

**The Shed Presents the North American Premiere of Wu Tsang's Feature-Length Silent Film *MOBY DICK; or, The Whale***

**Featuring an Original Score Composed by Caroline Shaw and Andrew Yee with Asma Maroof Performed Live by Members of the New York Philharmonic**

**An Accompanying Video Installation by the Collective, Moved by the Motion (founded by Tosh Basco and Wu Tsang), Will Show Concurrently in the Whitney Biennial 2022: Quiet as It's Kept**

**The Griffin Theater at The Shed  
April 15 – 17, 2022**

**NEW YORK, March 7, 2022** – The Shed presents the North American premiere of *MOBY DICK; or, The Whale*, a new feature-length silent film by award-winning filmmaker and visual artist **Wu Tsang**. With original music composed by **Caroline Shaw** and **Andrew Yee** with **Asma Maroof** and conducted by **Daniela Candillari**, its presentation at The Shed will be performed live by Members of the **New York Philharmonic** in the Griffin Theater on April 15 at 8 pm; April 16 at 2 pm and 8 pm; and April 17 at 3 pm.

The collective **Moved by the Motion**, embarks upon the telling of one of the great American novels, *Moby Dick* by Herman Melville. This adaptation, written by **Sophia Al Maria**, directed by Tsang, costumed by **TELFAR x Kyle Luu**, with movement direction by **Tosh Basco** and choreography by **Josh Johnson** follows the white whale above and below the surface of the water, developing a visual cosmology that resists the exploration and exploitation of the earth under imperial colonialism. The narrative is interwoven with extracts by the Sub-Sub-Librarian, a character played by **Fred Moten**, and tackles the novel's subterranean currents, encountering the resistance of the ship's hierarchy, or organizational structure, and collectives of "mariners, renegades, and castaways," as described by historian CLR James.

The staging of this adaptation by Moved by the Motion pairs the classic story of the whaler's "floating factory" with the beginnings of the film industry in silent film. The film was shot entirely on a sound-stage combining silent-era filmmaking techniques with a virtual reality game engine projecting surreal ocean environments.

"We felt more free in our approach to *Moby Dick* because it is such a ubiquitous book that has been adapted so many countless times, there was no pressure to be original—which in the end gave us a lot of space to play and be inventive," said director Wu Tsang. "It's a story that is so well known, but also unknown. The book is so juicy and saturated with problems and reflections of its time—but also of our present."

“Wu Tsang has contextualized this age-old story with honest reverence and a gripping new motif for the whale,” said **Alex Poots**, Artistic Director and CEO of The Shed. “The material and the nature of its presentation underline the complexities of this work; it is a mixture of mediums, a new format of illustration juxtaposed with symphonic, melancholic delight. We are pleased to partner with the New York Philharmonic and Whitney Museum on the realization of this work, and look forward to giving the North American premiere at The Shed.”

Concurrent with the performance at The Shed, *Moved by the Motion* will present a video installation at *Whitney Biennial 2022: Quiet as It's Kept*. The work features extra-narrative and recontextualized material from *MOBY DICK; or, The Whale*. The Whitney Biennial 2022 opens to the public on April 6 at The Whitney Museum of American Art. Featuring 63 artists and collectives from a variety of generations, working across disciplines and media, the 2022 Biennial reflects the current state of contemporary art in America. For more information, visit [whitney.org/exhibitions/2022-biennial](http://whitney.org/exhibitions/2022-biennial).

*Whitney Biennial 2022: Quiet as It's Kept* is co-organized by David Breslin, DeMartini Family Curator and Director of Curatorial Initiatives, and Adrienne Edwards, Engell Speyer Family Curator and Director of Curatorial Affairs, with Mia Matthias, Curatorial Assistant; Gabriel Almeida Baroja, Curatorial Project Assistant; and Margaret Kross, former Senior Curatorial Assistant.

*MOBY DICK; or, The Whale* is Produced by the Schauspielhaus Zürich and co-commissioned by LUMA Foundation, Superblue, TBA21-Academy, HARTWIG ART FOUNDATION, The Shed, DE SINGEL, and the Whitney Museum of American Art.

Tickets for *MOBY DICK; or, The Whale* go on sale March 10 at [theshed.org](http://theshed.org) or (646) 455-3494 (presale for Shed members begins March 8).

[View press images.](#)

**Production Credits:** Directed by Wu Tsang; written by Sophia Al Maria; original score by Caroline Shaw and Andrew Yee with Asma Maroof; conducted by Daniela Candillari; produced by Laura D’Incau; co-produced by Wu Tsang; David Codikow and Nadja Rangel, executive producers; Tosh Basco and Sophia Al Maria, associate producers; Stefan Scheuermann and Barbara Higgs, associate producers; cinematography by Antonio Cisneros; movement direction by Tosh Basco; choreography by Josh Johnson; costumes by TELFAR x Kyle Luu; production design by Nina Mader; virtual production by Bild Studios; video design by Fray Studio; edited by Jérôme Pesnel; dramaturgy by Katinka Deeke and Joshua Wicke.

**Cast:** Titilayo Adebayo, André Atangana, Tosh Basco, Vincent Basse, Maja Beckmann, Karim Boumjimar, Gottfried Breitfuss, Thelma Buabeng, Enantios Dromos, Timon Essoungou, Mel Guesson, Josh Johnson, Rene Melliger, Wiebke Mollenhauer, Fred Moten, Sebastian Rudolph, Daniel Kweku Schmid, Stéphanie Scholl, Corey Scott-Gilbert, Sscopeta Shephard, Malik Sievi, Rafal Skoczek, Steven Sowah, Ondrej Vidlar, and Thomas Wodianka.

### **Dates and Ticket Information**

*Moby Dick; or, The Whale* will be presented at The Shed on Friday, April 15 at 8 pm; Saturday, April 16 at 2 pm and 8 pm; and Sunday, April 17 at 3 pm. Running time is approximately 75 minutes with no intermission and no late seating. Tickets start at \$35 and are available beginning March 10 at [theshed.org](http://theshed.org) or by calling (646) 455-3494 (presale for Shed members begins March 8).

### **About Wu Tsang**

Wu Tsang is an award-winning filmmaker and visual artist. Tsang's work crosses genres and disciplines, from narrative and documentary films to live performance and video installations. Tsang is a MacArthur "Genius" Fellow, and her projects have been presented at museums, biennials, and film festivals internationally. Awards include a 2016 Guggenheim Fellowship (Film/Video), a 2018 Hugo Boss Prize nomination, and others from Creative Capital, Rockefeller Foundation, Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation, and Warhol Foundation. Tsang received her BFA (2004) from the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) and an MFA (2010) from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). Currently, Tsang works in residence at Schauspielhaus Zurich, as a director of theater with the collective Moved by the Motion.

Moved by the Motion is a loose affiliation or 'band' of artists and performers that was founded in 2013 by Tosh Basco and Wu Tsang, and is currently in residence at the Schauspielhaus Theater in Zürich. Contributors to this project include Sophia Al-Maria, Tosh Basco, Josh Johnson, Asma Maroof, Patrick Belaga, Laura Harris, and Fred Moten.

### **Support**

Major support for *MOBY DICK; or, The Whale* is provided by M&T Bank, Founding Bank of The Shed.

The creation of new work at The Shed is generously supported by the Lizzie and Jonathan Tisch Commissioning Fund and the Shed Commissioners. Major support for live productions at The Shed is provided by the Charina Endowment Fund.

### **About M&T Bank**

M&T Bank is The Founding Bank of The Shed and is the exclusive financial services supporter for live performance commissions as part of a multiyear partnership. M&T is proud to continue supporting our shared commitment to our communities and the belief that creative arts should be accessible to all.

M&T Bank Corporation is a financial holding company headquartered in Buffalo, New York. M&T's principal banking subsidiary, M&T Bank, operates banking offices in New York, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Connecticut, Virginia, West Virginia and the District of Columbia. Trust-related and investment services are provided by M&T's Wilmington Trust-affiliated companies and by M&T Bank.

**About The Shed**

The Shed is a new cultural institution of and for the 21st century. We produce and welcome innovative art and ideas, across all forms of creativity, to build a shared understanding of our rapidly changing world and a more equitable society. In our highly adaptable building on Manhattan's west side, The Shed brings together established and emerging artists to create new work in fields ranging from pop to classical music, painting to digital media, theater to literature, and sculpture to dance. We seek opportunities to collaborate with cultural peers and community organizations, work with like-minded partners, and provide unique spaces for private events. As an independent nonprofit that values invention, equity, and generosity, we are committed to advancing art forms, addressing the urgent issues of our time, and making our work impactful, sustainable, and relevant to the local community, the cultural sector, New York City, and beyond.