

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FANTASTIC PRINTS CELEBRATE 400 YEARS OF SHAKESPEARE**

**CHICAGO**—The Art Institute of Chicago is proud to join cultural and educational organizations throughout the city—and around the world—in celebrating four centuries of William Shakespeare. From **April 11 through October 10, 2016**, the museum will present ***Supernatural Shakespeare***, rarely seen engravings that rival in imaginative power the works produced by the Bard himself. Inspired by the work of Swiss painter **Henry Fuseli** (1741–1825), considered one of the most fantastical of 18<sup>th</sup>-century artists, the featured prints focus on the themes and characters of Shakespeare’s witches and phantasms, faeries and fools.



Fuseli received a commission in 1779 from John Boydell, a London publisher and print dealer intent on re-establishing interest in Shakespeare with a gallery devoted to paintings and prints of the playwright’s work. The Art Institute exhibition features engraved copies of the paintings by Fuseli that became some of the best-known images from Boydell’s Shakespeare renaissance. *The Nursery of Shakespeare* (1810) depicts an infant Shakespeare in the midst of phantasmal inspirations, while *The Witches Appear to Macbeth and Banquo* (1798) portrays the three sorceresses concocting their spell of “toil and trouble.” *Titania and Bottom with Ass’s Head* (1796) represents *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, as the enchanted odd couple carouses in their sylvan paradise.

The museum’s celebration continues when these characters come to life on May 1, as musicians from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra play selections from Felix Mendelssohn’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* in the Art Institute’s Fullerton Hall. Visitors are also encouraged to view the museum’s paintings by Henry Fuseli in a neighboring gallery: *Milton Dictating to his Daughter* (1794) and *Head of a Damned Soul*, from Dante’s *Inferno* (1770/78).

**Images:** Moses Haughton II, after Henry Fuseli. *The Nursery of Shakespeare*, 1810. Gift of Chalkley J. Hambleton.

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**MUSEUM HOURS**  
Daily: 10:30–5:00  
Thursdays until 8:00

Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year’s days  
Children under 14 always free  
Members always free

The Art Institute of Chicago gratefully acknowledges the support of the Chicago Park District on behalf of the citizens of Chicago.