



## American Repertory Theater

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### Creative Team and Cast Announced for American Repertory Theater Premiere of *Moby-Dick*

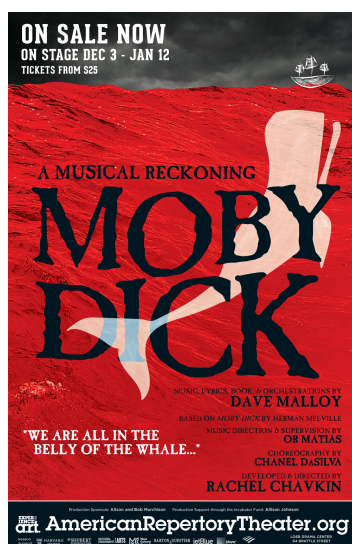
**New Collaboration Between Dave Malloy and Rachel Chavkin**

**To Run December 3, 2019 – January 12, 2020**

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**Cambridge, MA – American Repertory Theater (A.R.T.) at Harvard University**, under the leadership of Terrie and Bradley Bloom Artistic Director Diane Paulus and Executive Producer Diane Borger, have announced the creative team and cast of *Moby-Dick*, with music, lyrics, book, and orchestrations by **Dave Malloy**, developed with and directed by **Rachel Chavkin**. Performances of the new adaptation of Herman Melville's classic novel begin Tuesday, December 3 at the Loeb Drama Center in Cambridge, MA. The production opens officially on Wednesday, December 11, 2019 and closes Sunday, January 12, 2020.

*"We are all in the belly of the whale..."* From the creative team behind A.R.T.'s 2015 production of *Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812* comes an epic musical adaptation of Herman Melville's iconic American novel. As the egomaniacal Captain Ahab drives his crew across the seas in pursuit of the great white whale, Melville's nineteenth-century vision of America collides head-on with the present.



"I've always been fascinated with the surprising ways classic literature can resonate with contemporary times, and *Moby-Dick* is no exception," says Malloy. "Melville was writing about America in 1851, as the country was struggling to define itself and reconcile all the conflicts that led inevitably to the Civil War; 170 years later, we're still talking about the same issues—capitalism, democracy, environmentalism, race. Melville can be uncannily strange and prescient; the chapter "The Whiteness of the Whale" poetically explores the terror of the color white, a potent metaphor for a country founded on racism and slavery. With this adaptation we're looking at that same metaphor today, and how white supremacy has put us all on this boat, led by an insane and haunted old patriarch, a false utopia that is doomed to sink."

“Along with our design team, which includes **Mimi Lien** and **Bradley King** from **Comet**, Dave and I have been slowly evolving the world of this piece for years,” says Chavkin. “For the A.R.T. premiere, we’re particularly excited to be working with a number of new collaborators, including **Chanel DaSilva** (**The Black Clown**). Together, we’ve embraced Melville’s vaudevillian sensibility and the way he radically shifts form from chapter to chapter, so this production will blossom from an exuberant, immersive puppet show featuring puppets designed by **Eric Avery** (Taylor Mac’s *24-Hour...*), to a quiet sermon, to heart-wrecking full-company numbers charting the slow moral decay of the false utopia that is the *Pequod*.”

About their previous works, *The New York Times* said, “Malloy breaks many of the rules that have accrued around American musical theater, and Ms. Chavkin has been making enormously inventive, and often wildly experimental, work for years.” **Malloy** (*Octet* at Signature Theatre; **Ghost Quartet**, the Obie Award-winning **Three Pianos**, and **Beowulf—A Thousand Years of Baggage** at A.R.T.) and **Chavkin** (2019 Tony Award for Best Direction of a Musical for *Hadestown* on Broadway; **Three Pianos** and The TEAM’s **RoosevElvis** and **Particularly in the Heartland** at A.R.T.) reunite at the A.R.T. following their previous collaboration, **Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812**, which was nominated for twelve Tony Awards. The pair was honored with a 2017 American Ingenuity Award for the production, cited by *Smithsonian* Editor-in-Chief Michael Caruso as “an explosion of relentless creativity.”

The **Moby-Dick** creative team includes:

- **Dave Malloy**, Writer, Composer, Lyricist, Orchestrator (see above)
- **Rachel Chavkin**, Director / Developer (see above)
- **Chanel DaSilva**, Choreography (**The Black Clown** at A.R.T. and Mostly Mozart Festival; 2018 artist-in-residence at Harvard Dance Center; Co-Founder and Co-Director of MOVE(NYC); and others)
- **Or Matias**, Music Direction and Supervision (Music Director / Conductor for **Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812** on at A.R.T. and on Broadway; Music Director and Performer in *Preludes* at Lincoln Center Theater -- Lucille Lortel Awards Nomination for Outstanding Featured Actor; and others)
- **Mimi Lien**, Scenic Design (2015 MacArthur Fellow; **Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812** at A.R.T. and on Broadway -- Tony Award for Best Scenic Design; - *John* at Signature Theatre -- Hewes Design Award / American Theatre Wing; and others)
- **Brenda Abbondandolo**, Costume Design (*Octet* at Signature Theatre Company, *Continuity* at Manhattan Theatre Club, and others)
- **Bradley King**, Lighting Design (**We Live in Cairo**, **Endlings**, and others at A.R.T.; **Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812** at A.R.T. and on Broadway -- Tony Award winner; *Hadestown* on Broadway -- Tony Award winner; and others)
- **Hidenori Nakajo**, Sound Design (*Octet* at Signature Theatre, Assistant for *Be More Chill* on Broadway, *The Front Page* on Broadway, *Allegiance* on Broadway and others)
- **Eric F. Avery**, Puppet Director (Taylor Mac’s *24-Decade History of Music* at St. Ann’s Warehouse; Artist-in-Residence at University Settlement (NYC); and others)

- **J. Oconer Navarro**, Associate Music Director/Conductor (*Adding Machine* at Minetta Lane Theatre and others; American Theatre Wing Jonathan Larson Grant Recipient)
- **Stewart/Whitley**, Casting (*The Black Clown*, *Pippin*, *The Tempest*, and others at A.R.T.; *Hadestown*, *The Lightning Thief*, and others for Broadway)

**Geoff Boronda** (*Gertrude and Claudius* and *America v. 2.1: The Sad Demise & Eventual Extinction of The American Negro* at Barrington Stage Company, *Ain't No Mo'* at The Public Theater, and others) is the Production Stage Manager. **Erin McCoy** (Play On Shakespeare Festival, *The Chinese Lady* at Ma-Yi Theater Company/Barrington Stage Company, and others) is the Assistant Stage Manager.

The *Moby-Dick* [cast](#) includes:

- **Manik Choksi** as Ishmael (*Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812* at A.R.T. and on Broadway; *Indian Ink* at Roundabout Theater Company; and others)
- **Tom Nelis** as Ahab (*The Tempest*, *The Blue Flower*, and *bobrauchenbergamerica* at A.R.T.; *Indecent* and others on Broadway)
- **Starr Busby** as Starbuck (*Octet* at Signature Theater, *Decolonizing My Vagina* at New Ohio Theatre/Fridays on Ice, and others)
- **Kalyn West** as Stubb (*The Prom* on Broadway, *The Prince of Egypt* at TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, and others)
- **Anna Ishida** as Flask (*Beowulf—A Thousand Years of Baggage* at A.R.T., *Henry VI: Parts 1&2* at NAATCO, *The Importance of Being Earnest* at Aurora Theatre, and others)
- **Andrew Cristi** as Queequeg (*Pasek and Paul's A Christmas Story* on Broadway, *Miss You Like Hell* at The Public Theater, and others)
- **Matt Kizer** as Tashtego (*The River Bridge* at Alter Theater, *El Paso Blue* at Eugene O'Neill Foundation, and others)
- **J.D. Mollison** as Daggoo (*Octet* at Signature Theatre; *X: Or, Betty Shabazz v. the Nation* at The Acting Company; and others)
- **Eric Berryman** as Fedallah (*pool (no water)* at A.R.T., *The B-Side: Negro Folklore from Texas State Prisons* and *A Record Album Interpretation* at St. Ann's Warehouse/The Wooster Group, and others)
- **Morgan Siobhan Green** as Pip (*Be More Chill* on Broadway, *Folk Wandering* at A.R.T./New York Theatres, and others)
- **Ashkon Davaran** as Pip-not-Pip/Blacksmith/Sailor 1 (*Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812* at Kazino Theater, *One Thousand Nights and One Day* at Prospect Theater Company, and others)
- **Kim Blanck** as Shanty Singer/Carpenter/Sailor 2 (*Octet* at Signature Theatre, *Alice by Heart* at MCC Theater, and others)
- **Dawn L. Troupe** as Father Mapple/Captain of the Albatross/Captain Boomer of the Bachelor/Captain Gardiner of the Rachel (*Brothers ParaNormal* at Pan Asian Theater, *Pool of Unknown Wonders* at Ubuntu Theatre Project, and others)

Production support of ***Moby-Dick*** is provided by **Alison and Bob Murchison**. This production is supported, in part, by **Allison Johnson** through the Incubator Fund.

### **TICKETING INFORMATION**

**Tickets start at \$25** online at [AmericanRepertoryTheater.org](http://AmericanRepertoryTheater.org), by phone at 617.547.8300, and in person at the Loeb Drama Center Ticket Services Offices (64 Brattle Street, Cambridge). Discounts are available to A.R.T. Subscribers and Members, groups, students, seniors, Blue Star families, EBT card holders, and others.

### **PERFORMANCE DATES**

#### **7:30PM**

December 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31  
January 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12

#### **1PM -- note earlier curtain**

December 14, 15, 18, 21, 28, 29, 31  
January 4, 5, 8, 11, 12

#### **11AM**

Friday, December 13

#### **Press Performance:**

Wednesday, December 11 at 7:30PM

#### **ASL Interpreted performances:**

Sunday, January 5 at 1PM and Wednesday, January 8 at 7:30PM

#### **Open Captioned performances:**

Thursday, January 9 at 7:30PM and Saturday, January 11 at 1PM

#### **Audio Described performances:**

Friday, January 10 at 7:30PM and Saturday January 11 at 1PM

### **ABOUT AMERICAN REPERTORY THEATER**

**American Repertory Theater (A.R.T.)** at Harvard University is a leading force in the American theater, producing groundbreaking work that is driven by risk-taking, artistic inquiry, and passionate inquiry. A.R.T. was founded in 1980 by Robert Brustein, who served as Artistic Director until 2002, when he was succeeded by Robert Woodruff. Diane Paulus began her tenure as Artistic Director in 2008. Under the leadership of Paulus as the Terrie and Bradley Bloom Artistic Director and Executive Producer Diane Borger, A.R.T. seeks to expand the boundaries of theater by programming transformative theatrical experiences, always including the audience as a central partner.

Throughout its history, A.R.T. has been honored with many distinguished awards including the Tony Award for Best New Play for ***All the Way*** (2014); consecutive Tony Awards for Best Revival of a Musical for ***Pippin*** (2013) and ***The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess*** (2012), both of which Paulus directed, and sixteen other Tony Awards since 2012; a Pulitzer Prize; a Jujamcyn Prize for outstanding contribution to the development of creative talent; the Regional Theater Tony Award; and more than 100 Elliot Norton and IRNE Awards. Under Paulus's leadership, A.R.T.'s club theater, OBERON, has been recognized annually as a top performance venue in the Boston area, and has attracted national attention for its innovative programming and business models.

As the professional theater on the campus of Harvard University, A.R.T. is committed to playing a central role in the cognitive life of the University, catalyzing discourse, interdisciplinary collaboration, and creative exchange among a wide range of academic departments, institutions, students, and faculty members. A.R.T. is engaged in a number of multi-year initiatives with partners at Harvard that explore some of the most pressing issues of our day, including a collaboration with the Harvard University Center for the Environment to develop new work that addresses climate change. A.R.T. plays a central role in Harvard's undergraduate Theater, Dance & Media concentration, teaching courses in directing, dramatic literature, acting, voice, design, and dramaturgy. A.R.T. staff also mentors students in the Harvard Radcliffe Dramatic Club working at the Loeb Drama Center and OBERON.

Dedicated to making great theater accessible, A.R.T. actively engages more than 5,000 community members and local students annually in project-based partnerships, workshops, conversations with artists, and other enrichment activities both at the theater and across the Greater Boston area.

**@americanrep**

**#MobyDickMusical #MobyDickART**

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