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**Collection of playwright Sam Shepard
obtained by University of Texas Libraries**

AUSTIN, Texas—An archival collection of materials by Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright, actor and author Sam Shepard has been acquired by the University of Texas Libraries.

The archive contains materials from the latter part of Shepard's career as author, playwright and actor, roughly from the late 1970s to the present, and includes manuscripts, film scripts, correspondence, volumes from his personal library, awards and other personal items. The archive will be part of the Fine Arts Library special collections.

“Sam Shepard is an American original, a vision and voice that for 40 years has been unconfined by genre or convention,” says interim Dean of the College of Fine Arts Doug Dempster. “The University of Texas at Austin is thrilled to have the Shepard archive available for research and for use in our theatre and play writing programs.”

Shepard has written more than 40 plays and five screenplays, receiving numerous accolades, including eleven Obie Awards. Among his most notable dramas are “Buried Child (1979),” “La Turista” (1967), “Curse of the Starving Class” (1978) and “True West” (1980).

Though considered one of the preeminent contemporary American playwrights, Shepard is perhaps better known for his various acting roles in such notable films as “Days of Heaven” (1978), “The Right

Stuff” (1983) and “Crimes of the Heart” (1987). For his role as Chuck Yeager in “The Right Stuff,” Shepard was nominated for the Best Supporting Actor award by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Among the materials in the collection are manuscripts from such plays as “The Tooth of Crime” (1972) and “The God of Hell” (2004), as well as for the screenplay “Don’t Come Knocking” (2005) and his collection of stories “Great Dream of Heaven” (2002). Shepard’s film scripts for “Black Hawk Down” (2002) and the upcoming release “The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford” (2006) are part of the collection, as is correspondence with German director Wim Wenders. Also included in the archive are eight of Shepard’s Obie awards.

Shepard’s personal copy of “Buried Child,” his 1979 Pulitzer Prize-winning drama, becomes the nine millionth volume held by the University of Texas Libraries. This addition elevates the university’s library system to the sixth largest among research libraries in North America.

"I consider Sam Shepard to be one of the most important figures of his generation, and his archive represents significant work from all phases of Shepard's artistic life—theater, film, music, poetry, journalism and short fiction," says Dr. Kurt Heinzelman, professor of literature and creative writing at The University of Texas at Austin and member of the Libraries advisory council.

“This is also an archive for the future, because it entails the promise that Shepard's subsequent work will also become a part of the University Libraries' collection,” adds Heinzelman. “Most important, it signals the dedication of the Fine Arts Library in particular to invest in the preservation and the public display of work by contemporary American playwrights and screenwriters. This will be a major resource for scholarship at the university.”

As part of the acquisition agreement, Shepard will offer future material to the University of Texas Libraries to augment the collection.

Fine Arts Library staff members have begun processing the materials and the archive is expected to be available for use by students and scholars in summer 2007, the same time that a renovation of the library’s reading room will be completed. A collection of items from the archive is on display at the Fine Arts Library.

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