

MOBY DICK

— REHEARSED —



BAG &
BAGGAGE

MOBY DICK, REHEARSED

based on *Moby-Dick, or the Whale* by Herman Melville

adapted by Orson Welles

directed by Scott Palmer

March 3 - 20, 2016

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Jessi Walters* Young Actor/Ishmael
Heidi Hunter Member of the Company/Flask
Peter Schuyler* Serious Actor/Starbuck/Kent
Eric St. Cyr* Cynical Actor/Queequeg
Joey Copsey* Member of the Company/Carpenter
Gary Strong* Middle Aged Actor/Stubbs
David Heath Old Pro/Peleg
Cassie Greer* Young Actress/Pip/Cordelia
Arianne Jacques* Stage Manager/Elijah/Voice of The Rachel
Kymberli Coulburne Actor Manager/Ahab/Fr. Mapple/Lear
Dawson Oliver Member of the Company/
Mia Frances Duckart Member of the Company/
student Member of the Company/

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Scott Palmer Director
Emily Trimble[†] Stage Manager
Props Mistress
Clara Hiller* Movement/Voice Coach
Amanda Kishlock Assistant Stage Manager
Melissa Heller[†] Costume Designer
Megan Wilkerson[†] Scenic Designer
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INTRODUCTION



Moby-Dick, or The Whale, was written by American author Herman Melville and first published in 1851. It is considered to be one of the Great American Novels, telling the story of the adventures of wandering sailor Ishmael and his voyage on the whaleship Pequod, commanded by Captain Ahab. Ishmael soon learns that Ahab has a sole purpose on this voyage: to seek out and destroy Moby Dick, a ferocious, enigmatic white sperm whale. In a previous encounter, the whale crushed Ahab's boat and bit off his leg, which now drives Ahab to take revenge. Even those who've never read a word of *Moby-Dick* often recognize the book's famous first line, "Call me Ishmael," or the plot device of an insane quest for vengeance on an aspect of the natural world.

In the summer of 1955, American filmmaker, actor, director, and writer, Orson Welles, brought together a group of up-and-coming British actors at the Duke of York's Theatre in London to produce his theatrical adaptation of Melville's epic, entitled *Moby Dick - Rehearsed*. Welles' take on the story is framed as a play within a play - the action begins with a Shakespearean company of actors arriving to a rehearsal of *King Lear* - and is written largely in verse, with text that is pulled directly from Melville's novel. With the stage bare, set for rehearsal, the actors transform the theater over the course of the show into the yardarms, sails, masts, and deck of the ship that is hunting the great White Whale, inviting the audience to come along on their journey of theatrical imagination.

BACKGROUND: The Writers

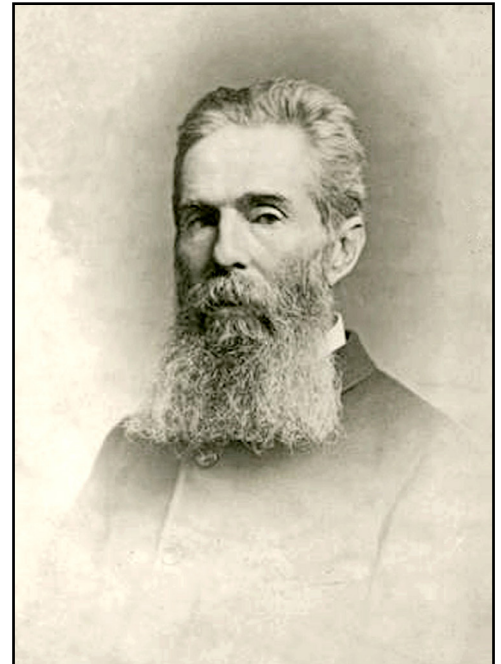
Herman Melville & Orson Welles

Herman Melville (1819-1891) was born in New York City in 1819, to Allan and Maria Gansevoort Melvill (Maria added the "e" to the family name following her husband's death), a French dry-good merchant and his wife. In the mid-1820s, young Herman fell ill to scarlet fever, and though he regained his health not long afterward, his vision was left permanently impaired by the illness.

During the 1830s, he was enrolled at Albany Academy and Albany Classical School, where he studied classic literature and began writing poems, essays, and short stories. Melville ended his formal education abruptly after his father died in 1832, shortly after bankruptcy left the family in financial straits.

After his father's death, Melville attempted to help support his family by working various jobs, from banking to teaching school; he was, however, unable to hold down a single job, and in 1839, he took the advice of his older brother Gansevoort and signed on as a cabin boy for a merchant ship called the *St. Lawrence*.

In 1841, Melville embarked on his second sea voyage after being hired to work aboard the *Acushnet*, a whaling ship. His subsequent wild journey provided the sparks for his yet-to-be-realized literary career: after arriving at the Marquesas Islands of Polynesia in 1842, Melville and a crewmate deserted the ship and, soon after, were captured by local cannibals. Although Melville was treated well, he escaped after four months by boarding another whaling ship, the *Lucy Ann*, and was jailed after joining her crew in a mutiny. He eventually wound up in Hawaii before catching a ride back to Massachusetts on the *USS United States*, arriving home more than three years after he left.



The last known image of Herman Melville, photographed in 1885 by George G. Rockwood

Melville immediately set about putting pen to paper to capture his experiences, and achieved success and acclaim with *Typee: A Peep at Polynesian Life* (1846); and *Omoo: A Narrative of Adventures in the South Seas* (1847) - both were combinations of personal tales and imagined events, with detailed descriptions of seafaring life.

After ending his seafaring career, Melville's concern over his sporadic education inspired him to read voraciously. In 1847, he married Elizabeth Shaw and moved first to New York and then the Berkshires. There he lived near the reclusive writer Nathaniel Hawthorne, who was to become a close friend and confidant. There, Melville combined his new, literary-inspired love of philosophical allegory with the sea-adventure theme, and penned *Mardi: and a Voyage Thither* (1849); *Redburn: His First Voyage* (1849); and *White-Jacket; or, The World in a Man-of-War* (1850).

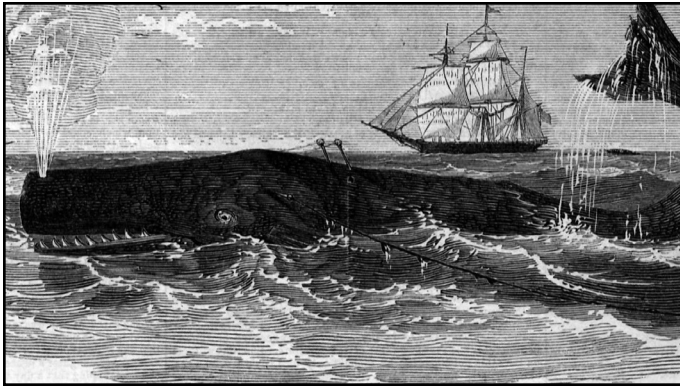


Image of *The Essex* from the Nantucket Whaling Museum

In 1851, Melville delivered what would become his signature work, *Moby-Dick* (initially titled *The Whale*). *Moby-Dick*, categorized as American Romanticism, is based on both Melville's years of experience aboard whaleships and the real-life disaster of the *Essex* whaleship. (see next section for more info about *The Essex*)

Considered by modern scholars to be one of the great American novels, *Moby-Dick* was dismissed by Melville's contemporaries and he made little money from the effort. Early critics were unimpressed by the novel: an 1851 article in the *Illustrated London News* noted Melville's "great aptitude for quaint and original philosophical speculation, degenerating, however, too often into rhapsody and purposeless extravagance."

The other two novels that today form the core of the Melville canon—*Pierre; or, The Ambiguities* (1852); and *Israel Potter: His Fifty Years of Exile* (1855)—met with a similar fate. Following the release of *The Confidence-Man: His Masquerade* in 1857, Melville all but gave up on writing novels.

Melville delivered a series of lectures throughout the late 1850s, and the following decade he began a 20-year career as a customs inspector in New York City. He also turned his creative interests to poetry for the next 30 years. Melville had finally begun work on another novel when he died of a heart attack in New York City on September 28, 1891. His early fame had vanished by then, but many of his books were eventually reprinted, and his name began slowly gaining traction in the literary world. By the early 1920s, Melville had become a well-known figure among readers and critics alike; his last novel also saw the light of day, published in 1924 as *Billy Budd, Sailor*. Today, Herman Melville is regarded as one of America's greatest writers.



Orson Welles on set in the 1970s.
Photo archived at the British Film Institute.

The most well-known filmmaker to the public this side of Alfred Hitchcock, **Orson Welles (1915-1985)** was the prodigy son of Beatrice Ives - a concert pianist and a crack rifle shot - and Richard Welles - an inventor and a businessman. Welles was well-versed in literature at an early age, particularly Shakespeare, and was adept at the piano and violin, acting, drawing, painting, and writing verse; he also entertained friends and relatives by performing magic tricks and staging mini-productions of William Shakespeare's plays.

Through the unusual circumstances of his life (both of his parents died by the time he was 12, leaving him with an inheritance and not many family obligations), he found himself free to indulge his numerous interests, which included the theater. He was educated at the exclusive Todd School in Woodstock, Illinois and the Art Institute of Chicago, before traveling to Dublin, where, while still a teenager, he successfully auditioned at the Gate Theatre and became part of the acting company.

Welles remained in Ireland for a year, acting with the company at the Abbey Theatre as well as at the Gate; he also designed sets, wrote a newspaper column, and began directing plays. In 1933, he returned to the United States, and was introduced to actress Katharine Cornell by author Thornton Wilder. Cornell hired him to act in her road company, through which he became associated with producer John Houseman. Together, Welles and Houseman mounted several edgy and acclaimed productions for the Works Progress Administration's Federal Theatre Project, which led to the 1937 founding of the Mercury Theater.

In 1938 the Mercury Players undertook a series of radio dramas adapted from famous novels. They attained national notoriety with a program based on H.G. Wells' *The War of the Worlds* when thousands of listeners mistakenly believed aliens had actually landed on Earth. The national coverage that resulted from his theatre and radio work brought Welles' name before Hollywood.

In 1939 he signed an extraordinary contract with the film studio RKO that guaranteed him near-total autonomy and final cut on any film he made. For his first film, Welles chose Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, which was to be filmed entirely from the point of view of the narrator Marlow. However, despite months of preparation, the film never got off the ground. Welles narrated *Swiss Family Robinson* (1940) while waiting for another project to evolve.

Shortly thereafter, working as director, producer, co-author, and star, he made *Citizen Kane* (1941), the most discussed - if not the greatest - American movie ever created. It made striking use of classic filmmaking techniques, as well as new, more experimental ones, and included complex flashback structures and a beautifully evocative score. Welles' distinctive directorial style featured layered and nonlinear narrative forms, innovative uses of lighting and chiaroscuro, unusual camera angles, sound techniques borrowed from radio, deep focus shots, and long takes. *Citizen Kane* put all of these on prime display, and while artistically brilliant, it was difficult to market, and failed to be a financial success. It nevertheless received nine Academy Award nominations - of which Welles received three (best actor, director, and original screenplay) - but only the screenplay won an Oscar.



Welles in *Citizen Kane* (1941)

Welles' second film, *The Magnificent Ambersons* (1942), ran into major budget and production problems, which brought down the studio management that had hired him. Word quickly spread through the film community of Welles' difficulty in adhering to shooting schedules and budgets. His career never fully recovered, and, although he directed other films in Hollywood - including *The Stranger* (1946), *Macbeth* (1948), and *Touch of Evil* (1958) - he was never again given full control over his movies.

European producers, however, were more forgiving, and - having discovered in the mid-'40s that, for 100,000 dollars a shot, he could make money as an actor to help finance his films and his fairly expensive lifestyle - Welles accepted many film acting assignments in England, France, and Italy. He made two series of short documentaries for British television, *Orson Welles' Sketch Book* and *Around the World with Orson Welles* (both 1955), and that same year he also produced *Moby Dick—Rehearsed* for the London stage, an adaptation of Herman Melville's novel in which he appeared as Captain Ahab and Father Mapple.



Welles as Father Mapple in *Moby Dick* (1956)

American audiences saw him as Father Mapple in John Huston's *Moby Dick* (1956) and as the imposing Varner in Martin Ritt's *The Long, Hot Summer* (1958). He then returned to Hollywood for the first time in 10 years and made his acclaimed film *Touch of Evil* (1958), before returning to Europe for the following decade. Throughout, Welles continued to work as an actor, in addition to making television appearances and doing voice-overs, recordings, and occasional commercials.

Welles died of a heart attack at his home in Hollywood on October 10, 1985, leaving behind a swath of unfinished screenplays and films. Despite his lack of commercial success, Welles remains one of the most well-known, discussed, and important directors in the history of motion pictures.

BACKGROUND: The *Moby-Dick* Story

Moby-Dick is an extensive work of fact-based fiction: a 136-chapter novel that details all aspects of the whaling trade, culture, and life, amid the story of Captain Ahab's revenge on the great White Whale. Because of its massive length, author Robert A. diCurcio offers a quick overview of the novel to help first-time readers navigate their way through it. This serves as a succinct synopsis of the action, and highlights the important plot points that show up in *Moby Dick*, *Rehearsed*:

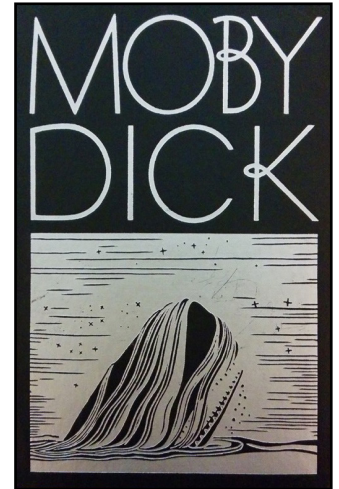
Ishmael decides to go on a whaling voyage. Travels to New Bedford from Manhattan. There he becomes the friend of Queequeg, the South Sea Islander. They decide to go whaling together on a Nantucket whaleship. (Chapters 1 - 13)

On Nantucket Island, they sign on the whaleship Pequod, commanded by the sinister Captain Ahab. A wharfside character called Elijah warns them that their souls are in danger on that ship. The Pequod leaves Nantucket bound "around the world" on Christmas Day. (Chapters 14 - 22)

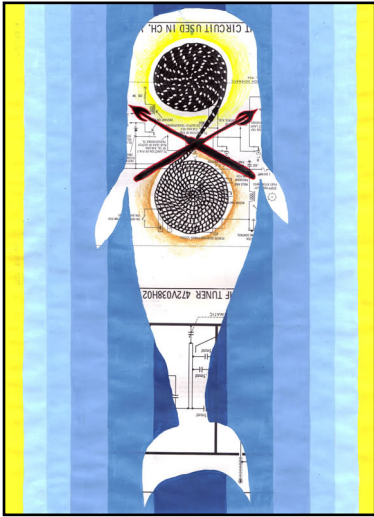
Various observations by Melville. (Chapters 23 - 25)

The characters of Ahab, the mates Starbuck, Stubb, and Flask, the harpooners Queequeg, Daggoo, and Tashtego, and the ship's boy Pip are introduced. (Chapters 26 - 35)

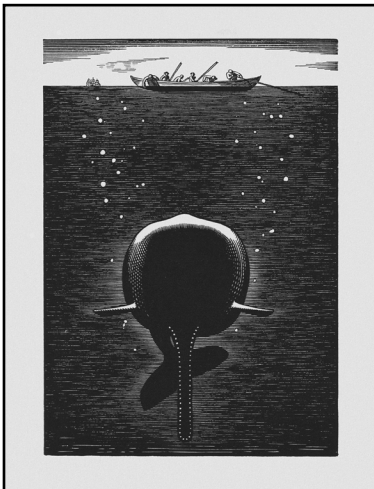
Captain Ahab nails a gold coin to the mast as a reward, making the crew swear that they will assist him in killing the white whale Moby Dick for revenge. Only Starbuck is against this. (Chapters 36 - 37)



Rockwell Kent's cover design on the Lakeside Press edition of *Moby Dick*



Moby Dick Page 271
illustration by Matt Kish



Rockwell Kent illustration

[di Curcio suggests skimming Chapters 38 - 47: largely maritime descriptions and Melville's musings on whaling culture and the sea.]

Fedallah is introduced - the leader of Ahab's boat-crew of Parsees, smuggled on board as stowaways by Ahab. (Chapters 48 - 50)

Various observations concerning Moby Dick's supernatural powers. (Chapters 51 - 54)

Various observations about whales and whale hunting, including further reference to Moby Dick's ability to wreak death and destruction. (Chapters 55 - 92)

Little black boy Pip jumps from a whaleboat, is abandoned and rescued, but goes insane as a result. (Chapter 93)

More on whales, whaling, and Moby Dick's doings. (Chapters 94 - 105)

Ahab gets a new leg made by the ship's carpenter. (Chapters 106 - 108)

Confrontation between Ahab and Starbuck, where Ahab threatens to kill Starbuck with a gun. (Chapter 109)

Queequeg decides he is dying, has the carpenter make him a coffin; then he decides he won't die after all. His coffin plays an important role in the story after that. (Chapter 110)

The Pequod reaches the Pacific Ocean by way of the Indian Ocean and the China Sea. Ahab has the ship's blacksmith forge him a special harpoon, tempered in blood, for Moby Dick. (Chapters 111 - 116)

Fedallah makes three predictions concerning Ahab's death. (Chapter 117)

Ahab smashes his quadrant, deciding to navigate by dead reckoning; he faces down a typhoon, gaining the respect of the crew and the revulsion of Starbuck. Ahab leaves the Sea of Japan to head for the Equator where he knows Moby Dick is waiting. (Chapters 118 - 122)

Starbuck comes close to shooting Ahab in his sleep, but chickens out. (Chapter 123)

Ahab magnetizes a needle as a compass to the amazement of the crew. Then he befriends poor little Pip, showing a tender side to his gruff personality. (Chapters 124 - 125)

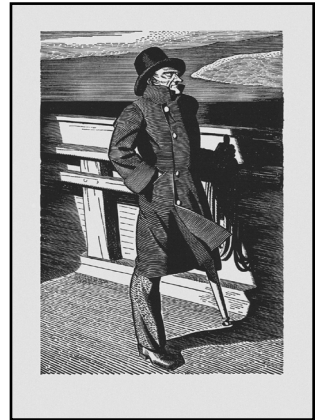
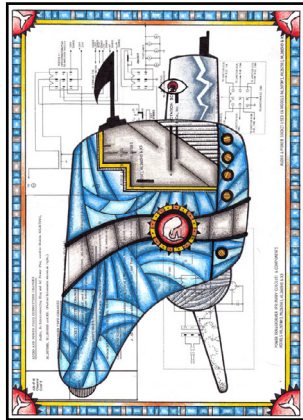
Eerie wails are heard one night; the next morning a sailor falls down from the rigging into the sea, and disappears along with the ship's life buoy. A buoy is made from Queequeg's coffin, and it is prophetically hung over the stern of the ship. (Chapters 126 - 127)

The Pequod meets the Nantucket whaleship Rachel whose Captain is searching for his son who is lost in a missing whaleboat. Ahab refuses to help in the search, because he is losing time. (Chapter 128)

Chapters preparatory to the assault on Moby Dick. Ill omens occur, and Starbuck makes a final, failed plea to Ahab to stop seeking revenge on Moby Dick and take the ship back to Nantucket. (Chapters 129 - 132)

The final three days -- Moby Dick is attacked each day. On the first two, the White Whale smashes the boats and drives them back on to the Pequod. On the third day Moby Dick sinks the Pequod and kills Captain Ahab by catching his neck in the harpoon-line and yanking him under water, fulfilling the three prophecies of Fedallah. (Chapters 133 - 135)

Ishmael survives to tell the tale and spin the yarn. It was the life buoy made of Queequeg's coffin that saved him until he was rescued by the Nantucket whaleship Rachel. (Epilogue)



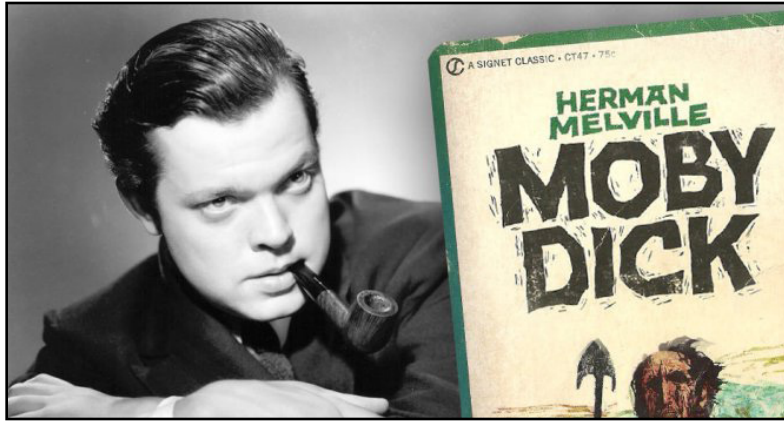
The monomaniacal Captain Ahab as imagined by artists (from l-r) Jon Foster; Matt Kish; Johnny Martin; and Rockwell Kent

THE ESSEX

On November 20, 1820, a Nantucket whaling ship named the Essex was on a routine expedition when it was suddenly struck by an 80-ton sperm whale in the middle of the South Pacific. After the ship sunk, the 20-man crew faced down a horrifying situation when they were forced to drift in three small boats for more than 90 days. Eventually, they washed up on an island almost 3,000 miles off of South America, but realized after a few short weeks that the island wouldn't be able to support them for long and they would eventually starve to death. First mate Owen Chase encouraged his crew to get back in their three boats and head for South America; all but three of the sailors agreed, and the seventeen shipmen set off. One of the boats was never recovered; one was spotted and rescued by the British whaleship Indian on February 18, 90 days after the sinking of the Essex; and the third was rescued when almost within sight of the South American coast by the Nantucket whaleship Dauphin on February 23, 95 days after the Essex sank. Of the men who set out from the South Pacific island, only five survived, having faced storms, illness, starvation, and having been reduced to cannibalism for the sake of survival. The three sailors who had remained on the island were eventually rescued, themselves near to death from starvation.

First Mate Owen Chase returned to Nantucket on June 11, 1821, and four months later he had completed a first-hand account of the disaster, the *Narrative of the Most Extraordinary and Distressing Shipwreck of the Whale-Ship Essex*. When Herman Melville was on his first whaling expedition in 1841, he met a Nantucketer named William Henry Chase - Owen Chase's teenage son. After questioning the boy about his father's experiences, William pulled out a copy of his father's Essex narrative and loaned it to Melville. "The reading of this wondrous story upon the landless sea, and so close to the very latitude of the shipwreck, had a surprising effect on me," Melville remembered. The experience of reading Chase's account, along with his own experience on the Acushnet, largely served as Melville's inspiration for *Moby-Dick*.

BACKGROUND: Welles' Adaptation, *King Lear*, and Blank Verse



In August of 1946, Orson Welles adapted *Moby Dick* - and played Captain Ahab - in a version which aired as part of Mercury Summer Theatre on the Air - a radio drama series which Welles produced, directed, and starred in, offering 30-minute adaptations of classic plays and dramas. From all accounts, this seems to be the source of Welles' fascination with Melville's story, as he returned to it not only to adapt, direct, and star in the 1955 *Moby Dick, Rehearsed* (which he also made a brief attempt to film), but also to play Father Mapple in John Huston's 1956 film adaptation (where he is rumored to have written his own lines). He revisited the Melville text again in 1971 when he filmed himself performing all the roles in the story for what is considered to be an unfinished film project, 22 minutes of which were recovered in 1999.

In *Moby Dick, Rehearsed*, Welles sets the action of the whaling ship firmly within the confines of a theatre, as the play begins with actors milling around waiting to begin a rehearsal of William Shakespeare's *King Lear*. Framing the Melville story in this way, Welles invites comparisons between Captain Ahab and King Lear as tragic heroes of their own stories. All tragic heroes have in common the presence of a tragic flaw - the flaw itself varies from hero to hero - and this major flaw is the eventual cause of the hero's downfall. In highlighting the Ahab-Lear similarities, Welles seems to suggest that these two tragic heroes share the same tragic flaw: hubris.

Hubris (from the ancient Greek ὑβρις) means, in a modern context, extreme pride or self-confidence. Hubris is usually perceived as a characteristic of an individual rather than a group, and often indicates a loss of contact with reality and an overestimation of one's own competence, accomplishments, or capabilities, especially when the person exhibiting it is in a position of power.

To help further understand the connection between Captain Ahab and King Lear, here's a brief synopsis of Shakespeare's play:

King Lear is a tragedy written by William Shakespeare in the early 1600s, depicting the gradual descent into madness of the title character, and widely regarded as one of Shakespeare's greatest plays. Based on the ancient legend, *Lier of Britain*, Shakespeare presents a dramatic version of the story, highlighting the relationships between parents and their children.



Ready to give up his power and spend the rest of his life in peace, Lear decides to divide up his kingdom between his three daughters: Goneril, the wife of the Duke of Albany; Regan, married to the Duke of Cornwall; and Cordelia, his youngest and favorite. In an attempt to give the "largest bounty" to the child who loves him most, King Lear asks for expressions of affection from each of his daughters. He receives embellished speeches of endearment from the older two, but Cordelia modestly speaks the truth, angering her father who disinherits her and banishes her forever. Trying to intercede on Cordelia's behalf, the Earl of Kent also is banished. The King of France, impressed by Cordelia's love and integrity, marries Lear's dowerless daughter.

Kevin Connell as King Lear, with Jessi Walters as Regan and Rebecca Ridenour as Goneril in Bage & Baggage's 2014 production of *Lear*.

Meanwhile, the Earl of Gloucester is deceived by his illegitimate son, Edmund, who leads him to believe that Edgar, the earl's legitimate son, is plotting to murder his father.

Lear's plans to live with his two older daughters are immediately thwarted when Goneril turns on him, reducing his train of followers by half. In shock from her ingratitude, Lear decides to seek refuge with Regan. Instead of admonishing her sister for her actions as Lear expects, Regan is harsh with him, suggesting that he apologize to Goneril.

Heartbroken and rejected, Lear totters out into a storm with only his Fool and Kent to keep him company. Kent, who is now in disguise, finds refuge in a hovel for the king, who has been driven mad by his suffering. There they meet Edgar, disguised as Tom o'Bedlam, hiding in fear for his life. Gloucester soon arrives and hurries Lear off to Dover, where Cordelia is waiting with a French army ready to restore her father's kingdom. Cordelia cares for her father in the camp, and their severed relationship is restored.

In the meantime, Cornwall gouges out Gloucester's eyes, calling him a traitor. Still in disguise, Edgar leads his blind father to Dover. Edmund, in command of the English army, defeats the French, taking Cordelia and Lear as prisoners. As Gloucester is dying, Edgar reveals his true identity to his father. Edgar kills Edmund, but cannot save Cordelia whom Edmund has ordered to be hanged. Lear dies, grief-stricken over Cordelia's death. Rivalry over their love for Edmund leads Goneril to poison Regan and then stab herself. Albany, Kent, and Edgar are left to restore some semblance of order to the kingdom.



Greg Hicks as King Lear and Geoffrey Freshwater as Gloucester in the Royal Shakespeare Company's 2010 production of King Lear.

Another similarity between Welles' play and Shakespeare's text is the use of blank verse. Blank verse is poetry written in regular metered but unrhymed lines, almost always iambic pentameters. It is predominantly used in English poetry, including the vast majority of the Shakespeare canon. In *Moby Dick*, *Rehearsed*, Welles has taken Melville's text and turned it into blank verse wherever possible, even further heightening the already-rich language of the novel *Moby-Dick*. Below is an example of the way Welles has taken Melville's text and adapted it into blank verse. Note that Welles has also significantly trimmed the text, ensuring that the stage play is not 18 hours long!

What is iambic pentameter?

Iambic pentameter refers to a certain type of line of poetry and relates to the number of syllables in the line, as well as the emphasis placed on those syllables. An iamb refers to a "foot" of poetry that is an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable, often notated like this: ♪ / Pentameter refers to the number of poetic feet per line. Therefore, iambic pentameter means five iambs in a row:

♪ / ♪ / ♪ / ♪ / ♪ /

Melville's Text

Call me Ishmael. Some years ago- never mind how long precisely- having little or no money in my purse, and nothing particular to interest me on shore, I thought I would sail about a little and see the watery part of the world. It is a way I have of driving off the spleen and regulating the circulation. Whenever I find myself growing grim about the mouth; whenever it is a damp, drizzly November in my soul; whenever I find myself involuntarily pausing before coffin warehouses, and bringing up the rear of every funeral I meet; and especially whenever my hypos get such an upper hand of me, that it requires a strong moral principle to prevent me from deliberately stepping into the street, and methodically knocking people's hats off- then, I account it high time to get to sea as soon as I can. This is my substitute for pistol and ball. With a philosophical flourish Cato throws himself upon his sword; I quietly take to the ship. There is nothing surprising in this. If they but knew it, almost all men in their degree, some time or other, cherish very nearly the same feelings towards the ocean with me.

Welles' Text

Call me Ishmael...
Some years ago — never mind how long —
I thought that I would sail about a little
and see the watery part of the world.
Whenever I grow grim about the mouth,
and hazy in the eyes; whenever
it's a damp November in my soul;
I count it time to get to sea.
Almost all men, sometime or other,
cherish these same feelings toward the ocean...

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Moby Dick, *Rehearsed* is dense with nautical terminology and references. The following glossary of terms will help you familiarize yourself with the language of Ahab, Ishmael, and the rest of the crew of the Pequod:

aft/abaft - Toward the rear (stern) of the boat. Behind.

Antilles - An archipelago bordered by the Caribbean Sea to the south and west, the Gulf of Mexico to the northwest, and the Atlantic Ocean to the north and east.

bow - The front of a vessel.

bow-ends - “On her bow-ends” may mean the vessel is literally on her side.

captain - The person lawfully in command of a vessel. “Captain” is an informal title of respect given to the commander of a naval vessel regardless of his or her formal rank; aboard a merchant ship, the ship’s master is her “captain.”

current - The horizontal movement of water.

Cyclades - The Cyclades is a group of Greek islands, southeast of the mainland in the Aegean Sea. It centers on uninhabited Delos, considered the birthplace of Apollo, and home to some of Greece’s most important archaeological ruins.

deck - A permanent covering over a compartment, hull or any part thereof.

dismast - To break or topple the mast or masts of a ship.

dock - A protected water area in which vessels are moored. The term is often used to denote a pier or a wharf.

eddies - Circular movements of water, counter to a main current, causing small whirlpools.

fan-tail - Aft end of the ship, also known as the Poop deck.

first mate - The second-in-command of a commercial ship.

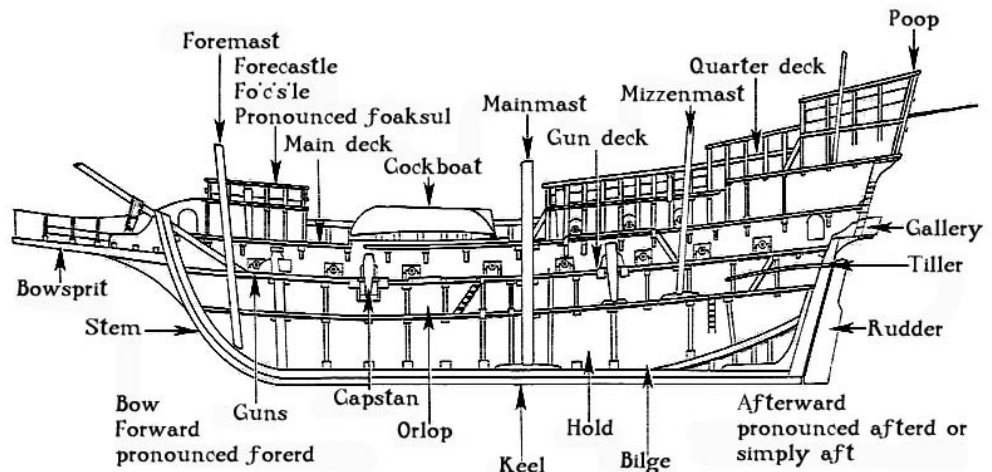
fluke - The palm or flat surface of an anchor.

forecastle - A partial deck, above the upper deck and at the head of the vessel; traditionally the sailors’ living quarters. The name is derived from the castle fitted to bear archers in time of war.

gale - A very strong wind - the U.S. National Weather Service defines a gale as 34–47 knots (39–54 miles/hour) of sustained surface winds.

gam - A meeting of two (or more) whaling ships at sea. The ships each send out a boat to the other, and the two captains meet on one ship, while the two chief mates meet on the other.

grog - Watered-down pusser’s rum consisting of half a gill with equal part of water, issued to all seamen over twenty. From the British Admiral Vernon who, in 1740, ordered the men’s ration of rum to be watered down. He was called “Old Grogam” because he often wore a grogram coat, and the watered rum came to be called ‘grog.’ Often used (illegally) as currency in exchange for favours in quantities prescribed as ‘sippers’ and ‘gulpers.’



harpoon - A long spear-like instrument attached to a rope and thrown or fired from a gun, used especially in whaling, fishing, sealing, and other marine hunting to catch fish or large marine mammals such as whales.

helm - A ship's steering mechanism, also called tiller and ship's wheel; the wheel and/or wheelhouse area.

jib/jib-stay - A triangular staysail at the front of a ship.

keel - The centerline of a boat running fore and aft; the backbone of a vessel.

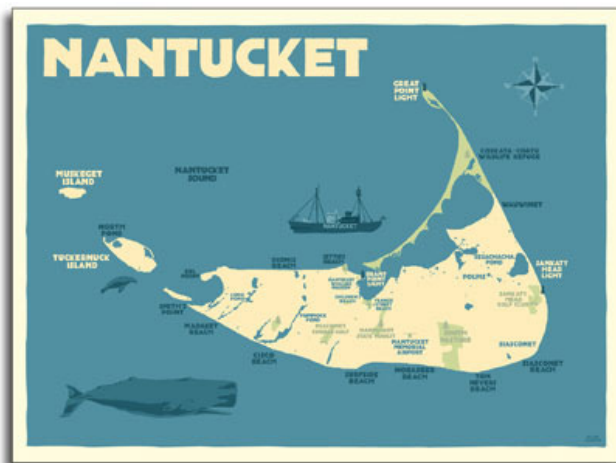
landsman - The opposite of a seaman. A person who does not go to sea, who lacks the skills of a sailor or who is uncomfortable on ships or boats.

lashing - An arrangement of rope wire or webbing with linking device used to secure and fasten two or more items together in a somewhat rigid manner. Lashings are most commonly applied to timber poles, and are commonly associated with the cargo, containerisation, the Scouting movement, and with sailors.

lee/leeward - The side sheltered from the wind. To move leeward is to move in the direction away from the wind.

main-top-sail - The top sail set on the main mast.

mast - A vertical pole on a ship which supports sails or rigging. If a wooden, multi-part mast, this term applies specifically to the lowest portion.



mastheads - A small platform partway up the mast, just above the height of the mast's main yard. A lookout is stationed here, and men who are working on the main yard will embark from here. Also called a crow's nest.

muster - To assemble (troops), especially for inspection or in preparation for battle.

Nantucket - A tiny, isolated island off Cape Cod, Massachusetts. The National Park Service cites Nantucket, designated a National Historic Landmark District in 1966, as being the "finest surviving architectural and environmental example of a late 18th- and early 19th-century New England seaport town".

oil/whale oil - Early industrial societies used whale oil widely in oil lamps and to make soap and margarine. With the commercial development of substitutes such as kerosene and vegetable oils, the use of whale oils declined considerably in the 20th century.

parmacetty - Another word for spermaceti: a white, waxlike substance taken from the oil in the head of a sperm whale or dolphin, used in making cosmetics, ointments, candles, etc. Parmacetty can also refer to a sperm whale itself.

prow - A poetical alternative term for bows.

quarter/quarterdeck - The sides of a boat rear of midships. A quarterdeck refers to the rear-most deck of a warship. In the age of sail, the quarterdeck was the preserve of the ship's officers.

rigging - The system of masts and lines on ships and other sailing vessels.

scuttle - A small opening, or lid thereof, in a ship's deck or hull.

shoal - Shallow water that is a hazard to navigation.

smack - A traditional fishing boat used off the coast of England and the Atlantic coast of America for most of the 19th century, and in smaller numbers up to the mid-20th century.

spars - A wooden (in later years also iron or steel) pole used to support various pieces of rigging and sails.

splice - To join lines (ropes, cables, etc.) by unravelling their ends and intertwining them to form a continuous line. To form an eye or a knot by splicing.

squall - A sudden, violent wind often accompanied by rain.

starboard - The right side of a boat when looking forward. Derived from the old steering oar or “steerboard” which preceded the invention of the rudder.

stem - The forward most part of the bow.

stern/sternward - The after or rear part of the boat; in the direction of the rear of the boat.

steward - A member of a vessel's crew involved in commissary duties or in personal services to passengers or other crew members.

stove - To smash inward, to force a hole or break in, as in a cask, door, or other (wooden) barrier.

stove boat - A wrecked boat: a mess of splintered timber, fouled tackle, and flailing bodies.

stunsails - Also called a studding sail or a studsail, is a sail used to increase the sail area of a square rigged vessel.

tides - The periodic rise and fall of water level in the oceans.

top-maul - A heavy hammer with a steel or wooden head, used in shipbuilding.

transom - The aft “wall” of the stern. A more or less flat surface across the stern of a vessel. Dinghies tend to have almost vertical transoms, whereas yachts' transoms may be raked forward or aft.

watch - A period of time during which a part of the crew is on duty. Changes of watch are marked by strokes on the ship's bell.

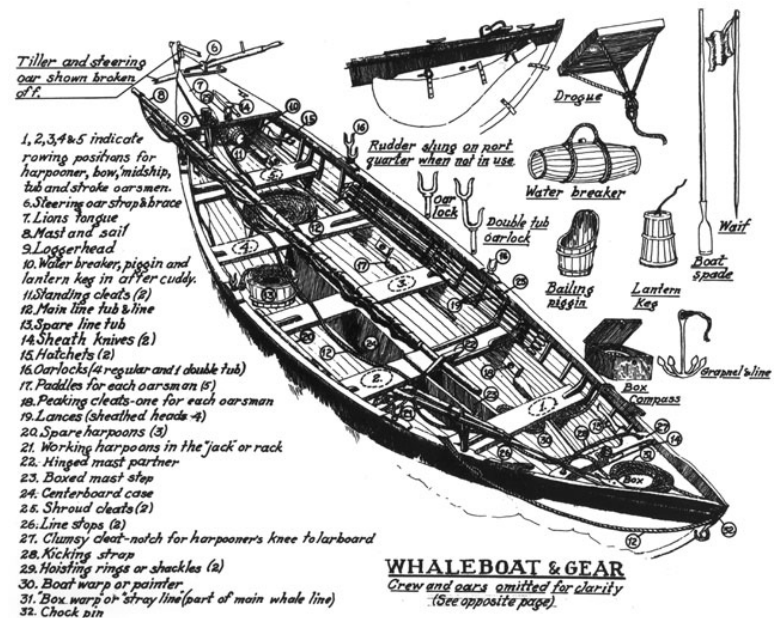
whale-boats - A type of open boat that is relatively narrow and pointed at both ends, enabling it to move either forwards or backwards equally well.

whaler - A specialized vessel designed for catching or processing whales.

wharf - A structure on the shore of a harbor or on the bank of a river or canal where ships may dock to load and unload cargo or passengers. Such a structure includes one or more berths (i.e., mooring locations), and may also include piers, warehouses, or other facilities necessary for handling the ships.

yard - A horizontal spar that holds up a square sail.

yaw - To swing or steer off course, as when running the ship with waves striking it at an angle (as opposed to running it in the same direction as the waves).



THEMES

Revenge

/rə`venj/

noun

1. the action of inflicting hurt or harm on someone for an injury or wrong suffered at their hands.

verb

1. to inflict hurt or harm on someone for an injury or wrong.

Moby-Dick is, fundamentally, a revenge tragedy: it's about one man's maniacal obsession with vengeance. Revenge - as a violent response to anger, injury, or humiliation - is generally a misguided attempt to transform shame into pride. Ahab has received both injury and humiliation at the hand (or the jaws, as it were) of Moby Dick, and now his sole focus in life has become wrapped up in his need for vindication. The spirit of revenge extends even to the whole crew of the Pequod, as every sailor becomes wrapped up in Ahab's personal mission. We see Starbuck struggle continually with this, and it is with this character that Melville wrestles with the morality of revenge.



The 1962 Broadway cast of *Moby Dick, Rehearsed*, in performance at the Ethel Barrymore Theatre. Photo archived at the Billy Rose Theatre Division of the New York Public Library.

Madness

/`mad nəs/

noun

1. the state of being mentally ill, especially severely.
2. extremely foolish behavior.
3. a state of frenzied or chaotic activity.

Madness shows up in a variety of forms in *Moby Dick*, *Rehearsed*. Ahab demonstrates the insanity of having a single-minded obsession over one thing, and being completely possessed by one overpowering desire. We see other, saner characters become helpless in the face of his driven, controlled, all-consuming obsession. Pip demonstrates another kind of madness - the madness of desperation in the face of overwhelming circumstances. The kind of madness inspires more sympathy rather than roping other characters in, and leads to its own tragic end. In the background, there is also the theme of madness that runs through *King Lear*, with Lear himself winding his way toward his death in a deranged and confused mental state, and the character of Pip paralleling the Fool in *King Lear*.

Imagination

/iˌmaja`nāSH(ə)n/

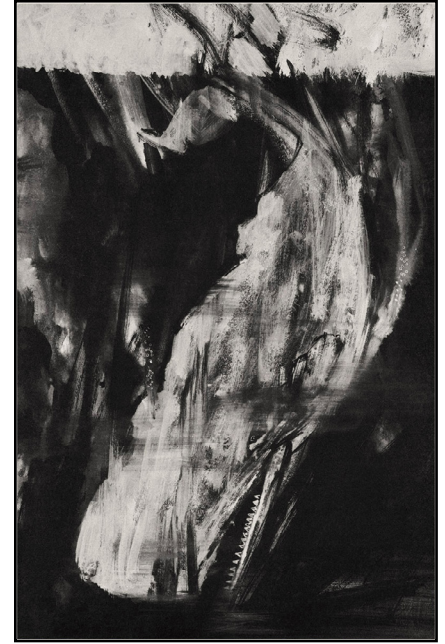
noun

1. the faculty or action of forming new ideas, or images or concepts of external objects not present to the senses.
2. the ability of the mind to be creative or resourceful.
3. the part of the mind that imagines things.

The theme of imagination is central to the theatrical art form as a whole. When we walk into a theater we assume a “willing suspension of disbelief” - we know that everything that is happening on the stage isn't real, but we agree to believe in this quasi-reality that will transcend and communicate some deeper perception about life in this world. *Moby Dick, Rehearsed* in particular asks audiences to engage with the story with a fewer-than-typical number of “real life” elements present on stage, further challenging the imaginative powers of theatre-makers and theatre-goers alike. By setting Melville's story in an empty theatrical rehearsal space, Orson Welles highlights the creative power of the human imagination in its ability to bring stories to life, inspiring the audience to become even greater participants in the action that surrounds them by using their own imaginations to help create the world of the Pequod.

QUESTIONS AND PROMPTS

1. Why do you think Orson Welles wanted to tell Herman Melville's story in this way? Consider the staging, the actor/characters, and the parallels with *King Lear*...
2. Why do you think Orson Welles specifically notes that the actor playing Kent in *King Lear* should play Starbuck in *Moby Dick*, *Rehearsed*, and the actor playing Cordelia should play Pip?
3. Why are the characters in this novel, including Ishmael, so easily caught up in Captain Ahab's revenge quest?
4. What is Ahab actually taking revenge for—the loss of his leg, his suffering, his anger, something else, all of the above?
5. Literary criticism has claimed that Ahab's quest for revenge on the White Whale represents mankind's struggle against the cruelty and arbitrariness of fate and human suffering. Do you agree or disagree?
6. Compare and contrast Captain Ahab's madness and Pip's madness. A character in the novel describes them as "[o]ne daft with strength, the other daft with weakness" (Chapter 125). Which is which? Why do you think Ahab is so affected by Pip?
7. By depicting single-minded obsession as an extreme form of madness, the *Moby-Dick* story implies that sanity can only consist of moderation and the relinquishing of bad feeling. Do you think this is true? Where do you see examples of what you would call sanity and insanity in your own life?
8. What is the role of imagination in a typical theatrical production? What about the role of imagination in reading a novel? How do both of these come into play in your experience of *Moby Dick*, *Rehearsed*?
9. Is Nature (i.e. the Natural World) in *Moby Dick*, *Rehearsed* a conscious, active power, or just a passive collection of animals and elements? How has Nature impacted the lives of the sailors, and how do the sailors seek to impact Nature?
10. Do the characters in *Moby Dick*, *Rehearsed* have unavoidable destinies? Consider especially Ahab, Ishmael, and Starbuck...
11. Why does Ishmael alone escape the wreck of the Pequod? Is there something that marks him out as different from the rest of the crew, or is it simply blind chance?



Moby Dick illustration by Robert Shore

SOURCES AND FURTHER READING

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Read blog posts from the cast and crew at <http://bagnbaggage.org/category/blog-boggage/>