

2018 | 2019 SEASON



Opera SAN JOSÉ

Celebrating 35 YEARS of Excellence

Music by JAKE HEGGIE
Libretto by GENE SCHEER

MOBY-DICK

February 9-24, 2019

PRESS KIT







Opera San José

MOBY-DICK

OPERA IN TWO ACTS

Music by Jake Heggie

Libretto by Gene Scheer

First performed April 30, 2010 at the Dallas Opera in Dallas, TX.

SUNG IN ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SUPERTITLES.

Performances of *Moby-Dick* are made possible in part by a Cultural Affairs grant from the City of San José and grants from the Carol Franc Buck Foundation and the Janet Q. Lawson Foundation. New orchestration funded by the Eugene McDermott Foundation.

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Moby-Dick is a co-production with Utah Opera, Pittsburgh Opera, Chicago Opera Theater, and Gran Teatre del Liceu, Barcelona.

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CAST

Ahab
Greenhorn
Starbuck
Queequeg
Pip
Gardiner
Flask
Stubb
Daggoo
Tashtego

Nantucket Sailor
Spanish Sailor

Richard Cox
Noah Stewart
Justin Ryan
Ashraf Sewailam
Jasmine Habersham
Trevor Neal
Mason Gates
Eugene Brancoveanu
Babatunde Akinboboye
Kevin Gino (2/9, 2/10, 2/14, 2/17)
Nicolas Gerst (2/22, 2/24)
Chester Pidduck
Kiril Havezov

COVERS

Alex Boyer, *Ahab*
Dane Suarez, *Greenhorn*
Eugene Brancoveanu, *Starbuck*
Babatunde Akinboboye, *Queequeg*
Chester Pidduck, *Flask*
William Lee Brown, *Stubb*

Shaunette Sulker, *Pip*
Vincent Granna, *Gardiner*
Xavier Joseph, *Daggoo*
Jeremy Ryan, *Nantucket Sailor*
Lazo Mihajlovich, *Spanish Sailor*

**Casting subject to change without notice*

CHORUS

TENORS

Josh Bongers
Alex Boyer
Ken Cioffi
Nicolas Gerst
Kevin Gino
Jose Hernandez
Dario Jackson
Dan Leal
Andrew Leidenthal
Greg Melton
Andrew Metzger
Don Nguyen
Michael Orlinsky
Chester Pidduck
Luis Rodriguez
Jeremy Ryan
Dan Suarez
Arthur Wu

BASSES

Babatunde Akinboboye
Clark Brown
William Lee Bryan
Emzy Burroughs
Jim Cowing
Reid Delahunt
Carter Dougherty
Chris Filipowicz
Vincent Granna
Kiril Havezov
Malcolm Jones
Xavier Joseph
Lazo Mihajlovich
Trevor Neal
Brendan Stone
Jason Vincent

DANCERS

Ty Danzl *courtesy of The New Ballet Studio Company*
Joshua Jung *courtesy of The New Ballet Studio Company*
Emmet Rodriguez *courtesy of The New Ballet Studio Company*
Anthony Shtov *courtesy of The New Ballet School*

Natalie Desch, *Répétiteur*
Michelle Klaers D'Alo, *Ballet Master*

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Warren D. Finch

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ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR

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Veronika Agranov-Dafoe

Victoria Lington



Opera San José

1ST VIOLIN

Cynthia Baehr, *Concertmaster*
Alice Talbot, *Assistant Concertmaster*
Matthew Szemela
Valerie Tisdell
Chinh Le
Virginia Smedberg
Rochelle Nguyen
Marie Flexer

2ND VIOLIN

Claudia Bloom, *Principal*
Susan Stein, *Assistant Principal*
Sue-Mi Shin
Elizabeth Corner
Sergi Goldman-Hull
Gulnar Spurlock
Andrew Lan
Josepha Fath

VIOLA

Chad Kaltinger, *Principal*
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Melinda Rayne
Ivo Bokulic

CELLO

Evan Kahn, *Principal*
Michael Graham, *Assistant Principal*
Nancy Kim
Dina Weinschelbaum

BASS

Andrew Butler, *Principal*
William Everett, *Assistant Principal*

FLUTE

Mary Hargrove, *Principal*
Laurie Seibold

PICCOLO

Laurie Seibold

OBOE

Patricia Emerson Mitchell, *Principal*
Pamela Hakl

ENGLISH HORN

Pamela Hakl

CLARINET

Mark Brandenburg, *Principal*
Mara Plotkin

BASS CLARINET

Mara Plotkin

BASSOON

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Carolyn Lockhart

CONTRABASSOON

Carolyn Lockhart

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Caitlyn Smith-Franklin
Eric Achen
Alex Camphouse

TRUMPET

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John Freeman

TROMBONE

Kathryn Curran, *Principal*
Christian Behrens

TIMPANI

Kumiko Ito, *Principal*

PERCUSSION

Mark Veregge, *Principal*
James Kassis

HARP

Karen Thielen, *Principal*

ORCHESTRA MANAGER

Mark Veregge

ORCHESTRA LIBRARIAN

Tim Spears

ACT I

Captain Ahab gazes out to sea in the early morning hours while his crew sleeps below deck. Harpooneer Queequeg, a South Sea Islander, awakens Greenhorn (Ishmael in Melville's novel) with his praying. "All hands" is sounded and the ship's sails are raised while first mate Starbuck and third mate Flask discuss the Captain's enigmatic absences.

The crew sings of whaling and fortunes to be made and Ahab appears to tell them that the real reason for the voyage is to hunt for Moby-Dick, the white whale that severed his leg. He commands that no whales are to be taken until Moby-Dick is sighted, then nails a gold coin to the masthead for the first man who sights the monster. All cry out "Death to Moby-Dick." Starbuck finds the mission to be blasphemous, but Ahab is unmoved.

Starbuck tutors Greenhorn in the art of whaling but is overcome with emotion, fearing he may never again see his wife and son. Suddenly, Stubb sights a pod of whales and Ahab arrives to forbid the hunt: Moby-Dick is the true target. The Pequod sails on, with Greenhorn and Queequeg as lookouts. Ahab is oblivious to the splendor of the scene before him. Starbuck fears that Ahab has become unhinged and is truly mad.

Three Months Later

Months have passed with no whales captured, and boredom has set in. Stubb teases Pip, the cabin boy, but too much cavilling within the crew incites a brawl. Fortunately, a whale is sighted, and Starbuck convinces Ahab that the men must hunt. In the process, a whaleboat capsizes and young Pip goes missing.

The men render the slaughtered whale, and the oil is poured into leaking barrels. Pip is sorely missed and feared dead. Starbuck urges Ahab to put into the nearest port to repair the leaking barrels. But Ahab thinks only of Moby-Dick, and a violent quarrel with Starbuck ensues. As Ahab points a gun at Starbuck, a cry goes up that Queequeg has rescued Pip.

Starbuck, still fearing he will never again see his family, stealthily enters Ahab's cabin and considers killing the Captain. He finds he cannot and departs.



Intermission (20 minutes)

ACT II: One Year Later

As a storm approaches, the crew sings while Greenhorn and Queequeg talk of voyaging together to the Pacific Islander's home. Queequeg suddenly falls ill and is taken below deck. He tells Greenhorn that he is dying and requests a coffin be crafted for him.

Ahab, who thinks always and only of sighting Moby-Dick, demands to be lifted aloft to keep a lookout. A massive storm surrounds the ship while lightning bolts bounce around the deck. When St. Elmo's fire engulfs the mast and the sails, Ahab encourages the crew by claiming it is a sign from heaven.

The Next Day

The storm has passed. From a whaling vessel nearby, Captain Gardiner solicits the Pequod for help to find his twelve-year-old son who has been washed overboard. When Ahab stonily refuses, Pip calls out that he, too, is lost and cuts himself, spilling blood on Ahab. As the Pequod sails on, Ahab baptizes his harpoon with Pip's blood. Below deck, Greenhorn considers the insanity that has afflicted those on board the Pequod.

On deck, Captain Ahab reflects to Starbuck about his forty years at sea and wonders if his life's journey has had purpose. Sensing a kindred spirit in Starbuck, Ahab is about to agree to return home to Nantucket when he spies Moby-Dick. He orders the whaling boats lowered, and the hunt is on. Ahab insists that Starbuck remain behind on the Pequod.

The great whale destroys two boats, tossing men into the sea, and then assails the Pequod herself. All crew members are lost save Ahab, who ferociously attacks the whale, only to be dragged down under the waves.

Days later, Captain Gardiner finds Greenhorn half dead, lying on top of Queequeg's floating coffin. He is the lone survivor of the ill-fated voyage.

Synopsis courtesy of Kristine McIntyre, Michael Clive, and Utah Opera



Richard Cox

TENOR

HOMETOWN: CHATTANOOGA, TN



Ahab – Richard Cox makes his company debut as Captain Ahab in OSJ’s 2018–19 production of Heggie and Scheer’s *Moby-Dick*. Recent engagements for Mr. Cox include a return to the Metropolitan Opera for Mozart’s *Die Zauberflöte* (Live in HD), and debuts at the Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia in Willy Decker’s production of Britten’s *Peter Grimes*. He recently made an acclaimed debut with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (with Maestro James Conlon), as the tenor soloist for Mahler’s *Das Lied von der Erde*.

Other recent performances have included Loge in Wagner’s *Das Rheingold* (Minnesota Opera and North Carolina Opera); Mitch in Andre Previn’s *A Streetcar Named Desire*; Laca in Janacek’s *Jenůfa* for Des Moines Metro Opera; the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra in semi-staged performances of *Peter Grimes*; his debut with Washington National Opera for Wagner’s *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (*Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre*); Prinz Kalaf in Ferruccio Busoni’s *Turandot* for the Bard SummerScape Festival, Bacchus in Strauss’s *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Sergei in Shostakovich’s *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, and Tichon in Janacek’s *Káta Kabanová* at the Teatro Municipal de Santiago de Chile; Froh in *Das Rheingold*, Malcolm in Verdi’s *Macbeth*, to name just a few.



Noah Stewart

TENOR

HOMETOWN: NEW YORK, NY



Greenhorn – Noah Stewart makes his company debut in the 2018-19 season, appearing as Greenhorn in Heggie and Scheer’s *Moby-Dick*. Recent engagements for Mr. Stewart include making his Scandinavian debut at Göteborg Opera as Don José in David McVicar’s acclaimed production of Bizet’s *Carmen* in Sweden, returning as guest soloist with The Hallé Orchestra and debuting his third solo UK tour entitled, “*In Love Again*”, featuring songs of Hollywood stage and screen as well as handpicked classical favorites.

He recently returned as guest soloist with The City of Birmingham Orchestra (U.K.), was guest soloist with The Hallé Orchestra and returned to Michigan Opera Theatre in Puccini’s *Tosca*. This past summer he was guest artist with *Friday Night Is Music Night* with the BBC Concert Orchestra for BBC Radio 2, and recently debuted as Cavaradossi in Puccini’s *Tosca* at Ries Opera in Holland. Upcoming appearances will feature him as guest soloist with The Hallé Orchestra, Cavaradossi in *Tosca* at Opera Birmingham (debut) and a return to Nashville Opera in the title role in Offenbach’s *The Tales of Hoffmann* (role debut).



Justin Ryan

BARITONE

HOMETOWN: NEW YORK, NY



Starbuck - Justin Ryan makes his OSJ debut in Heggie and Scheer's *Moby-Dick*, performing the role of Starbuck. Recent performances for Mr. Ryan include a debut this past season with Long Beach Opera and Chicago Opera Theater, where he appeared as the American animator-icon Walt Disney in the American premiere of Philip Glass' semi-biographical fantasia, *The Perfect American*. For New York City Opera, he delivered a performance of the painter Edward Hopper in Stewart Wallace's surrealist opera, *Hopper's Wife* in 2016.

Other career highlights include the role Count Almaviva in Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* with Connecticut Lyric Opera, a concert of the music of Britten and Vaughan Williams with the Helena Symphony, a New York Opera Festival world premiere in Deborah Mason's *The Rape of the Lock*, and a return to Martha's Vineyard as Figaro in Wendy Tauscher's new production of Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*.

Mr. Ryan can be heard as a recording artist on Evan Mack's *Angel of the Amazon*, released to critical praise in 2012 on Albany Records, and as the featured soloist in composer Tim Brown's collection of songs based on the poetry of Pablo Neruda, *Luces y Sombras (Songs of Light, Songs of Shadow)*, available on Capstone Records.



Ashraf Sewailam

BASS-BARITONE

HOMETOWNS: CAIRO, EGYPT

NEW YORK, NY



Queequeg – Ashraf Sewailam returns to OSJ as Queequeg in Heggie and Scheer’s *Moby-Dick*. Engagements for Mr. Sewailam during the 2017-18 season include directing Janacek’s *The Cunning Little Vixen* for Dell Arte Opera, performing the role of Capitán in Catán’s *Florencia en el Amazonas* with Madison Opera, Monterone in Verdi’s *Rigoletto* with Opera Grand Rapids, Toledo Opera, and Opera Carolina, where he also performs Lignieres in DiChiera’s *Cyrano*. On the concert stage, he will sing a concert entitled *Eternal Spirit* with Boulder Bach Festival and a recital with pianist Kenneth Osowski at York College. Additionally, he sings on a recording of a new opera by Danish composer Poul Ruders, *The 13th Child*. Past engagements featured Mr. Sewailam in the roles of Mustafa in Rossini’s *L’italiana in Algeri* with Portland Opera, Alidoro in Rossini’s *La Cenerentola* with San Diego Opera, and Basilio in Rossini’s *Il barbiere di Siviglia* with Opera San Antonio. He also performed the bass solo in both Händel’s *Messiah* with American University in Beirut and Beethoven’s *Mass in C* with Cairo Symphony.

In addition to his singing engagements, Mr. Sewailam has taught at the American University in Cairo, and served as music director for Disney Character Voice International (DCVI), dubbing Disney productions into Arabic, and performed several of the characters.



Jasmine Habersham

SOPRANO

HOMETOWN: MACON, GA



Pip – Jasmine Habersham makes her OSJ debut during the 2018-19 season, appearing as Pip in Heggie and Scheer’s *Moby-Dick*. Roles performed recently by Ms. Habersham include Pip in Utah Opera’s production of *Moby-Dick*, Pamina in Mozart’s *The Magic Flute* with Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Papagena in *The Magic Flute* with Cincinnati Opera, Yum-Yum in Gilbert and Sullivan’s *The Mikado* with Kentucky Opera, Esther in Nottage’s *Intimate Apparel* with Cincinnati Opera Fusion, and Clara in Gershwin’s *Porgy and Bess* with Utah Festival Opera. She has also performed the roles of Papagena in *The Magic Flute* and as an Apparition in Verdi’s *Macbeth* at The Glimmerglass Festival. Upcoming engagements will feature her as Katie Jackson in the world premiere of Joel Puckett’s *The Fix* with Minnesota Opera, and Clara in *Porgy and Bess* with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra.

A finalist in the Lotte Lenya Competition, she has also won numerous awards including 2nd Place in the 2018 Southeast Regional Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, The Strauss Award in the National Orpheus Competition, the John Alexander Memorial Award from University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, and the Young Artist Guild Award from Central City Opera.



Trevor Neal

BARITONE

HOMETOWN: DALLAS, TX



Gardiner – Trevor Neal returns as a member of the resident company in the 2018–19 season, appearing as Gardiner in Heggie and Scheer’s *Moby-Dick* and Sharpless in Puccini’s *Madama Butterfly*. During the 2017–18 season, Mr. Neal appeared as Rambaldo in Puccini’s *La rondine* and Germont in Verdi’s *La traviata*. Other roles performed recently include Killian in *Der Freischutz* with Virginia Opera, Sciarrone in Puccini’s *Tosca* with Opera North, and the Bonze in Puccini’s *Madame Butterfly* with Ash Lawn Opera.

He was member of the Herndon Foundation Emerging Artist program at Virginia Opera for the 2015/2016 season, where he covered Mars/Morpheus in *Orpheus in the Underworld* and Dutchman in *The Flying Dutchman*. Previously, he was a Young Artist at Opera North where he performed the role of Henry Davis in Kurt Weill’s *Street Scene* and covered the role of Germont in Verdi’s *La traviata*.

On the concert stage, Mr. Neal has appeared in concert with the South Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, Wichita Falls Symphony Orchestra, Abilene Symphony, and numerous community orchestras performing such works as Orff’s *Carmina Burana*, Verdi’s *Requiem*, Durufle’s *Requiem*, and Handel’s *Messiah*.



Mason Gates

TENOR

HOMETOWN: SAN JOSÉ, CA



Flask – Mason Gates returns as a member of OSJ’s resident company in the 2018–19 season, appearing as Beppe in Leoncavallo’s *Pagliacci*, Flask in the company premiere of Heggie and Scheer’s *Moby-Dick*, and Goro in Puccini’s *Madama Butterfly*. Last season, Mr. Gates appeared as Prunier in Puccini’s *La rondine*, the Steersman in Wagner’s *The Flying Dutchman*, and Gastone in Verdi’s *La traviata*. Other OSJ roles performed include Jonathan Dale in Puts and Campbell’s *Silent Night*, and his company debut as Don Curzio in the 2015–16 production of *The Marriage of Figaro*.

He received his Bachelor’s of Music from Brigham Young University in Utah, and his Master’s of Music from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. A two-time recipient of the encouragement award from the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, Mr. Gates was named Top 10 in the 2018 Brava! Opera Vocal Competition, as well as a Vocal Fellow at the esteemed Music Academy of the West.

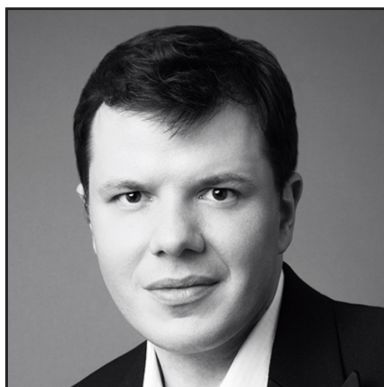
Other roles performed recently include the title role in Albert Herring, El Remendado (*Carmen*), The Man with Old Luggage (*Postcard from Morocco*), Spoletta (*Tosca*), Grigori (*Boris Godunov*), Rodolfo (*La bohème*), (Ferrando (*Così fan tutte*), Monostatos (*Die Zauberflöte*), and Edwin the Defendant (*Trial by Jury*).



Eugene Brancoveanu

BARITONE

HOMETOWN: ARAD, ROMANIA



Stubb –Eugene Brancoveanu returns during the 2018–19 season, appearing as Stubb in Heggie and Scheer’s *Moby-Dick*. Recent engagements for Mr. Brancoveanu include Older Brother in *Cities of Salt* with Opera Movie NY, serving as Director and performing the role of Pasha Selim in Mozart’s *The Abduction from the Seraglio* with Livermore Opera, and Falke in J. Strauss’s *Die Fledermaus* in Frieburg, Germany. Upcoming performances will feature him as Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice*, the title role in *Don Giovanni* in Warsaw, Poland, and Escamillo in *Carmen* in Frieburg, Germany.

Other career highlights include receiving the Tony Award for his role of Marcello in Puccini’s *La bohème*, in 2005–06, he was an Adler Fellow with San Francisco Opera, and he performed the title role in *Orango* with the Los Angeles Symphony under the direction of Esa-Pekka Salonen and Peter Sellars, which was recorded for Deutsche Gramophone.



Babatunde Akinboboye

BARITONE

HOMETOWN: LOS ANGELES, CA



Daggoo –Nigerian-American baritone Babatunde Akinboboye returns during the 2018–19 season, appearing as Daggoo in Heggie and Scheer’s *Moby-Dick*. Mr. Akinboboye previously appeared with OSJ as Rebonier in Puccini’s *La rondine*, Marchese D’Obigny in Verdi’s *La traviata* and as a member of the Scottish army in Puts and Campbell’s *Silent Night*. Other recent performances featured him as Daggoo in Utah Opera’s recent production of *Moby-Dick* and Private Manny Davis in Opera Theatre St. Louis’ world premiere of Ruo’s *An American Soldier*.

As an advocate for the performance of art song and operatic works written by African, and African American composers, Mr. Akinboboye has headlined the Lagos Chamber of Commerce & Industry Awards in Lagos, Nigeria, performing a fusion of opera and traditional African music and has been a featured performer at both the National Association of Negro Musicians Annual Conference, as well as the African American Art Song Alliance Conference.

Awards and accolades received include Regional Finalist of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Audition, and finalist in the International Eisteddfod Vocal Solo Competition in Llangollen, Wales.



Opera San José

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