May 5-15, 2011
Vanderhoef Studio Theatre
Mondavi Center

The Moby-Dick Variations
Based on the Novel
by
Herman Melville
Conceived & Directed by John Zibell
Devised by the Company

This production lasts one hour and fifty minutes without intermission. It contains partial nudity and mature adult content including profanity. Before the performance begins, please note the exit closest to your seat. Kindly silence your cell phone, pager, and other electronic devices. Video, photographic or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited by law. Food and drink are not permitted in the theatre. Thank you for your cooperation.
The Moby-Dick Variations

Director’s Notes

Hunting Whales in the Chaosmos: Or, Monomania For Multiplicity

Everyone is in search of a white whale. This is already getting too clear on something better left partially obscured. It’s saying too much and, of course, not saying enough. The white whale is not merely an object of desire - or obsession. It is not a metaphor, merely - not any more than I’m merely a metaphor for Captain Ahab, which, naturally, I have become. There’s no avoiding that. I tried becoming the whale instead of the one-legged, *ungodly, godlike man* and found that the dismasted monomaniac himself was doing just that (becoming whale). So it goes. It’s also too much to say the white whale is the 19th-Century American Pioneer Spirit that once tugged at stout souls inspiring them to strike out into the untamed wilderness of the Western territories back when California’s statehood (and corporations’ personhood) was days old and the machinery of the industrial revolution was lubricated by whale oil. The white whale is not the unattainable American dream in the post-9/11 era. The white whale is a material. He’s been a theatrical material for us. We’ve carved images on his teeth and bones and cut our cloth from his membranes. We’ve deciphered the hieroglyphic markings on his skin to use as the text we will speak, howl and sing to you. We’ve studied his voice, his movement, so we could make ritual, make dances. Yes, unlike Ahab, we’ve killed and dissected the whale, spreading his soft innards out on the deck to read our fortunes in the veins and capillaries in his lungs - the size of an American car. We’ve plotted profane cartographies of our lives and souls using the web of his neurons like a map. We’ve plucked chunks of stone, salt, and sand from his steaming guts to mark points along the journey that we carved with hand-made knives into layers of his muktuk. We made peace with killing this whale for our religious reasons and, like the Inuit with their semi-annual Bowhead sacrifice, we used every bit. Slaughter is a long-standing theatrical tradition. In every dramatic scene there’s one dead, stinking whale in the center of the floor that nobody talks about. That’s what drama is. But theatre... theatre isn’t merely a reproduction of this denial of ever-present death. It’s something else too. Something rhythmic and still irregular. Something oceanic. Our theatre piece wants to be the smooth, unmarked, and unmarkable space of the pre-industrial (and pre-GPS coordinated) ocean. It can’t. We’ve charted and toxified (sacrificed) that ocean. Melville talks a lot about our addiction to meaning and ways of making and remaking and discarding meaning from heterogeneous sources. He talks a lot about mono-mania and its destiny - which is to take down everything. Ev-ry-thing! He says a lot about contradiction and multitudinous generative forces (which often bear the names of Roman gods) which bring into being even the simplest of things - which are never really very simple when you look at them. Nothing is simple when you look at it, but these metaphors are already saying too much. Beneath the meaning(s) is a class of theatrical forms. They’re not hard to spot, you just need to learn how to look, preferably from someone who’s looked quite a lot, and find a high enough vantage point. These forms are, like the whale, material and much more. They live below the surface. Live. They communicate in languages we can hear but will never decode. We study them and
seem to learn nothing, at least not anything about the first (and maybe only) 21st century meme - self-destruction. We name them, tag them, track them, devour them, worship them and marvel when scientists claim that they’re nearly as smart as we and that they might even name each other the way we do. We’ve built a market to distribute what’s left when we’ve slaughtered them to make sweet-smelling things and fuel. The thing I’m saying too much about right now is theatre, if I’ve lost you in the perfumed ambergris of metaphor. I hope, like Jonah, you were inside the whale. These materials, which live below the surface, exploited by whaleman Herman Melville to make his book and the whalers (women and men) who made this piece of theatre are not the identifiable bones in the skeleton of narrative. They’re the dense, coursing, changing, echoing, flow of the tenacious, unknowable, multitudinous, un-graspable, phantom of life. But this is all saying too much.

-John Zibell

**Place:** Here  
**Time:** Now

**About the Director**

John Zibell makes media/physical artworks for theatre, cinema, gallery, and the street examining the collision of virtual with actual bodies. He worked and trained as an actor and director for many years in New York with Mike Nichols, Paul Sills and Andre Gregory. John is currently the second-year Master of Fine Arts Directing candidate in the Department of Theatre and Dance at UC Davis where he directed *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, assistant directed and performed in Guillermo Gomez-Pena’s *Corpo-Ilicito: The Post Human Society 6.9* and Anna Fenemore’s *The Matter of Taste*. John also created video for *Gallathea* and *Body of Knowledge* directed by Peter Lichtenfels and Karl Frost respectively.

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**Special Thanks**

Heartfelt appreciation to Stephanie Pulford for her creativity and long hours designing *The Moby-Dick Variations* poster.

And many thanks to all who generously contributed to our kickstarter drive. The funds raised helped us fully realize this production.
UC Davis Department of Theatre & Dance

presents

The Moby-Dick Variations
Conceived by John Zibell
Devised by the Company

with

Kevin Adamski, Jenny Adler, Sarah Birdsall, Don Carroll, Claire Maria Chambers, Emelie Coleman, Nina Galin, Bijian Ghiasi, Paige Greco, Anna Harp, Will Klundt, Ngoc Le, Brian Livingston, Moira Niesman, Daniel Olivias, Megan Phillips, Stephanie Pulford, Piper Sloan, Dennis Somera, Alejandro Torres, Eric Williams, Kevin Young

SCENIC DESIGNER
Gian Scarabino

COSTUME DESIGNER
Maggie Chan

STAGE MANAGER
William Macinnis

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Kelly Jean Conard

ORIGINAL MUSIC
Dylan Bolles
and
Thingamajigs Performance Group

DIRECTED BY
John Zibell
PERFORMER BIOS

KEVIN ADAMSKI started doing theatre after seeing his older brother perform in an after school play in elementary school. He is having a whale of a time in Davis and has been a part of the Dead Arts Society. He was seen last spring in *The Matter of Taste* and last fall in *Hinterland*.

JENNY ADLER is a third-year Dramatic Art and Music major with an emphasis in Vocal Performance. She just finished directing “The Ballad of a Tangerine” for The Edge Performance Festival and has previously been on stage with the department in *Come Hell and High Water*, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, and *The Matter of Taste*. She is president and founder of The Dead Arts Society and co-president of the A.C.T. Coalition on campus.

SARAH BIRDSALL is a graduating Dramatic Art major. Previous credits at UC Davis include: *Hinterland* (Eve), *The Matter of Taste* (self), *Corpo/Ilicito*, and 2008’s *ThirdEye Theatre Festival*. Other favorite roles include: *Seussical* (Gertrude), *Once Upon a Mattress* (Lady Larken), *Godspell* (Peggy), *Wyrd Sisters* (Magrat), *The Visit* (Claire) and *Nathan the Wise* (Daja).

CLAIRE MARIA CHAMBERS is a graduating doctoral candidate in Performance Studies. She has taught and directed theatre for young people, worked in community theatre, created arts outreach programs for homeless youth in Seattle, and taught performance analysis and criticism in the UC Davis Department of Theatre and Dance. As a performance scholar, Claire writes about religion and liturgy (especially apophatic spirituality), and contemporary performance practice. clairemariachambers.com

EMELIE COLEMAN is a doctoral candidate in Comparative Literature with a designated emphasis in Studies in Performance and Practice. She focuses on reception of Persian poetry in Central Asia and India, particularly translation, adaptation and performance of classical poetry by women. She is a member of Wan Chao Dance and a Principal Dancer with Ballet Afsaneh, both based in the Bay Area. She is also interested in intersections of dance and film, and is particularly excited to get to collaborate virtually with the rest of the cast.

NINA GALIN is a dance-theatre artist and bodymind philosopher. She recently completed her Master of Fine Arts in Choreography at UC Davis, and is currently working a doctoral candidate in Performance Studies. Her work in *The Moby-Dick Variations* cross-pollinates her work in theatre and her work in therapeutic somatic education. She salutes John Zibell for creating this performance laboratory.

BIJAN GHIASI. Born Bijan Homayoon Farshid Mansoor Teymour Ali Robinson-Ghiasi on a stormy day in Nantucket, Bijan had always dreamed of the sea. Now, he can finally fully realize that dream. In conjunction with director John Zibell’s artistic vision, Bijan will be embodying and portraying the White Whale: Moby Dick. This is an honor for him and his first show at UC Davis. His favorite roles include: Guard #5 in Shakespeare’s *Anthony and Cleopatra* and MacDuff’s Dead Body Double in *Macbeth*. Death to Captain Ahab!

PAIGE GRECO graduated from UC Davis with a major in Comparative Literature and a minor in Dramatic Art in 2010. She appeared and cooked and talked in *The Matter of Taste*. Her interests include writing, dramaturgy, the actor/audience relationship and how to make a really good waffle.
ANNA HARP is a fifth-year Communication major and Dramatic Art minor. She played basketball for the UC Davis Aggies for two years before ending her career early with a knee injury. She has performed in *Bluebeard’s Castle* and hopes to continue her acting career upon graduating.

WILL KLUNDT is a Master of Fine Arts Acting candidate at the UC Davis Department of Theatre and Dance. Just before coming to Davis he performed in Jeffery Hatcher’s *Three Viewings* (Emil), *Wait Until Dark* (Mike Talman) and co-directed *Reefer Madness* as a visiting artist at the College of Southern Nevada. He has also performed in *Twelfth Night* (Orsino), *Tuesday’s with Morrie* (Mitch Albom), *Angels in America* (Joe Pitt), *Take Me Out* (Mason Marsac), *Much Ado About Nothing* (Claudio), *The Laramie Project* (Stephen Belber), and *The America Play* (John Wilkes Booth). At various times he has been a board member at Las Vegas Little Theatre, on the play selection committee for Albuquerque Little Theatre, an artistic associate of the Atlas Theatre Ensemble and directed the drama departments at Shadow Ridge High School, Moriarty High School and Jim Bridger Middle School.

NGOC LE is a third-year major in Technocultural Studies and Dramatic Art. Her time at UC Davis has helped her realize love and passions for acting, directing, dancing, filming and producing. Her favorite quote is “If you don’t stand for something you will fall for anything” by Malcolm X. Ship happens.

BRIAN LIVINGSTON is a second-year Master of Fine Arts candidate in Acting at UC Davis. It is a tremendous gift for him to work on this production and create with these fine artists. Brian lives in the Bay Area where he is a member of the ensemble groups: foolsFURY Theatre Company and The Mystic Family Circus, both based in San Francisco and New York City. He recently finished acting in a feature length film and toured a show to the New York Fringe in June winning the “Overall Excellence Award.” When he is not directing, writing, acting, producing, community organizing, and teaching, he is usually found with his hands deep in the earth gardening.

KEVIN MORIARTY is a recent graduate of the UC Davis Department of Theatre and Dance. His work was featured in The Edge Performance Festival. He continues to pursue choreography and dance with aspirations of making it big.

MOIRA NIESMAN is a third-year double major in International Relations and Dramatic Art with Dance emphasis. She is primarily a dancer and has trained since age three in ballet, jazz and contemporary dance. She has performed in Main Stage Dance and at Sea World San Diego. She is a current member of the UC Davis Dance Team.

DANIEL OLIVAS is a double major in Art Studio and Film Studies with a minor in Music, who takes advantage of every opportunity in his practice. He is chair and co-founder of ASUCD Aggie Public Arts Committee and creates the artwork for productions of the Davis Shakespeare Ensemble. He has been a part of many extracurriculars involving art, and partakes in many performances including Studio 301’s Production of *Hair*.

MEGAN PHILLIPS is a second-year Master of Science student in Animal Behavior. She also studies acting at the Beverly Hills Playhouse in San Francisco. This is her first performance at UC Davis.

STEPHANIE PULFORD is a fifth-year graduate student in Mechanical Engineering. She is a dangerous neurotoxin, and should not be consumed by pets or small children.
PIPER SLOAN has been dancing since she learned to walk. She is a recent transfer to UCD and is pursuing a degree in Dramatic Art with Dance emphasis.

DENNIS SOMERA is a doctoral candidate in Performance Studies who has been doing “pokin’wordsplay/pinch/punch of performancearth” for years in the Oakland/SF Bay Area alone/on the page/online/in collaboration/etc. He is excited to be participating in this production with the UC Davis Department of Theatre and Dance.

ALEJANDRO TORRES is a graduating fourth-year student with double major in Dramatic Art and Film Studies. Finishing up his last quarter he looks back fondly at the numerous blessings, opportunities, and experiences both in and out of theatre. At UC Davis he’s played a dancer, a Russian peasant, himself, a devil, a prison guard, a cotton-house man, and now a Maori warrior. He looks forward to his future as an actor with confidence and excitement. He very much hopes you enjoy the show, and approach the unknown with openness.

ERIC WILLIAMS is a third-year Human Development and Dramatic Art double major. He has done much back stage work for department shows such as The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee and Some Things are Private, but this is his first performance with the department. He looks forward to working on more shows.

KEVIN YOUNG is a fourth-year Communication major. He is a member of the UC Davis Afterglow, an all male acapella group, and previously a member of the UC Davis University Choir. Last quarter he took part in the production Come Hell and High Water. This is his second production with the UC Davis Department of Theatre and Dance. He is very excited for it.

CONCEPT ARTIST BIOS

DYLAN BOLLES (Composer) makes performances with people and environments, many of which involve the design and construction of new musical instruments and the cultivation of co-creative relationships based in listening practice. His activities include a wide range of performance-based collaborations, time-based arts, installations, and sound compositions. Dylan is currently a doctoral candidate in Performance Studies at UC Davis.

Dylan’s Thingamajigs Performance Group emerged from long-term collaborations between individual ensemble members. Utilizing unconventional musical instruments, TPG combines world folk and traditional music with modern technology and performance practice. Creating pieces in a collaborative process that sometimes incorporates voice and multimedia elements, this ensemble expands and contracts for each performance situation. Besides Dylan, core members of TPG are Suki O’Kane, Zachary Watkins and Edward Schocker. Key collaborators over the years include poet Stephen Ratcliffe, and visual artists Michael Meyers and Keith Evans. thingamajigs.org/programs/TPG.html

DON CARROLL (Painting Artist) Received his BFA from the University of New Mexico in Fine Arts. This is his first performance piece. Most of the time Don can be found painting in oils.

MAGGIE S. CHAN (Costume Designer) is a first-year Master of Fine Arts candidate in Costume Design. She has designed The Laramie Project, variations for the Asian American Theater Festival, Hinterland and Body of Knowledge. Enjoy the show.
KELLY JEAN CONARD (Lighting Designer) is a second-year Lighting Design Master of Fine Arts candidate at the UC Davis Department of Theatre and Dance. She worked with a small non-profit Shakespeare company, Poor Players, for three years. She transferred to UC Santa Cruz where she received her Bachelor of Arts in Theatre in 2009. She has worked as an administration intern and electrician at Shakespeare Santa Cruz for two seasons and more recently interned with the multi-million dollar Los Angeles based design firm Thinkwell Group. Her past theatrical design work includes Love’s Fire, Carry the Tiger to the Mountain, Venus, and Faggot Arabesque at UC Santa Cruz. In her graduate studies Kelly has been pleased to be involved in A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Who Are You?, Gallathea, Body of Knowledge and The Who’s Tommy.

WILLIAM MACINNIS (Stage Manager) joined the Department of Theatre & Dance in 2009 where he has enjoyed wearing many hats. In 2010 he directed Third Eye Theatre Festival’s The Blue Jay’s Song -- a wild journey through the mind of Isaac Monger. He has worked on scenery crew for several shows. Bill is grateful for this current and challenging opportunity to stage manage The Moby-Dick Variations which has taught him a great deal.

KEVIN MORIARTY (Dance Consultant) is a recent graduate of the UC Davis Department of Theatre and Dance. His work was featured in The Edge Performance Festival. He continues to pursue choreography and dance with aspirations of making it big.

GIAN SCARABINO (Scenic Designer) is a second-year Master of Fine Arts candidate who most recently worked with Karl Frost and Peter Lichtenfels on their respective productions of Body of Knowledge and Gallathea. After a very fruitful collaboration Gian is proud to be part of The Moby-Dick Variations and finds himself entirely energized by the playfulness and grace of this exceptional company.
Production Staff

Production Manager
Technical Director
Facilities Manager/Audio Supervisor
Publicity Director
Costume Shop Director
Master Electrician
Cutter/Draper/Tailor
Cutter/Draper/Hair Specialist
Scene Technician/Properties
Scene Technician/Charge Artist
Company Managers

House Manager

Costume Shop Teaching Assistant

Stitchers

Stock Assistant

Web Master
Lead Graphic Designer
Graphic Designer
Publicity Assistant
Photographer

ERIC STEGGALL
DANIEL NEELAND
NED JACOBSON
JANICE BISGAARD
ROXANNE FEMLING
MICHAEL HILL
ABEL MERCADO
ANGELA KIGHT
BYRON RUDROW
JOHN MURPHY
MARK CURTIS FERRANDO
AVERY LINCOLN
DANIEL JORDAN

MAGGIE CHAN

SHANNON DUPONT
YER LOR
KIM NGUYEN
CANDY YANG

SHANNON DUPONT

TXAI-XING WONG
ANGELA ZANOTTI
KASSIE HOELPER
PAMELA OREBAUGH
JEFF PERRY
Production Team

Directing Advisor
SARAH PIA ANDERSON

Choreography Advisor
DAVID GRENEK

Scenic Design Advisor
JOHN IACOVELLI

Costume Design Advisor
MAGGIE MORGAN

Assistant Costume Designer
KARYN NOEL

Lighting Design Advisor
THOMAS J. MUNN

Sound Design Advisor
NED JACOBSON

Assistant Stage Managers
TIFFANY JAMISON
SEPIDEH SAEB

Dance Consultant
KEVIN MORIARTY

Costume Production Crew
HYGAN BAGHAYAN
SARAH BIRDSALL
ANNA CHALMERS
MICHELLE CHRISTENSEN
ESTEBAN GONZALEZ
GILLIAN HEITMAN
JAKI JOANINO
KARYN NOEL
INNA V. NOSENKO
CARMEN SIU

Dressers
SARAH ABELSON
DANIELA LEAL
TING JUNG LEE
HUONG NGUYEN
HEIDI TABING

Scenery Production Crew
KAREN BALDEROS
LAURA HOLLAND
TAI HUYNH
WILLIAM MACINNIS
JOSHUA NIELSEN
SEPIDEH SAEB
JENNA SEID

Properties Master
TIFFANY JAMISON

Stage Crew
QUANG NGUYEN
HUY PHAN

Lighting Technician
MARITZA ZELDA

Lighting Crew
ALISON GARCIA KELLER
AVERY LINCOLN
SARAH NORTON
DARRYL PALTAO
CHRISTIAN SAVAGE
JENNA SEID
REED WAGNER
TRISTAN WETTER
Arts Administration Group

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Academic Services Officers
Business Office

Technical Support

Academic Personnel Office

Graduate Program Coordination

Undergraduate Program Coordination

Faculty

SARAH PIA ANDERSON: Directing
LARRY BOGAD: Performance Studies
DELLA DAVIDSON: Dance
DAVID GRENKE: Department Chair, Dance
LYNETTE HUNTER: Performance Studies
JOHN IACOVELLI: Scenic Design
PETER LICHTENFELS: Directing, Acting, Performance Studies
BELLA MERLIN: Acting
MAGGIE MORGAN: Costume Design
THOMAS J. MUNN: Lighting Design
JON ROSSINI: Performance Studies

Visiting Faculty

STUART CARROLL: Dance
MARY BETH CAVANAUGH: Stage Movement
MINDY COOPER: Directing, Choreography
ROBIN GRAY: Stage Management
SUSANNAH MARTIN: Directing
JANET PAPALE: Playwriting
COMING SOON

The Who’s Tommy
Directed by Granada Artist-in-Residence Mindy Cooper
With Music and Lyrics by Pete Townshend
Book by Pete Townshend and Des McAnuff
Additional Music and Lyrics by John Enwistle and Keith Moon
Originally Produced on Broadway by
Pace Theatrical Group and Dodger Productions
Main Theatre
Thurs - Sat, May 19 - 21, & May 26 - 28, 8pm
Sun, May 22 & 29, 2pm

UC Davis Film Festival
Produced by the Department of Theatre & Dance and presented
by the Davis Varsity Theatre in association with UC Davis
Technocultural Studies and co-sponsored by
Film Studies and Art Studio
The Davis Varsity Theatre
616 Second Street, Davis
Wed - Thurs, May 25 - 26, 8:30pm

TICKETS & INFORMATION: theatredance.ucdavis.edu