

JAKE HEGGIE / LIBRETTO BY GENE SCHEER

MOBY-DICK

CONDUCTOR
Karen Kamensek

PRODUCTION
Leonard Foglia
DEBUT

SET DESIGNER
Robert Brill

COSTUME DESIGNER
Jane Greenwood

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Gavan Swift DEBUT

PROJECTION DESIGNER
Elaine J. McCarthy

MOVEMENT DIRECTOR
Keturah Stickann
DEBUT

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MUSIC DIRECTOR
Yannick Nézet-Séguin

Opera in two acts by Jake Heggie

Libretto by Gene Scheer

Based on the book by Herman Melville

Monday, March 3, 2025

8:00–11:10PM

Metropolitan Opera Premiere

The production of *Moby-Dick* was made possible by a generous gift from **C. Graham Berwind, III** and **The Eugene McDermott Foundation**

Additional support was received from Gordon P. Getty and Franci Neely

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The Metropolitan Opera

2024-25 SEASON

The Metropolitan Opera premiere of
JAKE HEGGIE'S

MOBY-DICK

CONDUCTOR
Karen Kamensek

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

QUEEQUEG
Ryan Speedo Green*

SPANISH SAILOR
Jonathan Scott

GREENHORN
Stephen Costello

GARDINER
Brian Major

FLASK
William Burden

STARBUCK
Peter Mattei

STUBB
Malcolm MacKenzie

PIP
Janai Brugger

CAPTAIN AHAB
Brandon Jovanovich

NANTUCKET SAILOR
Remy Martin

TASHTEGO
Steven Myles

DAGGOO
Jarrod Lee

Monday, March 3, 2025, 8:00-11:10PM



A scene from Jake
Heggie's *Moby-Dick*

Musical Preparation Caren Levine,* Steven Osgood,
Bryan Wagorn,* Bénédicte Jourdois,*
Katelan Tràn Terrell,* and Lynn Baker

Assistant Stage Directors Jonathon Loy, Alison Pogorelc,
and Doug Scholz-Carlson

Associate Projection Designer Shawn Boyle

Climbing Consultants Rick Sordelet, Christian Kelly-Sordelet,
Collin Kelly-Sordelet, and Anastasiya Le Gendre

English Diction Coach Lynn Baker

Prompter Caren Levine*

Met Titles Michael Panayos

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This production uses lightning and haze effects.

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The Metropolitan Opera

2024-25 SEASON



A scene from Puccini's *La Bohème*

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Synopsis

Act I

The whaling ship *Pequod* has been at sea for one week. Captain Ahab stands alone on deck in the hours before dawn. Below deck, while most of the crew sleeps, the harpooneer Queequeg prays and wakes Greenhorn, a loner and newcomer to whaling. Dawn breaks, and the call is made for "All Hands!" While the crew is raising the ship's sails, Starbuck, Stubb, and Flask talk about Ahab, whom no one has seen since the ship left Nantucket.

The crew sings of whales, wealth, and home, when suddenly Captain Ahab appears. He tells them of Moby-Dick, the white whale that took off one of his legs, then nails a gold doubloon to the mast and promises it to the man who first sights him. This is the real reason they have sailed, he explains: to search the globe to find and destroy this one whale. His rousing call of "Death to Moby-Dick!" excites everyone but the first mate, Starbuck. To no avail, he confronts Ahab about what he sees as a futile and blasphemous mission.

Starbuck instructs Greenhorn about the dangers of whaling. When he ponders never again seeing his wife and son, Starbuck is overcome with emotion and orders Queequeg to complete the lesson. Stubb sights a pod of whales, but Ahab will not allow the eager crew to hunt since they have not yet found Moby-Dick. Starbuck orders the crew to sail on and sends Greenhorn up to the lookout on the masthead, joined by Queequeg.

As the sun begins to set, Ahab looks over the wake of the ship and mourns that his obsession deprives him of any enjoyment of beauty. All is anguish to him. At the masthead, Queequeg and Greenhorn look over the world, while Starbuck, on deck, bemoans Ahab's madness.

Three months later. After three months without a single whale hunt, Stubb jokes with the young cabin boy Pip about the sharks circling the ship. The song ignites a dance for the full crew, but rising tensions take over, and a dangerous racial fight erupts. When Greenhorn suddenly sights a pod of whales, Starbuck is at last able to persuade Ahab to let the men hunt. Starbuck and Stubb harpoon whales, but Flask's boat is capsized, and Pip is lost at sea.

On board the *Pequod*, an enormous whale is being butchered and the oil rendered in the burning tryworks. Flask tells Ahab that the search for Pip is underway, but Ahab thinks only of finding Moby-Dick. As they butcher the whale, the crew imagines Pip lost and struggling in the heart of the sea. Flask tells Starbuck that many oil barrels are leaking, and he goes below to tell Ahab that they must find a port for repairs.

Synopsis CONTINUED

Ahab is unmoved by Starbuck's report and is concerned only with the white whale. When Starbuck refuses to leave, Ahab grabs a musket and orders him to his knees. From afar, Greenhorn shouts that Pip has been found. Ahab orders Starbuck out of the cabin.

On deck, the crew listens to Greenhorn describe how Queequeg rescued Pip. As the men return to work, Greenhorn pleads with Starbuck to get help for Pip, who has gone mad. The first mate ignores him. Greenhorn observes how life really works on the ship and decides to befriend Queequeg.

Starbuck returns to Ahab's cabin, where he finds the captain asleep. He picks up the musket with which Ahab had threatened him and contemplates what he should do: Kill Ahab, and he may survive to see his wife and child again. When Ahab cries out in his sleep, Starbuck replaces the musket and leaves the cabin.

Intermission (AT APPROXIMATELY 9:25PM)

Act II

One year later. An enormous storm is approaching, but Stubb, Flask, and the crew sing a jolly work song. From the mastheads, Greenhorn and Queequeg talk of traveling together to his native island. Greenhorn wants to learn Queequeg's language and write down their adventures. Suddenly, Queequeg collapses. The crew gets him down, and Ahab announces he will take the masthead watch himself, as he wants to sight Moby-Dick first.

Below deck, Queequeg tells Greenhorn that he is dying and asks that a coffin be built for him. Pip enters from the shadows and sings a lament, joined by Greenhorn.

The massive storm now surrounds the *Pequod*. As Ahab sings defiantly to the heavens, bolts of lightning engulf the ship and the masts glow with St. Elmo's fire. Ahab demands that the men hold their posts, promising them the white flame is a sign from heaven to guide them to the white whale. The captain has inspired the crew once again, much to Starbuck's distress.

The next morning. The ship has made it through the storm. From afar, the voice of Gardiner, captain of the *Rachel*, calls out. He pleads with Ahab to help him search for his 12-year-old son, who was lost in the storm, but Ahab refuses. Pip shouts to Gardiner of the *Pequod's* own lost boy. Pip cuts himself and gets blood on Ahab's clothes. The captain orders the ship to sail on, leaving Gardiner behind. Ahab contemplates the

heartless God who devastates so many lives and baptizes his new harpoon with Pip's blood. Below deck, Greenhorn sees Queequeg's newly built coffin and contemplates the madness that seems to surround him.

On deck, Ahab and Starbuck gaze over the horizon. Ahab describes his 40 years at sea and all he has left behind. And why? To what end? He cannot say. But he sees in Starbuck's eye a human soul, and it touches him deeply. Starbuck seizes the moment and persuades Ahab that they should return to the wives and sons who wait for them in Nantucket.

Just as Ahab appears to relent, he sights Moby-Dick on the horizon. Great excitement ensues, and the whale boats are lowered. Ahab looks again in Starbuck's eye and orders him to stay on board. The crew declares its loyalty to Ahab. During the chase, Moby-Dick destroys two whaleboats in succession, drowning their crews. Then, the *Pequod* is rammed and sunk, killing all aboard. Ahab's boat is attacked, and all but the captain jump or fall off. Finally alone with the white whale, Ahab cries out and stabs at Moby-Dick before being dragged down into the sea.

Epilogue

Many days later. Greenhorn floats on Queequeg's coffin, barely alive, softly singing his lost friend's prayer. Gardiner calls from afar, thinking he has at last found his missing son. Instead, he learns that Ahab and all the crew of the *Pequod* have drowned, except for this sole survivor.

—Synopsis courtesy of the Dallas Opera, written by Gene Scheer



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Jake Heggie

Moby-Dick

Premiere: The Dallas Opera, 2010

Herman Melville's famously sprawling, richly meditative *Moby-Dick*—with its free-ranging discourses on human nature, diverse spiritual traditions, race relations, America's place in the world, the values and customs of distant peoples, and philosophical considerations of the ego and self—is a novel about nearly everything. In translating the grandiose source material for the stage, composer Jake Heggie and librettist Gene Scheer necessarily distilled the story to its core elements: Aboard the whaling ship *Pequod*, the crew serves under the command of Captain Ahab, determined to destroy a mysterious and fearsome white whale. And while they focused on only a handful of main characters, Heggie and Scheer were careful to retain the novel's speculative allegory alongside its gritty realism. The result is an epic, thrilling musical drama exploring the cycle of life, death, and rebirth.

The Creators

Jake Heggie (b. 1961) is an American composer known for his orchestral and choral work, his collaborations with a wide variety of artists, and especially his operas. His first, *Dead Man Walking* (2000), remains the most performed contemporary opera of the last two decades and had its Met premiere on Opening Night of the 2023–24 season. *Moby-Dick's* libretto is by Gene Scheer (b. 1958), an American lyricist and songwriter who frequently collaborates with Heggie and also wrote the libretto for Tobias Picker's *An American Tragedy*, which had its world premiere at the Met in 2005. In addition to his undisputed masterpiece, *Moby-Dick*, American author Herman Melville (1819–91) also penned a number of other novels, short stories, and poems. His posthumously published novella, *Billy Budd, Sailor*, served as the basis for Britten's opera *Billy Budd* (1951), which similarly features a nautical setting, metaphysical mediations, and a preponderance of male voices.

The Setting

Melville based much of the narrative on his own experiences as a sailor between 1842 and 1845, as well as on accounts of the destruction of the whaleship *Essex* by an enraged sperm whale in 1820. His novel takes place in various ports (notably Nantucket) and aboard the *Pequod*. The opera, however, is set entirely at sea.

The Music

Heggie's score evokes the grandeur of tone and scope of the novel's prose, and from its very first bars, delineates individuals and ideas with quasi-Wagnerian motifs. The orchestra is featured prominently, as is the all-male chorus, who gives voice to a range of emotions—from the levity of shanties and jigs in Act I to an almost mythic wave of impending doom as they affirm their loyalty to Ahab late in Act II. The principal characters are clearly depicted through their voice types and music. The opera is framed around the experiences of Greenhorn—counterpart to the novel's Ishamel—a lyric tenor reminiscent of the romantic leads of traditional Italian opera. The Black cabin boy Pip is a pants role sung by a soprano (the only female voice in the score), reflecting the character's youthfulness, tender-heartedness, and later madness. Captain Ahab is sung by a heldentenor, and his solos express the full range of the untethered mind, from dreamy transcendence to hell-defying determination. Ahab's honest and philosophical first mate, Starbuck, is a lyric baritone, and Queequeg, the Polynesian cannibal, is a bass-baritone who must convey both the stentorian tones of a warrior-like harpooneer and the mystical chants of his native prayers. The opera's most striking moments come as solo voices are combined in duets and ensembles that express the many confrontations in the human journey: good vs. evil, love vs. death, hope vs. despair.

Met History

This season, *Moby-Dick* has its company premiere in a production by director Leonard Foglia. Karen Kamensek conducts a cast featuring Brandon Jovanovich as Captain Ahab, Stephen Costello as Greenhorn, Peter Mattei as Starbuck, Ryan Speedo Green as Queequeg, Janai Brugger as Pip, William Burden as Flask, and Malcolm MacKenzie as Stubb.

Program Note

In the course of writing *Moby-Dick*, Herman Melville frequently wrote to friends. He was in good spirits in May 1850 when he reported his progress to Richard Henry Dana, a fellow New Englander, sailor, scholar, and author who had written *Two Years Before the Mast* ten years earlier:

About the “whaling voyage”—I am half way in the work. . . . It will be a strange sort of a book, tho, I fear; blubber is blubber you know; tho you may get oil out of it, the poetry runs as hard as sap from a frozen maple tree;—and to cook the thing up, one must needs throw in a little fancy, which from the nature of the thing, must be ungainly as the gambols of the whales themselves. Yet I mean to give the truth of the thing, spite of this.

When the book was complete, a quite satisfied Melville quipped to Nathaniel Hawthorne in a letter the following November: “I have written a wicked book, but I feel spotless as a lamb.” He went on to say that it was, however, “a strange feeling—no hopefulness is in it, no despair. Content—that is it.”

The root story in *Moby-Dick* is an oft-told tale: An underdog engages in a zero-sum contest with a colossus—an ogre, a cyclops, now a rare white whale. The story of Jonah comes to mind, as does the darkly mysterious tableau in a far corner of the Hall of Ocean Life in New York City’s Museum of Natural History in which a giant squid wraps its tentacles around the head of an enormous sperm whale. It’s a drama with a predictable end: The laws of nature will prevail, and this David will not defeat Goliath. But the story is mesmerizing nevertheless.

Melville certainly thought so, but he also found in the saga of Captain Ahab’s pursuit of Moby-Dick an opportunity to ruminate on the environment, religion, and human instinct, intuition, and emotion. He couched his reflections in an epic that unfolds in a series of nine encounters with other whaling ships, interwoven with detailed chapters about whales, whaling, history, and the law—all of which combines into what many critics consider the greatest American novel ever written.

British writer and critic Philip Hoare, however, put his finger on something else in his *New Yorker* article “What *Moby-Dick* Means to Me” (November 2011): “*Moby-Dick* is not a novel. It’s barely a book at all. It’s more an act of transference, of ideas and evocations.” He concludes that “*Moby-Dick* can be whatever you want it to be,” a sentiment evidenced in its numerous adaptations into movies, stage plays, illustrations, and paintings.

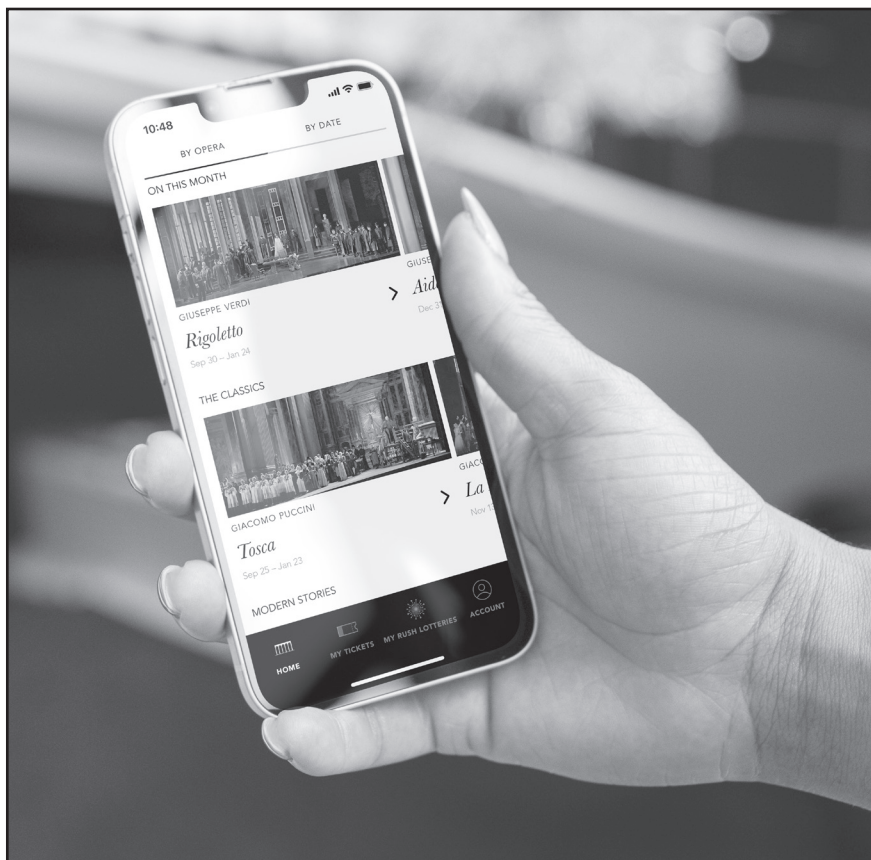
But, as Melville himself observed, his work was “ungainly,” filled with “fancy.” How does such massive material translate into an opera that offers an audience what it wants most—as Jake Heggie has stated, “a connection.” It’s a tall order, but that didn’t stop playwright Terrence McNally from suggesting *Moby-Dick* to Heggie as source material for a new opera. Heggie recounts an early conversation with McNally as both revelatory and inspiring:

He had hinted at this before, but the reality of it suddenly seemed terrifying: too big, too vast, too difficult, too dense, too ... much. Then I took a breath, and in his eye I saw a real sparkle. And I knew that if he, one of the great men of the theater, felt in his heart that it was possible, then it must be so. I did some research, read the book, dug deep inside, and realized I was indeed terrified by it, challenged, but also hugely inspired by the musical and dramatic possibilities. Melville's language is ravishingly beautiful, his characters fascinating, tough, and psychologically complex. There is a great sense of adventure throughout, much is at stake, and the overall story fits into what I have found works consistently in grand opera: a vast, inevitable landscape that looms over intimate, transformative human journeys.

The libretto ultimately would be crafted by another long-term work partner: composer, lyricist, and librettist Gene Scheer. Heggie and Scheer excised Melville's more abstruse chapters and decided that the entire action would take place at sea and in real time, without the retrospective framing of the novel. The story demanded musical power, beginning with a large and diverse cast of characters: Captain Ahab; the harpooneer Queequeg, an islander of Polynesian descent; the first mate, Starbuck, a Quaker and a realist; the good-tempered second mate, Stubb; third mate Flask; Pip, a young African American boy; and four sailors, one from Nantucket, a Gayhead Indian, a Spaniard, and an African. All of the voices are male, except for the cabin boy Pip, a "trouser role," sung by a soprano. The opera is through-composed and supported by a large orchestra, including a battery of percussion instruments. There are the expected arias, ensembles, and choruses, but also dances and songs, including a jocular duet between Stubb and Pip about whale steak. Among several orchestral interludes is the "Nantucket Sleigh Ride," a term used to describe the terrifying experience of being in a small boat dragged by a harpooned whale.

The opera begins with a prelude that captures a world without edges; time is suspended, the stars and the constellations shine, and "everything rotates." The music materializes, as if from nothing, into a unique sound world: First violins play an undulating pattern of 16th notes while a solo muted French horn and second violin intone a high, distant melody punctuated by harp and glockenspiel; bowed vibraphone provides an eerie drone. The mood is strangely unsettled, like the one-legged man who stands on the deck of the Pequod gazing at the stars.

Captain Ahab has been silent for a week; his crew hears only the sound of his peg leg as he paces the deck. Each morning, they go about their business, as first mate Starbuck shouts orders. A busy scene swells into a rousing work song: "Hand over hand / whales and wealth await us." The song ends abruptly with a loud clap of Ahab's false leg on the deck. The captain speaks, and the word "Infinity!" pierces the air. "We will harvest infinity! ... Ye will grab the world by the throat until it gasps and yields to thee!" It's a challenge for the singer, a full-throated declaration at the top of his range in which the last syllable of "infinity" must be sustained for five full measures. Ahab knows the power of his voice and the dramatic potential of his body: He whips his men into a frenzied chorus until they pound their harpoons on the deck



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with shouts of “Death to Moby-Dick!” Ahab’s self-image is a perverse version of Wagner’s Siegfried, destined to slay the monster. He forges his own spear and soaks its tip in blood: “Ego non baptizmo te in nomine patris sed in nomine diaboli!” (“I baptize you, not in the name of the father, but in the name of the devil!”).

While the opera revolves around the thrilling story of Captain Ahab’s obsession with the whale, the deeper connection is the human one—intimate relationships between isolated men. Friendships form, suppressed animosities are unleashed, and trauma begets madness. Two pairs are drawn into close focus: Queequeg and Greenhorn, and Starbuck and Captain Ahab. Queequeg and Greenhorn are strangers in the night, a prince of Kokovoko and a man who sees himself as “no one from nowhere.” Their differences become their bond, and in one of the most tender moments in the score, the two men imagine a visit to Queequeg’s island, where they will tell “all the stories” and “find a name” for Greenhorn. It is a love duet sung in close harmony.

Starbuck and Ahab are both from Nantucket, but their spiritual and moral outlooks are worlds apart. Starbuck is a righteous man; he insists that the Pequod fulfill its mission to hunt whales and produce oil. And he is not afraid to confront Ahab, condemning the irrationality of his quest for “vengeance on a dumb brute that smote thee from blind instinct!” Ahab is unmoved: “I’d strike the sun if it insulted me.” Starbuck contemplates the morality and ethics of murdering a captain who will lead his men to their deaths, but abandons such thoughts with resignation and humility when he hears the captain cry out in his sleep. Ahab holds his humanity close and reveals himself only in a private moment, his aria, “I leave a white and turbid wake,” in which he sings lyrically and releases his anguish in long melismas.

It is the penultimate scene of the opera, however, that captures the heart and soul. Heggie and Scheer followed Melville’s chapter 132 very closely by titling the scene “Symphony.” One might well ask novelist, librettist, and composer alike: why “symphony”? A Beethovenian symphony will begin with an exposition and end in reconciliation, a moment of triumph in which, for example, the angst of C minor surrenders to C major. In this “Symphony,” Ahab willingly bares his vulnerability to Starbuck for the first time. There is an abundance of warmth and compassion; like Queequeg and Greenhorn, they reflect upon “home” as idea and aspiration. Starbuck and Ahab together recall their wives and sons, the beauty of family and place, their shared regrets. Musically, there is a coming together of themes that now blossom in the full orchestra. Voices combine in ravishing harmony, and Starbuck’s faith is restored: The captain will surely do the right thing and bring the men home. But just then, at the decisive moment, his sighting of a huge white whale disrupts the cadence. The madness returns to Ahab’s eyes. He orders the hunters to their boats one last time.

—Helen M. Greenwald

Helen M. Greenwald is chair of the department of music history at New England Conservatory and editor of The Oxford Handbook of Opera.

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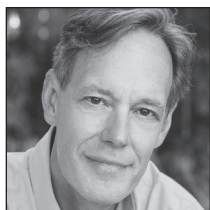
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Ailyn Pérez in the title role of Daniel Catán's *Florencia en el Amazonas*

PHOTO: KEN HOWARD / MET OPERA

The Creative Team



Jake Heggie

COMPOSER (SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA)

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS *Moby-Dick* is the second opera by composer Jake Heggie to be performed at the Met, following the company premiere of *Dead Man Walking*, which opened the 2023–24 season. With librettist Gene Scheer, he also created *Three Decembers*; (2008), *It's a Wonderful Life* (2016), and *Intelligence* (2023). In addition to ten full-length operas and numerous one-acts, he has composed more than 300 art songs, as well as concerti, chamber music, and choral and orchestral works, which have been performed on five continents. Additional highlights of the 2024–25 season include the world premiere of *Earth 2.0*, a monodrama commissioned by the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra and created with choreographer Jawole Willa Jo Zollar and librettist Anita Amirrezvani; performances of his song cycle *Songs for Murdered Sisters*, created in collaboration with writer Margaret Atwood and baritone Joshua Hopkins, by the Philadelphia Orchestra; *Crossing Borders*, a London Foundation commission setting of Nora London's wartime diary entries; and *Oh Children*, a new commission for countertenor Aryeh Nussbaum Cohen touring to New York, Houston, and Washington, D.C. Named *Musical America's* 2025 Composer of the Year, he will be inducted into Opera America's Opera Hall of Fame this spring.



Gene Scheer

LIBRETTIST (NEW YORK, NEW YORK)

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Librettist Gene Scheer is widely recognized for his critically acclaimed collaborations with Jake Heggie, including *Moby-Dick*, *Three Decembers*, *It's a Wonderful Life*, and *Intelligence*. Among his other notable works is *An American Tragedy*, created with Tobias Picker for the Met. In partnership with Joby Talbot, he wrote *Everest* and *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly*, which both premiered at the Dallas Opera. His work has garnered multiple Grammy nominations, and his opera *Cold Mountain*, with Jennifer Higdon, won the International Opera Award for Best World Premiere. His Grammy-nominated oratorio *August 4th, 1964*, written with Steven Stucky, further highlights his distinguished career. He has also written more than 50 songs with Heggie, including the cycle *Camille Claudel: Into the Fire* for Joyce DiDonato. His upcoming projects include *Another Eve*, a song cycle for DiDonato with composer Rachel Portman, and *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay*, an opera with music by Mason Bates set to open the Met's 2025–26 season. A composer in his own right, he has written many songs, including "American Anthem," which Norah Jones performed in Ken Burns's documentary *The War* and has been featured at multiple presidential inaugurations.

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The Creative Team CONTINUED



Karen Kamensek

CONDUCTOR (CHICAGO, ILLINOIS)

THIS SEASON *Moby-Dick* and the Eric and Dominique Laffont Grand Finals Concert at the Met, Poul Ruders's *The Handmaid's Tale* at San Francisco Opera, *La Bohème* at Houston Grand Opera, *Candide* in Dresden, and concerts with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Kraków Philharmonic Orchestra, Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, and Welsh National Opera Orchestra.

MET APPEARANCES *Akhnaten* (debut, 2019) and *Rigoletto*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS She served as music director and chief conductor of Staatsoper Hannover between 2011 and 2016 and music director of Theater Freiburg between 2003 and 2006. She has also held tenures as deputy music director of Staatsoper Hamburg, interim chief conductor at the Maribor Slovene National Theatre, and first kapellmeister at the Vienna Volksoper. She has led performances at Covent Garden, English National Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, the Royal Swedish Opera, and with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Seattle Symphony, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Oslo Philharmonic, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, and Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano Giuseppe Verdi, among many others.



Leonard Foglia

DIRECTOR (BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS)

THIS SEASON *Moby-Dick* for his debut at the Met and José 'Pepe' Martínez's *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna* at Opera San Antonio and Lyric Opera of Kansas City.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He directed the world premieres of Jake Heggie's *Moby-Dick*, *It's a Wonderful Life*, *Three Decembers*, and *The End of the Affair*; Joby Talbot's *Everest* and *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly*; Jennifer Higdon's *Cold Mountain*; and Iain Bell's *Stonewall*. He wrote the libretti and directed the world premieres of Ricky Ian Gordon's *A Coffin in Egypt*, José 'Pepe' Martínez's *Cruzar la Cara de La Luna* and *El Pasado Nunca se Termina*, and Javier Martínez's *El Milagro del Recuerdo*. His three Mariachi Operas have played across the United States and on three continents. He made his Broadway debut with *Master Class* and returned with *Wait Until Dark*, *On Golden Pond*, *Thurgood* (filmed for HBO), *The People in the Picture*, and *The Gin Game*. Off-Broadway, he directed Ann Deavere Smith's *Let Me Down Easy* (filmed for PBS) and *Notes from the Field* (filmed for HBO), Jonathan Tolins's *If Memory Serves*, Calvin Trillin's *About Alice*, and Laurence Fishburne's *Like They Do in the Movies*.

The Creative Team CONTINUED



Robert Brill

SET DESIGNER (SALINAS, CALIFORNIA)

THIS SEASON *Moby-Dick* at the Met.

MET PRODUCTIONS *Faust* (debut, 2011).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has designed 20 Broadway productions, earning Tony Award nominations for *Hell's Kitchen*, *Ain't Too Proud*, *Guys and Dolls*, and *Assassins*. His Broadway credits include *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, *Dancin'*, *Thoughts of A Colored Man*, *Summer*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Design for Living*, *Buried Child*, and the set and club design for the 1998 and 2014 revivals of *Cabaret*. His opera world premieres include *Moby-Dick* and Joby Talbot's *Everest* at the Dallas Opera, Jennifer Higdon's *Cold Mountain* at the Santa Fe Opera, and Kevin Puts's *The Manchurian Candidate* at Minnesota Opera. His theatrical world premieres include *Frozen* for Disney's Hyperion Theater, and as a frequent collaborator with La Jolla Playhouse, his world-premiere designs include *Chasing the Song*, *Yoshimi Battles the Pink Robots*, *The Ballad of Johnny & June*, and the upcoming EDM musical *The Heart*. His designs have been showcased internationally and across the United States, including at English National Opera, San Francisco Opera, Radio City Music Hall, and Brooklyn Academy of Music, among others. He is a founding member of Sledgehammer Theatre and member of the faculty at UC San Diego.



Jane Greenwood

COSTUME DESIGNER (LIVERPOOL, ENGLAND)

THIS SEASON *Moby-Dick* at the Met.

MET PRODUCTIONS The world premiere of John Harbison's *The Great Gatsby*, *Andrea Chénier*, *La Favorita*, *Dialogues des Carmélites*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Four Saints in Three Acts*, and *Syllabaire pour Phèdre* and *Dido and Aeneas* (debut, 1973).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS She made her Broadway debut in 1963 with *The Ballad of the Sad Café* and went on to design 130 additional productions over the next six decades, most recently the 2022 revival of *Plaza Suite*. She has been nominated for 22 Tony Awards, winning in 2017 for *The Little Foxes* and earning a Special Tony Award for Lifetime Achievement in 2014. She designed for the world premiere of *Moby-Dick* at the Dallas Opera in 2010 and has also created costumes for productions at Lyric Opera of Chicago, the Canadian Opera Company, LA Opera, Washington National Opera, San Francisco Opera, the Santa Fe Opera, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, English National Opera, and New York City Opera, among others. She was inducted into the American Theater Hall of Fame in 2003 and is a Professor in the Practice Emerita of Design at Yale University's David Geffen School of Drama.



Gavan Swift

LIGHTING DESIGNER (MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA)

THIS SEASON *Moby-Dick* for his debut at the Met and *Follies* at Melbourne's Victorian Opera.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He designed *Moby-Dick* at the State Opera of South Australia, San Diego Opera, San Francisco Opera, Washington National Opera, LA Opera, and the Dallas Opera. He has also contributed to productions at Opera Australia, Opera de Montréal, and Florida Grand Opera. Other productions for Victorian Opera include *La Rondine* and *Salome*. For the Brisbane Baroque Festival, he designed Handel's *Faramondo*. His lighting designs for musical theater include *Mamma Mia!*, *Heathers: The Musical*, *Mack & Mabel*, *Chess*, *The Mikado*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Hot Shoe Shuffle*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Sweet Charity*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Jolson, Buddy*, *Oh What a Night!*, *Footloose*, *Hair*, *Xanadu*, and *Saturday Night Fever* both in Australia and London's West End. His work has also appeared at the State Theatre Company of South Australia, Bell Shakespeare, Sydney Theatre Company, Melbourne Theatre Company, Ensemble Theatre, Windmill Theatre Company, and Australian Theatre for Young People, among others, as well as for events, television programs, concerts, and tours. He graduated from Australia's National Institute of Dramatic Art in 1994.



Elaine J. McCarthy

PROJECTION DESIGNER (ARLINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS)

THIS SEASON *Moby-Dick* at the Met, *Iolanta* in Gothenburg, and Meyerbeer's *Le Prophète* at Bard SummerScape.

MET PRODUCTIONS *Mazepa* and *War and Peace* (debut, 2002).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Over the course of her more than 30-year career, she has contributed to 17 Broadway productions, most notably *Wicked*, *Man of La Mancha*, *Thurgood*, *Into the Woods*, *Spamalot*, and *Assassins*. Her work for the operatic stage includes productions for La Scala, London's Barbican Centre, St. Petersburg's Mariinsky Theatre, Madrid's Teatro Real, Calgary Opera, State Opera South Australia, the Dallas Opera, San Francisco Opera, the Santa Fe Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and LA Opera, among many others. She has contributed to seven world premieres by Tan Dun, Jake Heggie, Jennifer Higdon, and Joby Talbot. Her work has also appeared frequently Off-Broadway, with her designs for Anna Deveare Smith's *Notes from the Field* earning Lucille Lortel, Drama Desk, IRNE, and Henry Hewes Design Award nominations. In 2020, her peers in the United States Institute for Theatre Technology honored her with a Distinguished Achievement Award in Digital Media.

The Creative Team CONTINUED



Keturah Stickann

MOVEMENT DIRECTOR (KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE)

THIS SEASON *Moby-Dick* for her debut at the Met; choreographer for José “Pepe” Martínez’s *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna* at Opera San Antonio and Lyric Opera of Kansas City; director for *La Bohème* at San Diego Opera and the Chautauqua Opera Company, Rachel Portman’s *The Little Prince* with Resonance Works, and Byron Au Yong’s *Stuck Elevator* at Knoxville Opera; and director and choreographer for *Carmen* at Indiana University’s Jacobs School of Music.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS A champion of new American opera, she has worked extensively with director and librettist Leonard Foglia, collaborating on premieres by Ricky Ian Gordon, Jennifer Higdon, Joby Talbot, and Jake Heggie. Her contributions to the premieres of Heggie’s *Moby-Dick* and *It’s a Wonderful Life* prompted the composer to ask her to direct the premiere of his opera *If I Were You* with San Francisco Opera’s Merola Opera Program in 2019. In addition to classics of the standard repertory, she has directed works by Laura Kaminsky, Anthony Davis, and Robert Aldridge, and her work has appeared at opera houses across the United States, Canada, Chile, Japan, France, Germany, Hungary, and Australia.

Sordelet Inc.

FIGHT DIRECTION

THIS SEASON *Moby-Dick* for their debut at the Met.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Rick Sordelet and Christian Kelly-Sordelet are fight directors and the creators of Sordelet Inc., a combat company bringing more than 30 years of action-movement experience to the New York theater community. Their more than 70 Broadway productions include *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Lion King*, *No Man’s Land / Waiting for Godot*, and *Picnic*. Their credits also include more than 60 first-class productions on five continents in hundreds of cities around the world, including *Ben Hur Live* both in Rome and on tour throughout Europe. Rick and Christian have been fight directors at leading regional theaters across the United States, contributing to works ranging from Sam Shepard to William Shakespeare, as well as for dozens of tours running across the United States and North America. Both Rick and Christian are stunt coordinators for television and film, with more than 1,000 episodes of daytime television and numerous feature films. Rick has been teaching stage combat for Yale University’s David Geffen School of Drama for 20 years. Christian teaches stage combat at CUNY Harlem.

The Cast

IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER



Janai Brugger

SOPRANO (DARIEN, ILLINOIS)

THIS SEASON Pip in *Moby-Dick* at the Met, Aaron Zigman's *Émigré* with the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin and Hong Kong Philharmonic, Mozart's *Requiem* with the Bozeman Symphony, Brahms's *Ein Deutsches Requiem* with the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra, and concerts with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and at the Grant Park Music Festival.

MET APPEARANCES Pamina in *The Magic Flute*, Glauce in *Medea*, Clara in *Porgy and Bess*, Micaëla in *Carmen*, Jemmy in *Guillaume Tell*, Helena in *The Enchanted Island*, and Liù in *Turandot* (debut, 2012).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Micaëla at the Glyndebourne Festival, Glauce at the Canadian Opera Company, Mary Jane Bowser in the world premiere of Jake Heggie's *Intelligence* at Houston Grand Opera, the title role of *Susannah* at Opera Theater of Saint Louis, Liù at Opera Colorado, and Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro* at LA Opera. She has also sung Micaëla, Susanna, and Clara at Cincinnati Opera; Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* at Palm Beach Opera; Servilia in *La Clemenza di Tito* at LA Opera; Clara and Servilia at Dutch National Opera; Ilia in *Idomeneo* and Liù at Lyric Opera of Chicago; and Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* at Covent Garden and LA Opera.



William Burden

TENOR (MIAMI, FLORIDA)

THIS SEASON Flask in *Moby-Dick* at the Met.

MET APPEARANCES Louis in Kevin Puts's *The Hours*, Polonius in Brett Dean's *Hamlet*, the King of Naples in Thomas Adès's *The Tempest*, Gilbert Griffiths in the world premiere of Tobias Picker's *An American Tragedy*, Pelléas in *Pelléas et Mélisande*, Tybalt in *Roméo et Juliette*, and Janek in *The Makropulos Case* (debut, 1996).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He has appeared in a number of notable world premieres, including Damien Geter's *American Apollo* at Des Moines Metro Opera, *The Hours* in concert with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Jake Heggie's *It's a Wonderful Life* at Houston Grand Opera, Mark Adamo's *The Gospel of Mary Magdalene* and Christopher Theofanidis's *Heart of a Soldier* at San Francisco Opera, Theodore Morrison's *Oscar* at the Santa Fe Opera, and Daron Hagen's *Amelia* at Seattle Opera. He has also starred in performances at the Bavarian State Opera, Paris Opera, La Scala, Staatsoper Berlin, Dutch National Opera, Glyndebourne Festival, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Glimmerglass Festival, LA Opera, Washington National Opera, New York City Opera, Cincinnati Opera, and Atlanta Opera, among others.



Stephen Costello

TENOR (PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA)

THIS SEASON Greenhorn in *Moby-Dick* and the Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto* at the Met, Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with the Houston Symphony, Roméo in *Roméo et Juliette* in Zurich, the title role of *Don Carlo* at the Bavarian State Opera, and concerts in Saltillo and at Arizona Opera.

MET APPEARANCES Rodolfo in *La Bohème*, the Duke of Mantua, Alfredo in *La Traviata*, Roméo, Percy in *Anna Bolena*, Camille de Rosillon in *The Merry Widow*, and Edgardo and Arturo (debut, 2007) in *Lucia di Lammermoor*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS He created the role of Greenhorn in the world premiere of *Moby-Dick* at the Dallas Opera. Recent performances include Rodolfo in Rovigo, Padua, Tokyo, and in concert with the Philadelphia Orchestra; Cavaradossi in *Tosca* with the Oklahoma City Philharmonic; Don José in *Carmen* at the Bavarian State Opera; and the title role of *Roberto Devereux* in Zurich. He has also sung Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore* and the title role of *Faust* at the Vienna State Opera; Alfredo at Covent Garden and the Bavarian State Opera; Rodolfo in Naples, Hamburg, and Dresden; Don José at Cincinnati Opera; and Chevalier des Grieux in *Manon* at the Paris Opera.



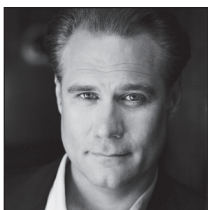
Ryan Speedo Green

BASS-BARITONE (SUFFOLK, VIRGINIA)

THIS SEASON Queequeg in *Moby-Dick*, Ferrando in *Il Trovatore*, and the Spirit Messenger in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* at the Met; a recital at Carnegie Hall; Wotan in *Die Walküre* at the Santa Fe Opera; and concerts with the Orchestre Métropolitain, Boston Symphony Orchestra, and at Florida State University.

MET APPEARANCES Since his 2012 debut as the Mandarin in *Turandot*, he has sung more than 150 performances of 15 roles, including Escamillo in *Carmen*, Charles and Uncle Paul in Terence Blanchard's *Fire Shut Up in My Bones*, Young Emile Griffith in Blanchard's *Champion*, Truffaldin in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Jake in *Porgy and Bess*, Colline in *La Bohème*, and Varlaam in *Boris Godunov*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Between 2014 and 2019, he was a member of the ensemble at the Vienna State Opera. He has also appeared at the Bavarian State Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Paris Opera, Theater an der Wien, Washington National Opera, Palm Beach Opera, and Houston Grand Opera. He is a graduate of the Met's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program, and in 2021 and 2023, he received the Met's Beverly Sills Award, established by Agnes Varis and Karl Leichtman.



Brandon Jovanovich

TENOR (BILLINGS, MONTANA)

THIS SEASON Captain Ahab in *Moby-Dick* at the Met, a concert at Washington National Opera, Shostakovich's *From Jewish Folk Poetry* at Carnegie Hall, and Ulysse in Fauré's *Pénélope* at the Bavarian State Opera.

MET APPEARANCES Sergei in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, Bacchus in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, the Prince in *Rusalka*, and Don José in *Carmen* (debut, 2010).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Dick Johnson in *La Fanciulla del West* at Staatsoper Berlin, Siegmund in Act I of *Die Walküre* in concert with the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, Hermann in *The Queen of Spades* at the Bavarian State Opera, the title role of *Peter Grimes* at La Scala, the Prince in Bergen, Florestan in *Fidelio* at the Vienna State Opera, and Laca in *Jenůfa* in Valencia. He has also sung Luigi in *Il Tabarro* and Bacchus in Barcelona, the title role of *Lohengrin* at Covent Garden, Bacchus at the Bavarian State Opera, the title role of *Parsifal* at the Vienna State Opera, and Siegmund in *Die Walküre* and *Parsifal* at the Deutsche Oper Berlin.



Malcolm MacKenzie

BARITONE (WOODLAND, CALIFORNIA)

THIS SEASON Stubb in *Moby-Dick* at the Met and Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* at Opera San Antonio and Austin Opera.

MET APPEARANCES Le Dancaïre in *Carmen* (debut, 2010) and Marullo in *Rigoletto*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include the Old Doctor in *Vanessa* at Spoleto Festival USA, Uncle John in Ricky Ian Gordon's *The Grapes of Wrath* with Orchestra of St. Luke's, Germont in *La Traviata* at Knoxville Opera and Eugene Opera, and Mark Torrance in Paul Moravec's *The Shining* at the Atlanta Opera and Lyric Opera of Kansas City. He has also sung Alfio in *Cavalleria Rusticana*, Germont, and Roger Chillingworth in the world premiere of Lori Laitman's *The Scarlet Letter* at Opera Colorado; Germont at Toledo Opera, Virginia Opera, and with the Chattanooga Symphony and Opera; Peter in *Hänsel und Gretel* and Schaunard in *La Bohème* at San Diego Opera; Scarpia in *Tosca* at North Carolina Opera and Opera Omaha; Stubb at Pittsburgh Opera and LA Opera; Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor* at Eugene Opera; Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte* at Opera San José; and Iago in *Otello* at Nashville Opera.



Peter Mattei

BARITONE (PITEÅ, SWEDEN)

THIS SEASON Starbuck in *Moby-Dick* and Jochanaan in *Salome* at the Met and Count Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro* at the Bavarian State Opera.

MET APPEARANCES Since his 2002 debut as Count Almaviva, he has sung more than 150 performances of 11 roles, including Rodrigo in *Don Carlo*, Amfortas in *Parsifal*, Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Wolfram in *Tannhäuser*, Prince Yeletsky in *The Queen of Spades*, Marcello in *La Bohème*, Shishkov in *From the House of the Dead*, and the title roles of *Don Giovanni*, *Wozzeck*, and *Eugene Onegin*.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Amfortas at the Royal Swedish Opera, *Wozzeck* in Valencia, *Don Giovanni* at Staatsoper Berlin and the Verbier Festival, and Count Almaviva in Dresden and at the Paris Opera. He has also sung *Don Giovanni*, Count Almaviva, and Eugene Onegin at the Vienna State Opera; Amfortas and Shishkov at the Paris Opera; Eugene Onegin in Zurich and at the Paris Opera; Don Fernando in *Fidelio* and *Don Giovanni* at La Scala; Wolfram at Staatsoper Berlin; and *Don Giovanni* in Zurich.