectures at the Library each year. Millions hear monthly national
broadcasts of the Folger Consort. The Folger's national "Teaching Shakespeare" programs invigorate the teaching of Shakespeare in classrooms across the country and are endorsed as models by the Department of Education, America 2000, and numerous private education agencies. Programs for Washington schools reach several hundred teachers and over 10,000 students each year.

Thank you for your attention to this request. I will be calling your office in the near future to talk to you further about being an Honorary Patron of the Awards Evening.

Sincerely,

Mark M. MacCarthy