## WINTER/SPRING SEASON

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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| Jan 23–24 | eighth blackbird  
             | *Hand Eye*   |
| Jan 28–30 | Toshiki Okada/chelfitsch  
             | *God Bless Baseball* |
| Feb 4 and 6–7 | Ingri Fiksdal, Ingvild  
                     | Langgård & Signe Becker  
                     | *Cosmic Body* |
| Feb 11–14 | Faye Driscoll  
             | *Thank You For Coming: Attendance* |
| Feb 18–27 | Tim Etchells/Forced Entertainment  
             | *The Notebook, Speak Bitterness, and (In) Complete Works: Table Top Shakespeare* |
| Mar 5–6   | Joffrey Academy of Dance  
             | *Winning Works* |
| Mar 25–26 | eighth blackbird  
             | featuring Will Oldham  
             | (Bonnie “Prince” Billy)  
             | *Ghostlight* |
| Mar 31–Apr 3 | Blair Thomas & Co.  
                      | *Moby Dick* |
| Apr 7–10  | Teatrocinema  
             | *Historia de Amor (Love Story)* |
| Apr 12 and 14–16 | Taylor Mac  
                        | *The History of Popular Music* |
| Apr 28–May 1 | Kyle Abraham/Abraham.In.Motion  
                       | *When the Wolves Came In* |

Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago
Mar 31–Apr 3, 2016

Blair Thomas & Co.
Moby Dick

or The Brotherhood of the Monastic Order of Ancient Mariners Purges the Ills of Society Through a Reading of the Tales of Moby-Dick

From the book by Herman Melville

Conceived by Blair Thomas and created in collaboration with the company

THE MONASTIC ORDER OF ANCIENT MARINERS

Puppeteer Michael Montenegro
Balladeer Michael Smith
Puppeteer Blair Thomas
Musician Michael Zerang

PRODUCTION STAFF

Director and co-adaptor Greg Allen
Production designer and co-adaptor Blair Thomas
Codesigner Michael Montenegro
Songwriter Michael Smith
Sound score composer Michael Zerang
Costume designer Ana Kuzamic
Lighting designer Sarah Hughey
Projection designer John Boesche
Projections assistant Joe Burke
Production stage manager Madeleine Borg

Technical director Jim Moore
Hurdy-gurdy coffin and wind machine constructor Erik Newman
Puppet builder and set constructor Tyler Culligan
Costume constructor Uber Costume

Additional puppet and set construction by Hannah Chavez, Eryka Dellenbach, Max McDermott, Erik Newman, Lucinda Sponholz, and Chris Wooten.

SPECIAL THANKS

The production crew at the Moss Arts Center in Blacksburg, Virginia, David Catlin, Shawn Pfautsch, Derek Matson, Angel Ysaguirre, Danny Thompson, Robin Young, Sheri Doyel, Tom and Carolyn Doyel, Dan Kerr-Hobert, Sarah Fornace, Julia Miller, Lizi Briet, Sam Deutsch, Max Callahan, Matthew Duvall, Julia Rhoads, and Peter McDowell

The performance runs approximately one hour and twenty minutes without intermission.

Blair Thomas & Co. developed Moby Dick, or The Brotherhood of the Monastic Order of Ancient Mariners Purges the Ills of Society Through a Reading of the Tales of Moby-Dick in part through the MCA Stage New Works Initiative, which provided commissioning support and a production design residency in August 2015. Established in 2014, the New Works Initiative meaningfully expands MCA Stage’s ongoing commitment to supporting artists and bringing important new performances to audiences.

Lead support for the MCA Stage New Works Initiative is provided by Elizabeth A. Liebman.

Additional lead commissioning support for this production is provided by The Boeing Foundation, The Jim Henson Foundation, Elizabeth A. Liebman, Rick Stoneham, Nina and Steve Schoeder and Ellen Stone Belic.

Moby Dick, or The Brotherhood of the Monastic Order of Ancient Mariners Purges the Ills of Society Through a Reading of the Tales of Moby-Dick is a National Performance Network (NPN) Creation Fund/Forth Fund Project co-commissioned by the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago in partnership with Virginia Tech University, College of St. Ben’s/St. John’s University and NPN. The Creation Fund is supported by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Ford Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts (a federal agency). The Forth Fund is supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

For more information, visit npnweb.org.
Melville’s singular achievement in writing *Moby-Dick* was articulating a prescient vision of the American experience that resonates with us today. The thirty men of the Pequod represented a nation-state driven by the charismatic Captain Ahab, who led a righteous mission to rid the world of evil, as Ahab perceived it to exist in the white whale Moby Dick. Melville’s book abounds with biblical themes, principally a central theme from the book of Job: if God exists, how is there evil in the world? This question leads Ahab to challenge the authority of God by going after his agent of chaos, the great Leviathan Moby Dick.

But Ahab could not have acted without his crew. Our play imagines a time after the rescue of Ishmael, when a group of men who are still wrestling with the issues raised by Ahab attempt to liberate themselves from torment by forming a Monastic Order of Ancient Mariners. Their performance—part ritual, part religious service—functions as the rhythm recounted by Coleridge’s famous poem “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner.” Ahab’s story is a cautionary tale, but the stories of the other sailors of the Pequod resonate anew in the performance by members of this new devotional order.

I am very grateful to Peter and Yolanda and the performance staff at the MCA who have supported the fruition of this project over the past year.

—Blair Thomas

**BLAIR THOMAS & CO. AND THE MCA**

Thomas’s contemporary interpretation of Herman Melville’s classic overflows with seemingly impossible-to-stage symbolism. He began the exploration in 1990 as a large-scale retelling of the story on North Avenue Beach, conceived and designed by Thomas with Redmoon Theater and Greg Allen as Ahab.

MCA Stage first presented work by Thomas with *Pierrot Lunaire* (2006), his collaboration with the Grammy Award-winning sextet eighth blackbird. His subsequent MCA presentation, *The Ox-Herder’s Tale* (2008), featured music direction by Michael Zerang, who performed with fellow percussionist Hamid Drake.

*The Ox-Herder’s Tale*, based on the ancient Zen-Buddhist teaching parable, was Thomas’s interpretation set in a contemporary Western world. It followed the story of a washed-up magician who decides to attempt an amazing magical feat—to pull a bull out of a hat by the ring in its nose.

*Moby Dick, or The Brotherhood of the Monastic Order of Ancient Mariners Purges the Ills of Society Through a Reading of the Tales of Moby-Dick* is Thomas’s latest exploration of the implications of storytelling and how the attempt becomes a path to enlightenment. In the book, Melville searches for words to describe the whale; for Ishmael, the whale can never be seen because once it is caught and pulled from the ocean, it is no longer what it was, and when it is swimming below the surface of the water it is too vast to be conceived. Thomas uses puppet theater to stage this paradox and to also unsettle our trust in what the eye sees.

MCA has supported the development of *Moby-Dick* with two commissions and a design residency in August 2015, provided in part by the New Works Initiative. The creative team performed a public work-in-progress on August 21.
GREG ALLEN is the founding director of the Neo-Futurists and creator of Too Much Light Makes The Baby Go Blind and more than fifty other productions. His award-winning work as director and playwright has been produced in Chicago at the Goodman, Steppenwolf, Northlight, Court, and dozens of other theaters, as well as throughout the United States and internationally. His current productions are running in New York, San Francisco, Italy, Taiwan, Australia, Tanzania, and Norman, Oklahoma. His adaptations include The Strange and Terrible True Tale of Pinocchio (the Wooden Boy) as Told by Frankenstein’s Monster (the Wretched Creature), Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious, The Last Two Minutes of the Complete Works of Henrik Ibsen, and K., his award-winning version of Kafka’s The Trial. His play What Happened in Pinkville? (A Cubist Dialectic on the Massacre at My Lai) was a finalist for the National Playwright’s Conference in 2015. Allen directed and adapted Ibsen’s Ghosts for Mary-Arrchie’s final season last winter. He is adapting the works of Edgar Allan Poe for Blair Thomas & Co. and the works of Kafka with Michael Montenegro. He is also arranging an international tour of his seven-hour production in nine acts of Eugene O’Neill’s Strange Interlude, and creating a Harold Pinter festival for the spring of 2017. In addition, Allen teaches performance and playwriting at University of Chicago, the Theatre School at DePaul, and the National Theater Institute at the O’Neill Center in Connecticut, as well as at the Neo-Futurarium and in several residencies across North America.

JOHN BOESCHE has created media and scenic designs for more than 120 professional theater, opera, and dance productions. His Broadway credits include The Glass Menagerie directed by Frank Galati at Roundabout Theatre, and his off-Broadway credits include Beyond Glory directed by Robert Falls at Roundabout Theatre, among others. Regionally, his work has been seen at Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Geffen Playhouse (Los Angeles), Goodman Theatre (Chicago), Lookingglass Theatre Company (Chicago), McCarter Theatre (Princeton), Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, New York Shakespeare Festival (NYC), Remy Bumppo Theatre (Chicago), Seattle Repertory Theatre, Shakespeare at the Folger (Washington DC), Steppenwolf Theatre (Chicago), Theater On The Square (San Francisco) and Victory Gardens Biograph Theatre (Chicago), and elsewhere. He has designed for dance companies including the Joffrey Ballet in Chicago, Cincinnati Ballet, Liz Lerman Dance Exchange (Washington, DC), and Lucky Plush Productions (Chicago), as well as Erica Mott (Chicago). His design work has been recognized with three Joseph Jefferson Awards, a Metro DC Dance Award, and a Los Angeles Ovation Award. 

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**Historia de Amor**

Tickets at mcachicago.org

Photo: Montserrat Quezada A.
Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award, among others. Boesche is the chair of digital media for live performance at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

SARAH HUGHEY has designed lighting for numerous Chicago productions, including Northlight Theatre, Theatre Wit, Victory Gardens Biograph Theatre, About Face Theatre, Griffin Theatre, Remy Bumppo Theatre, Haven Theatre, Writers’ Theatre, Steep Theatre, Next Theatre, Two Pence Theatre, the Gift Theatre, Court Theatre, Chicago Children’s Theatre, Fox Valley Rep, Teatro Vista, The House, Lifeline Theatre, A Red Orchid Theatre, and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Regionally she has designed at Kansas City Rep, City Theatre (Pittsburgh), St. Louis Black Rep, and Ash Lawn Opera (Charlottesville, VA). She is the recipient of a Jeff Award (Scorched, Silk Road Rising) and a Jeff Nomination (The Iron Stag King, The House). She was the 2013 recipient of Chicago’s Maggio Emerging Designer Award. Hughey is an Artistic Affiliate of American Blues Theatre, has been the resident designer at Silk Road Rising, and is a collaborator with the performance collective Yellow House. She holds an MFA in stage design from Northwestern University, and has taught lighting design at Northwestern, Columbia College Chicago, and North Central College.

ANA KUZMANIC is a native of the former Yugoslavia and a prolific costume designer for theater and opera. Her upcoming projects include Disgraced, directed by Marcela Lorca at the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis, Wonderful Town, directed by Mary Zimmerman at the Goodman Theatre, and Peter Grimes, directed by Robert Falls at the Lyric Opera. This season she designed costumes for the Goodman Theatre production 2666, an adaptation of Roberto Bolaño’s novel directed by Robert Falls and Seth Bockley, and Treasure Island, directed by Mary Zimmerman at the Lookingglass Theatre Company. Other Chicago credits include The Lyric Opera (Don Giovanni, directed by Robert Falls), and numerous productions at The Goodman Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Court Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, and the House Theatre of Chicago. Costume designs for Broadway include Tony Award-winning August: Osage County, Robert Falls’s Desire Under the Elms, and Superior Donuts directed by Tina Landau. Kuzmanic’s off-Broadway credits include The Jacksonian, directed by Robert Falls. Regionally, she has designed costumes for Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, McCarter Theatre Center, the Shakespeare Theatre Company, Trinity Repertory Company, the Geffen Playhouse, and the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Kuzmanic is the recipient of a Jeff Award for The Comedy of Errors at Chicago Shakespeare Theater and a Drama Desk nomination for August: Osage County on Broadway. She has a BFA in costume and fashion from Faculty of Applied Arts in Belgrade and an MFA in stage design from Northwestern University. She is also an associate professor of costume design at Northwestern University.

MICHAEL MONTENEGRO is artistic director of Theatre Zarko which has produced numerous original puppet theater works including He Who, Haff (The Man), Sublime Beauty of Hands, Klown Kantos,
Lookingglass Theatre Company.

Harry Pedersen in played the role of Captain Selfish Giant performing the songs for the in creating, writing, and collaborated with Thomas. He also composed and performed the songs for the Tony Award–winning Steppenwolf production, directed by Frank Galati, of John Steinbeck’s The Grapes of Wrath. He wrote and performed in Michael, Margaret, Pat & Kate at Victory Gardens Biograph Theatre, a production that won four Joseph Jefferson Awards. With Jamie O’Reilly he wrote and performed Pasiones at Theater On The Lake and Hello Dali at Victory Gardens. He adapted, composed, and performed songs in the Victory Gardens’ production of Hans Christian Andersen’s The Snow Queen, Smith’s first collaboration with Blair Thomas. He also collaborated with Thomas in creating, writing, and performing the songs for the Chicago Children’s Theater production of Oscar Wilde’s Selfish Giant. Smith also played the role of Captain Harry Pedersen in Eastland at Lookingglass Theatre Company.

BLAIR THOMAS
is a puppeteer and director/designer working in Chicago for the past thirty years. He cofounded and was codirector of Redmoon Theater from 1989–98. Following his tenure, he staged Manuel de Falla’s puppet opera Master Pedro’s Puppet Show with Chicago Opera Theater and served as a curator for the City of Chicago’s International Puppet Theater Festivals in 2000 and 2001. He is founder of Blair Thomas & Co. and in its fourteen-year history has created The Vinegar Works, a toy theater staging of Edward Gorey’s little books; Cabaret of Desire, an adaptation of short works by Federico Garcia Lorca; and The Ox-Herder’s Tale, an interpretation of the ten Buddhist paintings of enlightenment. For young audiences, Blair Thomas & Co. has adapted Oscar Wilde’s The Selfish Giant and staged a fantasy inspired by Modest Mussorgsky’s Pictures at an Exhibition. Recent company collaborations include creating puppets and visual design for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Children’s Theater, Victory Gardens Biograph Theatre, and the Trinity Repertory Company of Providence Rhode Island.

In 2014, the Ballard Institute and Museum of Puppetry in Connecticut presented an exhibition of Thomas’s stage renderings for solo works from the past fifteen years. His upcoming collaborations include designing puppets for Lookingglass Theatre Company and the Lyric Opera. In 2015, Thomas founded the Chicago International Puppet Theater Festival in partnership with presenters and venues across Chicago, including the MCA. He was the first Jim Henson artist-in-residence at the University of Maryland and has been an adjunct faculty member at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago since 1991. He has a BA from Oberlin College.

MICHAEL ZERANG
is a Chicago native and a first-generation American of Assyrian descent. He has been a professional musician, composer, and producer since 1976, focusing on improvised music, free jazz, contemporary composition, and collaborations on puppet theater, experimental theater, dance, and multidisciplinary work. He has received three Joseph Jefferson Awards for Original Music Composition in Theater in collaborations with Redmoon Theater (1996, 1998, and 2000). As a percussionist and composer, Zerang has more than ninety titles in his discography and has toured nationally and internationally to thirty-five countries. He founded and was artistic director of Link’s Hall Performance Series in Chicago from 1985–89, presenting more than 300 music concerts. He also presented concerts at Cafe Urbus Orbis (1994–96) and at the Candlestick Maker in Chicago’s Albany Park neighborhood (2001–05). He was a board member of Links Hall from 1989 to 2013. Zerang has taught performance technique, sound design, and sound/music as a guest artist at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago;
Apr 28–May 1
at MCA Stage

Kyle Abraham/
Abraham.In.Motion

Sam Pratt, Catherine Ellis Kirk
Photo: Tim Barden

When the Wolves Came In

Tickets at mcachicago.org

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Every effort was made to ensure the accuracy of this list. If you notice an error, please accept our apology and contact Sarah Augusta at Sarah@CreativePartnersArts.org.

When the Wolves Came In

Tickets at mcachicago.org
The MCA’s newest affinity group, Enact, gives longtime performance fans and newcomers alike the opportunity to meet artists, discuss groundbreaking directions with leading curators, and choose key performers to sponsor.

Join Enact, a group of MCA Circle Donors dedicated to supporting and learning more about the renowned programs on the MCA Stage. Membership in Enact enhances your MCA experience by offering you backstage access to artists and insider information about our programs and the current state of the field.

Each year, Enact members choose—through discussion and voting—one performance to sponsor, thereby increasing the impact MCA Stage programming has on the community.

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Enact dues: $1,000 annually
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For more information, contact us at enact@mcachicago.org.

* Enact Chair
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Lead support for the 2015-2016 season of MCA Stage is provided by Elizabeth A. Liebman.

Generous support for MCA Dance is provided by David Herro and Jay Franke.

Additional generous support is provided by Caryn and King Harris; Shawn M. Donnelley and Christopher M. Kelly; Lois and Steve Eisen and The Eisen Family Foundation; Ginger Farley and Bob Shapiro; the Martha Struthers Farley and Donald C. Farley Jr. Family Foundation; Mary E. Ittelson; Sharon and Lee Oberlander; Maya Polsky; Carol Prins and John Hart/The Jessica Fund; Ellen Stone Belic; Amphion Foundation, Inc.; Leigh and Henry Bienen; Mark Light; Melynda Lopin; Maecenas; Herbert R. and Paula Molner; Elizabeth Price and Lou Yecies; and Ms. Patricia F. Sternberg.

The MCA is a proud member of the Museums in the Park and receives major support from the Chicago Park District.

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CHICAGO

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As of March 2016
As an internationally renowned institution devoted to contemporary culture, the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago presents the most thought-provoking visual art and performing arts of our time. MCA Stage is a vibrant series presenting theater, dance, and music by leading artists from the United States and around the world in the MCA’s three-hundred-seat Edlis Neeson Theater.

MCA Stage’s groundbreaking performances are an integral part of the MCA’s artist-activated, audience-engaged programming. Along with the museum’s exhibitions and educational initiatives, they encourage a broad and diverse community to experience and discuss the work and ideas of living artists.

PARKING
Validate your ticket at the coat check for $12 parking in the MCA garage (220 East Chicago Avenue) or the Bernardin garage (747 North Wabash). Discounted parking is limited to six hours on the date of performance.

LOST AND FOUND
To inquire about a lost item, call the museum at 312-280-2660. Unclaimed articles are held for thirty days.

SEATING
Please switch off all noise-making devices while you are in the theater.

Patrons are seated at the management’s discretion. Food and open beverage containers are not allowed in the seating area.

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