



the mead center
for american theater

ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

Molly Smith Artistic Director Edgar Dobie Executive Director Zelda Fichandler Founding Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Greta Hays

press@arenastage.org, 202-600-4056

October 6, 2016

For additional press materials, visit the online press room:

arenastage.org/news-press/press-room/press-kits-photos/productions/moby-dick/

Username: arenapress / Password: arena1617

FULL COMPANY ANNOUNCED FOR LOOKINGGLASS THEATRE COMPANY'S
NEW ACROBATIC AND AERIAL TAKE ON *MOBY DICK*
RUNNING NOVEMBER 18-DECEMBER 24, 2016 AT ARENA STAGE

*** Bold trapeze and acrobatic work turn seafaring classic into thrilling experiment in aerial storytelling ***

(Washington, D.C.) Set sail on an epic adventure this holiday season with a dramatically reimagined production of *Moby Dick*. Adaptor and director **David Catlin** brings his daring new adaptation of the classic seafaring tale to Arena Stage, using bold trapeze and acrobatic work to bring to life Captain Ahab's harrowing quest for the legendary great white whale. Hailed by the *Chicago Sun-Times* as "a triumph of grand theatrical imagination, deep thought, superb acting and eye-popping, ingeniously deployed physical daring" for its acclaimed 2015 debut at Lookingglass Theatre Company, the production fuses innovative staging with aerial storytelling. Based on the book by Herman Melville, *Moby Dick* is a co-production with the Alliance Theatre and South Coast Repertory and runs **November 18-December 24, 2016 in the Kreeger Theater**.

Reprising their roles from the celebrated Chicago production are **Jamie Abelson** as Ishmael, **Christopher Donahue** as Ahab, **Anthony Fleming III** as Queequeg, **Kasey Foster** as Fate/Widow, **Raymond Fox** as Stubb/Captain Boomer/Captain Gardiner and **Javen Ulambayar** as Mungun. They are joined by **Kelley Abell** as Fate/Inkeeper, **Walter Owen Briggs** as Starbuck/Father Mapple/Dr. Bunger, **Cordelia Dewdney** as Fate/Crone, **Micah Figueroa** as Cabaco/Captain of New Bedford Whaling Ship and understudies **Adeoye** (for Queequeg/Mungun) and **Chris Mathews** (for Ahab/Ishmael/Stubb/Starbuck/Cabaco).

"*Moby Dick* begs to be reimagined, and who better than David Catlin and the creative team from Lookingglass," shares Artistic Director **Molly Smith**. "The story doesn't just come alive in this production, it flies in the air all around you. Prepare to be amazed."

"*Moby Dick* is both a rollicking sea adventure and meditation on madness," says **Catlin**. "Even if we haven't read the novel, we know the first line, 'Call me, Ishmael.' We understand Ishmael—a self-titled "isolato"—unmoored and rudderless. Haven't we all, at some point in our lives, felt that way? Enter Ahab, his quest is noble, impossible and entirely compelling—to dive deeper; to slay the beastly White Whale and rid the world of 'evil incarnate.'"

—continued—

Page 2— Full company announced for Lookingglass Theatre Company's *Moby Dick*

DAVID CATLIN (*Adaptor, Director*) is a founding ensemble member of Chicago's Lookingglass Theatre Company, the recipient of the 2011 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theater. Regional directing/writing credits include *Lookingglass Alice* at Lookingglass Theatre, McCarter Theatre, New Victory Theater, Arden Theatre Company, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Syracuse Stage (SALT Award, Production), Alliance Theatre (Suzi Bass Award, Best Ensemble), Adrienne Arsht Center and Denver Center and *Moby Dick* at Lookingglass Theatre (four Jeff Awards including Production, Large, and nominations for direction and adaptation) and Alliance Theatre. Additional Lookingglass credits include *The Little Prince*, *Icarus*, *The Idiot* (Jeff Award, Adaptation), *Black Diamond* (co-direction), Kafka's *Metamorphosis*, *The Master and Margarita* (co-direction) and *West*. David teaches theater at Northwestern University.

Cast Biographies (in alphabetical order)

KELLEY ABELL (*Fate/Inkeeper & Others*) makes her Arena Stage debut. Chicago credits include *Moby Dick* and *Peter Pan* (Lookingglass), *42nd Street* and *Fiddler on the Roof* (Paramount Theatre), *Mr. Burns: A Post Electric Play* (Theater Wit), *Dorian* (House Theatre) and *Bat Boy: The Musical* and *Titanic* (Griffin Theatre). She has also worked with Goodman Theatre and Marriot Theatre and is a graduate of Northwestern University. Gratitude to Graham and the family.

JAMIE ABELSON (*Ishmael*) makes his Arena Stage debut. Recent theater credits include *Moby Dick* and *Peter Pan* (Lookingglass), *Red Kite Blue Sky* (Chicago Children's Theatre), *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* (Northlight), *Eurydice* (Victory Gardens), *Scenes from the Big Picture* (Irish Theatre of Chicago), *As Told by the Vivian Girls* (Dog & Pony), *columbinus* (Raven Theatre) and *Hope Springs Infernal* and *Dorian* (House Theatre). Jamie received his B.F.A. in drama from the Tisch School at NYU.

WALTER OWEN BRIGGS (*Starbuck/Father Mapple/Dr. Bunger*) makes his Arena Stage debut. Chicago credits include *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo* and *The North China Lover* (Lookingglass), *Hit The Wall* (Steppenwolf), *Sucker Punch* (Victory Gardens), *All Our Tragic* (The Hypocrites) and *The Glass Menagerie* (Mary-Archie). He has worked regionally at American Repertory, The Getty Villa (Los Angeles), Actors Theatre of Louisville, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Goodman Theatre and Chicago Shakespeare Theater. TV/film credits include *Chicago Med*, *The West Wing*, *The Express*, *Jessica*, *Older Children*, *Ballad* and *A Good Person*. Love to Chloe.

CORDELIA DEWDNEY (*Fate/Crone & Others*) makes her Arena Stage debut. A Chicago based actress, she received her degree in theater from Northwestern University and can be seen in a recent episode of *Chicago Med*. She is happy to be represented by Stewart Talent. Many thanks and much love to my mother, my family in Vermont and dear friends who have helped along the way.

CHRISTOPHER DONAHUE (*Ahab*) makes his Arena Stage debut. New York credits include *Dogeaters*, *Measure for Measure* (The Public/NYSF), *The Notebooks of Leonardo DaVinci* (Second Stage), *Monster* (Classic Stage Company, Obie Award) and *Metamorphoses* (Circle in the Square). He has appeared in many productions across the country. "But even so, amid the tornadoed Atlantic of my being, do I myself still forever disport in mute calm; and while ponderous planets of unwaning woe revolve around me, deep down and deep inland there I still bathe me in eternal mildness of joy."-Herman Melville, *Moby Dick*

MICAH FIGUEROA (*Cabaco/Captain of New Bedford Whaling Ship*) makes his Arena Stage debut. He is a Chicago-based actor, choreographer and director. Chicago credits include *Moby Dick* and *Lookingglass Alice* (Lookingglass), *The Winter Pageant* (Redmoon) and *Distance to the Moon* (First Floor Theater). Regional credits include *The Farnsworth Invention* and *Wild Oats* (Theatre Three), *Coriolanus*, *Cyrano de Bergerac* and *Macbeth* (Shakespeare Dallas), *Titus Andronicus* (Kitchen Dog Theater), *Sense and Sensibility* (Stolen Shakespeare) and *In The Beginning* and *Henry IV* (Dallas Theater Center). B.F.A, Southern Methodist University and the British American Drama Academy.

Page 3— Full company announced for Lookingglass Theatre Company's *Moby Dick*

ANTHONY FLEMING III (*Queequeg*) makes his Arena Stage debut. Select theater credits include a national tour of *Lookingglass Alice* (McCarter, New Victory Theater, Arden Theatre Company, Alliance Theatre, Syracuse Stage); *Clybourne Park* (Arizona Theatre Company); *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* (Milwaukee Repertory); *Camino Real* (Goodman); *The Glass Menagerie* (Steppenwolf); *Denmark* (Victory Gardens); and *Fences* (Court Theatre). TV/film credits include *Chicago Fire* (NBC); *Prison Break* (FOX); and *Divergent* (Summit). Anthony is an ensemble member with Lookingglass and received the 2015 Jeff Award for Best Supporting Actor in a Play for his portrayal of Queequeg in *Moby Dick*.

KASEY FOSTER (*Fate/Widow & Others*) makes her Arena Stage debut. She has been performing, singing, directing and producing in Chicago since 2004. She has worked with Chicago-based theater companies including Lookingglass, Manual Cinema, Chicago Children's Theatre, Blair Thomas & Co., Redmoon, Dog & Pony, Trap Door, Theater Wit, Red Tape, Oracle and Collaboraction. Kasey sings with Chicago bands Grood, Babe-alon 5, Old Timey and This Must be the Band. She has directed/choreographed over 30 original works and produces an annual series called Dance Tribute. Foster was most recently seen in Mary Zimmerman's *Treasure Island* (Berkeley Repertory). Thanks to all for supporting the arts! They make everything better.

RAYMOND FOX (*Stubb/Captain Boomer/Captain Gardiner*) returns to Arena Stage, where he previously appeared in *Metamorphoses*, a play he performed as part of the original Broadway (Circle in the Square) and Off-Broadway (Second Stage) casts and numerous productions elsewhere. His notable regional credits include Simon Craig in *Blood and Gifts* (TimeLine Theatre, 2013 Equity Jeff Award, Supporting Actor, Play), Prince Hal in *Henry IV* (Court Theatre) and Valentine Coverly in *Arcadia* (Meadow Brook Theatre). Raymond is an ensemble member of Chicago's Lookingglass where he co-adapted *The Old Curiosity Shop* with Laura Eason and Heidi Stillman (shared 2006 Joseph Jefferson Award, New Adaptation). Raymond was a member of the Young Company of the Stratford Festival (Ontario) in 1996. He is a graduate of Northwestern University and the A.R.T. Institute at Harvard University.

JAVEN ULAMBAYAR (*Mungun*) makes his Arena Stage debut. His circus career has given him the opportunity to work with companies including Lookingglass, The Actors Gymnasium and Midnight Circus. He attained his skills in variety of performing acts at Juventas circus school in Saint Paul, Minnesota. Tumbling, teeterboard, acro and Russian bar are among the skills he attained, but above all, he specializes in aerial straps and Chinese pole, performing with male and female partners. He graduated from the University of Minnesota in 2012, with a degree in kinesiology with emphasis on clinical movement and science.

ADEOYE (*u/s Queequeg/Mungun*) makes his Arena Stage debut. Chicago credits include *Lookingglass Alice*, *The Little Prince*, *Peter Pan*, *Icarus* and *Black Diamond* (Lookingglass), *The Magnificents* (House Theatre), *The Unmentionables* (Steppenwolf) and *The Lost Boys of Sudan* (Victory Gardens). Regional credits include *Lookingglass Alice* (Denver Center), *A Raisin in the Sun* (The Guthrie/Penumbra Theatre) and *Intimate Apparel* (Clarence Brown Theatre). TV credits include *Detroit 1-8-7*, *Leverage* and *Prison Break*. Film credits include *#Vengeance is Mine* and *Chicago Overcoat*. He earned his M.F.A. at The Academy for Classical Acting with Shakespeare Theatre Company/George Washington University. Love and gratitude to his family.

CHRIS MATHEWS (*u/s Ahab/Ishmael/Stubb/Starbuck/Cabaco*) makes his Arena Stage debut. He is a company member with House Theatre of Chicago, where he regularly writes and performs. With Nathan Allen and Jake Minton, he co-wrote *The Sparrow* (Jeff Award, New Work) and *Rose and the Rime*. With Allen, he co-wrote *The Hammer Trinity* (House Theatre and the Adrienne Arsht Center). He has also written and directed original circus theater plays for family-friendly audiences at The Actors Gymnasium. As an actor, he has performed with House Theatre, Lookingglass and The Actors Gymnasium, among others. Chris provides motion capture performance for video game maker Netherrealm Studios, having been featured in the "Mortal Kombat" franchise titles (Johnny Cage) and "Injustice: Gods Among Us" (Batman). Thanks for hosting us, come visit us in Chicago!

Page 4— Full company announced for Lookingglass Theatre Company's *Moby Dick*

The creative team for *Moby Dick* includes Aerial/Acrobatic Choreography by **Sylvia Hernandez-DiStasi**, Set Designer **Courtney O'Neill**, Costume Designer **Sully Ratke**, Lighting Designer **William C. Kirkham**, Sound Design & Original Music by **Rick Sims**, Rigging Designer **Isaac Schoepp**, Dialect Coach **Kathy Logelin**, Stage Manager **Mary Hungerford** and Assistant Stage Manager **Marne Anderson**.

For full company bios please visit arenastage.org/shows-tickets/the-season/productions/moby-dick/.

***Moby Dick* is generously sponsored by Joan and David Maxwell. Additional support is provided by the Paul M. Angell Family Foundation.**

Special Events

Moby Dick: From Classic Novel to Novel Play—Sunday, December 11 following the 2:00 p.m. performance

Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, originally published in 1851, is widely considered one of the hallmarks of great American literature. Now, 165 years later, this story comes to us in a bold new production. How does this new staging relate to the original text? How does this production both remain true to—and deviate from—the original source? Melville scholars and local artists join in a discussion about the original novel and telling this beloved story in a daring new way onstage.

Post-Show Conversations

Connect with our shows beyond the performance at a post-show conversation with artists and staff—November 30, December 14 and December 20 following the noon performance; December 20 following the 7:30 p.m. performance; and December 22 following the 8:00 p.m. performance.

Production Information

Lookingglass Theatre Company's

Moby Dick

Adapted and directed by David Catlin from the book by Herman Melville

Co-production with the Alliance Theatre and South Coast Repertory

In the Kreeger Theater | November 18-December 24, 2016

ABOUT: Set sail on the holiday season's biggest adventure! Melville's classic tale of man's obsessive battle against nature comes to life in "a triumph of grand theatrical imagination, deep thought, superb acting and eye-popping, ingeniously deployed physical daring" (*Chicago Sun-Times*). Innovative staging fused with bold trapeze and acrobatic work turn this seafaring classic into a death-defying experiment in aerial storytelling. Climb aboard with Captain Ahab and the crew of the good ship *Pequod* in this harrowing and intoxicating quest for the great white whale.

CAST:

Fate/Inkeeper & Others: Kelley Abell

Ishmael: Jamie Abelson

Starbuck/Father Mapple/Dr. Bunger: Walter Owen Briggs

Fate/Crone & Others: Cordelia Dewdney

Ahab: Christopher Donahue

Cabaco/Captain of New Bedford Whaling Ship: Micah Figueroa

Queequeg: Anthony Fleming III

Fate/Widow & Others: Kasey Foster

Stubb/Captain Boomer/Captain Gardiner: Raymond Fox

Mungun: Javen Ulambayar

u/s Queequeg/Mungun: Adeoye

u/s Ahab/Ishmael/Stubb/Starbuck/Cabaco: Chris Mathews

—continued—

Page 5— Full company announced for Lookingglass Theatre Company's *Moby Dick*

CREATIVE TEAM:

Adaptor, Director: David Catlin
Aerial/Acrobatic Choreography: Sylvia Hernandez-DiStasi
Set Designer: Courtney O'Neill
Costume Designer: Sully Ratke
Lighting Designer: William C. Kirkham
Sound Designer & Original Music: Rick Sims
Rigging Designer: Isaac Schoepp
Dialect Coach: Kathy Logelin
Stage Manager: Mary Hungerford
Assistant Stage Manager: Marne Anderson

Plan Your Visit

TICKETS: Tickets for *Moby Dick* are \$40-90, subject to change and based on availability, plus applicable fees. For information on savings programs such as pay-your-age tickets, student discounts, Southwest Nights and hero's discounts, visit arenastage.org/shows-tickets/single-tickets/savings-programs.

Tickets may be purchased online at arenastage.org, by phone at 202-488-3300 or at the Sales Office at 1101 Sixth St., SW, D.C.

Sales Office/Subscriptions: 202-488-3300
Group Sales Hotline for 10+ Tickets: 202-488-4380
TTY for deaf patrons: 202-484-0247
Info for patrons with disabilities: 202-488-3300

PERFORMANCE DATES:

Sunday, Tuesday & Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.
Thursday, Friday & Saturday at 8:00 p.m.
Saturday & Sunday at 2:00 p.m.
Weekday matinee at noon on Wednesday, 11/30; Wednesday, 12/14; & Tuesday, 12/20

Full calendar: tickets.arenastage.org/single/PSDetail.aspx?psn=22879

Open-captioned performances: 12/14 at 7:30 p.m.; 12/15 at 8:00 p.m.; & 12/17 at 2:00 p.m.

Audio-described performances: 12/3 at 2:00 p.m.

CATWALK CAFÉ: Prix fixe meals are now available at the Catwalk Café and include a choice of soup or salad, main entrée and dessert. Pre-ordered meals are only \$22 (\$25 if purchased that day). To pre-order and see the menu, call 202-488-3300 or visit arenastage.org/plan-your-visit/the-café/. The Catwalk Café opens two hours before the show, and reservations are recommended.

To **pre-order drinks** from the Catwalk Café for up to 50% savings (\$6 house wine and beer), visit tickets.arenastage.org/cart/precart.aspx?p=1007.

METRO: Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater is only one block from the Waterfront-SEU Metro station (Green Line). When exiting the station, walk west on M Street toward Sixth Street, and the main entrance to the Mead Center is on the right.

—continued—

Page 6— Full company announced for Lookingglass Theatre Company's *Moby Dick*

PARKING: Parking is available in Arena Stage's on-site garage. Subscribers may purchase parking in advance for \$16. Single ticket buyers may purchase parking in advance for \$19 or on the day of the performance for \$22 on a first-come, first-served basis. Limited handicapped parking is available by reservation. Advanced parking must be reserved by calling 202-488-3300. The entrance to the Mead Center garage is on Maine Avenue between Sixth and Seventh streets, and the garage closes one hour after the day's last performance ends. Patrons can also park at the Public Parking Garage at 1101 Fourth Street, one block from the Mead Center, for \$11. Street parking is also available along Maine Avenue.

VALET PARKING: Arena Stage offers valet service at no additional cost to patrons with accessibility needs who call 202-488-3300 in advance to request valet parking. On days when valet parking is being used for accessibility, it is also available to general patrons one hour prior to show time for \$25, based on availability. To use valet parking, pull up to the main entrance on Sixth Street.

Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater, under the leadership of Artistic Director Molly Smith and Executive Director Edgar Dobie, is a national center dedicated to American voices and artists. Arena Stage produces plays of all that is passionate, profound, deep and dangerous in the American spirit, and presents diverse and ground-breaking work from some of the best artists around the country. Arena Stage is committed to commissioning and developing new plays, and impacts the lives of over 10,000 students annually through its work in community engagement. Now in its seventh decade, Arena Stage serves a diverse annual audience of more than 300,000. arenastage.org

###

