

“Melville: Finding America at Sea” Checklist of Items in Exhibition

Introduction, Case 1 of 1

Moby-Dick is epic prose-poem, scientific treatise, industrial exposé, philosophical exploration, travelogue, Shakespearean tale of revenge, and much more—all rolled into one whale-sized package. Melville’s book can be read as one of the first distinctively American masterpieces, embracing these diverse, disparate materials to form a whole greater than the sum of its parts.

1. Herman Melville

The Whale

Published in London by Richard Bentley in October 1851

Call number and to request viewing: [VAULT Melville PS2384 .M6 1851m](#)

(Copy 1)

The true first edition of *Moby-Dick* appeared in England in October 1851, in an edition of 500 copies.

2. Herman Melville

Moby-Dick, or, The Whale

Published in New York by Harper & Brothers in November 1851

Call number and to request viewing: [VAULT Melville PS2384 .M6 1851k](#)

This first American edition shows the major variations between the texts of the American and English editions, starting with their different titles. See the case in the next room of the Trienens Galleries on the making of the Northwestern-Newberry Edition for another example of these differences. While the title *Moby-Dick* was hyphenated in the first edition, the whale’s name was not hyphenated in the text—the reason for which is rather unclear. This exhibition follows the common practice of hyphenating when referring to the book, but not to the whale, and not to other editions or works such as plays and films which do not hyphenate the title.

Introduction, Wall Items

3. Matt Kish

Extracts, 2015-2016

Acrylic and ink on found paper

Call number and to request viewing: [VAULT Melville oversize N8215 .K57 2015](#)

The thirteen artworks on this wall and on the monolith to the west are part of a larger series of 81 illustrations, one for each of the Extracts that Melville

chose and placed at the beginning of *Moby-Dick*. The Extracts are excerpts from works of literature, religion, political philosophy, science, travel writing, and other fields (including one fictitious extract made up by Melville) highlighting the importance of whales and whaling throughout history. They prepare a reader for the eclectic, genre-busting epic to follow.

Matt Kish is an artist currently living and working in Ohio. He reuses found paper in his work, including pages from technical manuals, government documents, and other texts. This creates vibrant palimpsests, illustrations reflective of Melville's dense layers of allusion and meaning.

Other works by Kish can be found in the next room of the Trienens Galleries.

Melville the Mariner, Case 1 of 4
Melville's Family and Upbringing

4. Oliver Wendell Holmes

The Last Leaf

Published in Cambridge, Massachusetts by Houghton, Mifflin & Co. in 1886
Gift of the Estate of Bryan Lathrop

Call number and to request viewing: [folio Y 285 .H7369](#)

Holmes's inspiration for this popular poem was Thomas Melvill, Herman's grandfather, who participated in the Boston Tea Party. He is depicted in the frontispiece. The poem was first published in 1831, when Thomas Melvill was still alive and revered in Boston as a patriot and surviving link to the Revolutionary War.

5. Herman Melville

Israel Potter: His Fifty Years of Exile

Published in London by Routledge & Co. in 1855

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville PS2384 .I7 1855](#)

For this novel, Melville fictionalized the 1824 autobiography of Potter, an unfortunate Revolutionary War soldier and sailor who spent decades impoverished in London. Characteristically for Melville, it shows a more skeptical view of the Revolution and its fruits in nineteenth-century America than he likely received from his patriotic grandparents. The copy shown here is the pirated (unauthorized) first English edition.

6. *The Psalms of David... for the Use of the Reformed Dutch Church in North-America*

Published in Albany, New York by Charles R. and George Webster in 1796

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville BV434 .A3 1796](#)

This book belonged to Maria Gansevoort (later Melville), Herman's mother. It was purchased by the Newberry in 1976.

The Gansevoorts were one of the elite families of Albany, and Maria was a devout member of the Calvinist Dutch Reformed Church. Herman would grapple with Calvinist concepts like predestination and original sin throughout his writing.

7. Augusta Melville

Augusta Melville's Book of Portraits

Probably compiled in Gansevoort, New York, around 1863

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville CT206 .M45 1863](#)

Herman's younger sister Augusta (called "Gus" by the Melvilles), who proofread and prepared copies of many of his manuscripts, kept this scrapbook of engravings of authors and celebrities. The paper cutouts shown here, which were laid into the book, may represent Melville family members.

Melville the Mariner, Case 2 of 4
[Going to Sea, Going A-Whaling](#)

8. John D'Wolf

A Voyage to the North Pacific and a Journey through Siberia, More than Half a Century Ago

Printed in Cambridge, Massachusetts, by Welch, Bigelow and Co. in 1861

Acquired with support from the Edward E. Ayer Fund

Call number and to request viewing: [Ayer 128.8 .D99 1861](#)

Melville's uncle, John D'Wolf, was a ship captain who explored and traded along the coast of Alaska and in Russia and Asia in the early 1800s. His seafaring was likely an inspiration for Melville's own decision to go to sea. D'Wolf sent this copy of his rare account of his travels to George W. Maynard, along with the letter and photograph of himself shown here.

9. Herman Melville

Redburn: His First Voyage

Published in New York by Harper and Bros. in 1849

Call number and to request viewing: [Case Y 255 .M516](#)

Melville drew on memories of his father's importing business and of his own first voyage for this novel, of a young "son of a gentleman" learning how to work on a merchant ship and exploring Liverpool and London.

10. William Ellen Wallace

Whaling log of the ship *John and Edward*, 1841-1844

Acquired with support from the Rudy L. Ruggles Fund

Call number and to request viewing: [VAULT folio Ruggles 507](#)

The *John and Edward* sailed on a whaling voyage to the Indian and South Pacific Oceans at the same time that Melville was aboard the *Acushnet* and, later, the *Charles and Henry* on his own whaling adventures. The journal here, kept by a boatsteerer, gives insight into life on a whaler. In addition to typical information such as weather reports and whales sighted and caught, Wallace records fights in which he participated, floggings of crewmembers, and even his dreams. The whale stamps throughout the journal record the number of oil barrels extracted from each killed whale.

11. Owen Chase

Narrative of the Most Extraordinary and Distressing Shipwreck of the Whale-Ship Essex, of Nantucket; Which was Attacked and Finally Destroyed by a Large Spermaceti-Whale, in the Pacific Ocean...

Published in New York by W. B. Gilley in 1821

Acquired with support from the Edward E. Ayer Fund

Call number and to request viewing: [Case G 047 .15](#)

Chase's harrowing *Narrative* is the most famous inspiration for the plot of *Moby-Dick*. Of the twenty-man crew aboard the *Essex*, only eight survived the hardships following its sinking by a whale. Melville met Chase's son at sea in 1841 and heard the story then, but did not acquire a copy of this rare book until 1851, as he was working on his own tale of a marauding whale.

12. Wilson Armistead

Memoir of Paul Cuffe, a Man of Colour

Published in London by Edmund Fry in 1840

Acquired with support from the Edward E. Ayer Fund

Call number and to request viewing: [Ayer 247 .C845 A73 1840](#)

Paul Cuffe personified the enterprising spirit and multiracial makeup of the American whaling fleet. Born around 1759 to a Wampanoag woman and an Ashanti man freed from slavery, Cuffe worked on a whaler in his teenage years and eventually became a whaleship captain and then owner of a maritime trading empire. By the time of his death in 1817, he was likely the nation's largest employer of free African Americans.

13. J. Ross Browne

Etchings of a Whaling Cruise...

Published in London by J. Murray in 1846

Call number and to request viewing: [G 047 .12](#)

As this engraving of sailors' living quarters in the dreary forecandle of a ship indicates, life aboard a whaleship was rough-and-tumble, but also full of lively characters. *Etchings of a Whaling Cruise...* was one of the best-known

books about whaling written before *Moby-Dick*. Melville wrote a review of it in 1847, and used it as a sourcebook in writing his own whaling tale.

Melville the Mariner, Wall Items

14. Four English sailor's ballads, left to right:

Thomas Knight

"Tom Starboard"

Published in Birmingham, England by D. Wrighton between 1812 and 1830

Unknown author

"Lay of the Lash"

Published by an unknown publisher, likely in England between 1800 and 1850

John Holland

"The Mariner's Compass"

Published in London by J. Pitts between 1819 and 1844

Michael Arne

"The Topsails Shiver"

Published in London by J. Jennings between 1790 and 1840

Call number and to request viewing: [Case folio Y 17 .183](#)

Songs were a rich part of the sailor's life. The ephemeral ballads shown here, called "slip songs," were printed as broadsides and then cut apart to be sold individually. These examples all originated in England, but the transatlantic ship traffic and mixing of nationalities on whaleships and merchant vessels ensured their popularity among Americans as well. These songs were plentiful and varied: drinking songs like "The Mariner's Compass"; protest songs like "Lay of the Lash"; and tales of tragedy or homesickness such as "Tom Starboard" and "The Topsails Shiver."

Such ballads and songs were clear influences on Melville. He would intersperse snippets of sailor's shanties and songs in many of his works. Late in his life, he wrote poems, such as "Tom Deadlight," reminiscent of traditional sailor's ballads. His final work, the unfinished novel *Billy Budd, Sailor*, ends with an original ballad.

Melville the Mariner, Wall Item

15. W. J. Huggins, artist; T. Southerland, engraver

South Sea Whale Fishery...

Published in London by W. J. Huggins in 1825

Hand-colored engraving

Gift of James Albert FitzSimmons

Call number and to request viewing: Melville FitzSimmons 2

Whale ships were a combination of offshore oil rig and refinery. This was exhausting, extremely dangerous work, as the damaged (or “stove”) boat in this print illustrates. Upon sighting whales, a ship would lower boats to chase, harpoon, and kill as many as possible. A killed whale would be attached to the side of the ship, where its blubber and other valuable substances would be harvested. The deck would be converted into a refinery to boil the oil out of the blubber, which would be stored in barrels in the ship’s hold. Whale oil was used for lamps and machine lubrication. The waxy substance called spermaceti found in the heads of sperm whales was used to make high-quality candles.

Melville the Mariner, Wall Item

16. Yorkraft, Inc.

The Spouter Inn sign

Created in York, Pennsylvania, probably around 1963

Probably acrylic or enamel paint on wood

Call number and to request viewing: Modern MS Melvilleana

At the beginning of *Moby-Dick*, Ishmael arrives in New Bedford on a cold December night and finds lodgings at the Spouter Inn. “It was a queer sort of place,” he says, “a gable-ended old house, one side palsied as it were, and leaning over sadly.” The inn is full, and he is forced to share a bed with a fellow whaler, as was common in nineteenth-century inns. His bedmate, Queequeg, becomes his fast friend and companion on their voyage.

Melville the Mariner, Case 3 of 4

White-Jacket and the Navy

During his time in the Navy in 1843 and 1844, Melville found opportunities for camaraderie, friendship, and shared purpose with fellow sailors in the service of freedom and nation. And yet, he also found that service marred by tyrannical leadership, brutality, and injustice—especially physical abuses of sailors, such as flogging. Melville’s book *White-Jacket*, based on his experiences on the *USS United States*, was instrumental in provoking reforms in the Navy, including a ban on flogging.

17. Herman Melville

White-Jacket, or, The World in a Man-of-War (volumes 1 and 2)

Published in London by Richard Bentley in 1850

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville PS2384 .W5 1850](#)

18. Henry Howe, editor

Life and Death on the Ocean

Published in Cincinnati by Henry Howe in 1857

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville G525 .H84 1857](#)

This compilation of maritime stories includes an excerpt from *White-Jacket* with the illustration shown here, depicting the flogging of a sailor.

19. Washington P. Buckner

“Account of a voyage on the *U.S.S. Constitution* leaving New York May 30, 1844, and arriving at Manila Bay Sept. 12, 1845”

Manuscript journal

Gift of Edward E. Ayer

Call number and to request viewing: [VAULT Ayer MS 119](#)

Buckner was a midshipman on the celebrated around-the-world voyage of the *Constitution*, the frigate known as “Old Ironsides.” His journal from the voyage includes the touching poem shown here, “To Washington P. Buckner,” written by his fellow midshipman, John E. Hart. Hart refers to Buckner as his “bosom friend” and “old watch-mate.”

Melville the Mariner, Case 4 of 4

A Trip to Illinois

In 1840, after a brief stint as a schoolteacher in upstate New York, Melville went west with a friend in search of a job—to Galena, Illinois, a growing river town in the young state. Melville was unable to find work, but he encountered scenes on the journey that remained with him, since references to the prairie and the Great Lakes are abundant in his work. He also visited Chicago in 1859 as part of a rather unsuccessful lecture tour.

20. J. Calvin Smith

Guide Through Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Wisconsin, and Iowa...

In *The Western Tourist and Emigrant's Guide...*

Published in New York by J. H. Colton in 1840

Acquired with support from the Edward E. Ayer Fund

Call number and to request viewing: [Ayer 138 C65 1840](#)

Melville's route west in 1840 very likely included a canal boat ride down the Erie Canal to Buffalo, a steamboat trip across Lake Michigan to Chicago, and overland stagecoach travel across the prairie from Chicago to Galena. He may have consulted a popular guidebook such as this.

21. Thomas Melvill, Jr.

Letter to Henry A. S. Dearborn, October 2, 1821

Call number and to request viewing: [VAULT folio Case MS 5452](#)

Herman hoped that his Uncle Thomas Melvill, Jr., who had moved to Galena in the 1830s, could help him with a job when he arrived. Thomas had recurring money trouble of his own, however, and could not help. He was imprisoned twice for debts, and in this letter he pleads with an important lawyer and politician (and son of the namesake of Fort Dearborn) for financial assistance.

22. Herman Melville

John Marr and Other Sailors, with Some Sea-Pieces

Published in New York by the De Vinne Press in 1888

Call number and to request viewing: [Case Y 285 .M511](#)

The title piece in this collection, "John Marr," is a poem with a prose preface about a former sailor who "settles down about the year 1838 upon what was then the frontier-prairie" and finds its taciturn inhabitants disinterested in his sea-stories. Melville combines his Uncle Thomas's experience with his own for a reflection on memory, on his artistic struggles, and on the American character as he had seen it develop through his lifetime.

John Marr and Other Sailors was published a few years before Melville's death, at his own expense, in an edition of just 25 copies to give to family and friends. This copy features a few corrections in the hand of Elizabeth Shaw Melville, Herman's wife, as on the displayed page. It was purchased by the Newberry in 1968.

Melville the Mystic, case 1 of 4

Polynesian Tattooing

23. Wilhelm Gottlieb Tilesius von Tilenau, artist; J. Storer, engraver

"An Inhabitant of the Island of Nukahiva," in G. H. von Langsdorff, *Voyages and Travels in Various Parts of the World...*

Published in London by Henry Colburn in 1813

Gift of Everett D. Graff

Call number and to request viewing: [folio Graff 2391](#) v. 1

This plate depicts a tattooed warrior holding a fan and a war club on Nuku Hiva, the island in Te Henua Kenata (the Marquesas Islands) that Melville described in his first book, *Typee*. Polynesian tattoos hold religious, cultural, social, genealogical, and military significance, and in the nineteenth century were applied to nearly all areas of the body, including the eyelids and gums. Tattoos were prevalent among many Indigenous peoples in the Americas and elsewhere, but the practice and the word "tattoo" were introduced to most Europeans in the late eighteenth century by sailors returning from the South Pacific.

24. George L. Craik

The New Zealanders

Published in London by C. Knight in 1830

Call number and to request viewing: [F 23 .62](#)

Melville's creation in *Moby-Dick* of Queequeg, the Polynesian prince turned harpooner, was heavily influenced by the true story of Te Pehi Kupa or Tupai Cupa, a Māori man who traveled from New Zealand to England. His portrait by an English artist (left, in facsimile) and self-portrait (right) focus on his heavy facial tattooing, the meanings of which, Te Pehi Kupa says in this book, include his true name, tattooed on his forehead.

Melville combined features of Marquesan and Māori styles for Queequeg's tattoos: they include "large, blackish-looking squares" more typical of Marquesan tattoos, but also more curvilinear forms and meanings in line with Māori traditions. He writes, "this tattooing, had been the work of a departed prophet and seer of [Queequeg's] island, who... had written out on his body... a mystical treatise on the art of attaining truth..."

Melville the Mystic, case 2 of 4

25. John Webber, artist; John Keyse Sherwin, engraver

"A Young Woman of the Sandwich Islands," in James Cook, *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean...*

Published in London by G. Nicol and T. Cadell in 1785

Call number and to request viewing: [Ayer 118 .C7](#) v. 10

This is the first published image of a Hawai'ian woman, drawn by the official artist for James Cook's third voyage of 1776-1780. She wears feathered leis in her hair and around her neck, likely an indication of her status in Hawai'ian society at the time. Webber depicts her with a cloth hanging off her shoulder, satisfying English standards of modesty while hinting at nakedness.

In *Typee*, Melville would stir controversy with his discussion of the sexual freedom on Nuku Hiva and the beauty of its scantily clad women. His descriptions of the beautiful Fayaway and the other women of the island, and his superficial understanding of sexual mores among the Polynesians, contributed to the harmful exoticization and sexualization of Polynesian women that persists to this day.

Melville the Mystic, case 3 of 4

Controversy and Celebrity: *Typee* and *Omoo*

His first two books, *Typee* and *Omoo*, made Melville a controversial celebrity. Presented as true first-hand narratives of his travels in the South Pacific, questions about whether the books were fiction rose almost immediately. Melville defended

them as “genuine,” though later scholarship would prove that there were scenes that must be fictional and material cribbed from Melville’s reading added to both books.

In both books, Melville criticized the Protestant missionaries in the islands for treating the Polynesians as menial servants and acting as agents of colonialism, introducing greed and the worst kinds of vice from their home countries and imposing moral standards with little regard for local practices. Reviewers in religious periodicals took great exception, and the controversy set the pattern for Melville’s reception as a somewhat dangerous author for pious readers.

26. Herman Melville

Typee: A Peep at Polynesian Life

Published in New York by Wiley and Putnam in 1846

Call number and to request viewing: [Case Y 255 .M5168](#)

27. Herman Melville

Letter to Edwin Croswell, July 4, 1846

Call number and to request viewing: VAULT box Misc Vault Items

Melville deserted from his whaleship at Nuku Hiva with fellow seaman Toby Greene. In this letter, he writes to the editor of the Albany *Argus* newspaper to confirm the authenticity of a published letter by a man claiming to be Toby Greene. He supported Melville’s version of their adventures, helping to convince the reading public of the book’s status as nonfiction.

28. Herman Melville

Omoo: A Narrative of Adventures in the South Seas

Published in New York by Harper and Brothers in 1847

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville PS2384 .06 1847](#)

29. *The Polynesian*, vol. 3 no. 20

Published in Honolulu on October 3, 1846

Call number and to request viewing: [Ayer 1602 .P78](#)

The *Polynesian* was, in the words of its editor, the “official organ of the Hawaiian government.” In this issue, it approvingly prints one of Melville’s criticisms of missionaries’ mistreatment of native islanders in *Typee*, with a satirical headnote.

Melville the Mystic, case 4 of 4
[Pilgrimage and Poetry](#)

30. Herman Melville

Mardi, and a Voyage Thither

Published in London by Richard Bentley in 1849

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville PS2384 .M3 1849](#)

Melville's third book and first true novel takes the form of a metaphysical quest through the fictional archipelago of Mardi. Among many other islands, the travelers visit Vivenza, an allegorical depiction of the United States, and comment on the slavery, political strife, and colonization of other islands that they find there. "There's not so much freedom here as these freemen think," comments Babbalanja, a Mardian sage.

31. Herman Melville

Timoleon, Etc.

Published in New York by the Caxton Press in 1891

Acquired with support from the Horace Hawes Martin Memorial Fund

Call number and to request viewing: [Case Martin Y 285 .M512](#)

Timoleon was published a few months before Melville's death, at his own expense, in an edition of just 25 copies to give to family and friends. It includes a variety of earlier poems from his travels as well as later poems with an elegiac tone. Many of these, such as "Art," focus on the rewards and challenges of creating art and valuing beauty, and include many references to classical mythology and history as well as to Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, and other religious traditions. One poem in the collection, "Monody," has been interpreted as an elegy for Nathaniel Hawthorne, or for his son Malcolm, who died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound. Neither hypothesis can be confirmed.

32. Herman Melville

Clarel: A Poem and Pilgrimage in the Holy Land (volumes 1 and 2)

Published in New York by G. P. Putnam's Sons in 1876

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville PS2384 .C5 1876](#) c. 5 and 6

In *Clarel*, possibly the longest American epic poem, Melville gives a travelogue of the Holy Land. The title character is an American divinity student struggling with his faith. He travels with an international cast of pilgrims, and their discussions provide a panorama of religious perspectives and experiences. Melville drew on his own trip to the Middle East in 1856 for the book, his most sustained comment on the difficulty of reconciling religious faith with modern life.

The publication of the poem in an edition of 300 copies was subsidized by Melville's uncle, Peter Gansevoort, to whom the book is dedicated. The design on the front cover depicts a Jerusalem cross, which appears in the poem as a character's tattoo.

33. Herman Melville, author; Frederic Prokosch, calligrapher and illustrator

"That Rama"

Published in Grasse, France by the Prometheus Press in 1984

Acquired with support from the John M. Wing Fund

Call number and to request viewing: [Wing ZP 939 .P933 no.5](#)

“That Rama” is an excerpt from the canto “Of Rama” in *Clarel*. In it, Melville presents his interpretation of the Hindu deity Rama, the seventh avatar of Vishnu. It is one of the most remarkable manifestations of his recurring fascination with the idea that innocence and divinity are innate in, but hidden from, human beings.

This is a printed calligraphic text (shown in facsimile) with manuscript illustration by the American Modernist writer Frederic Prokosch, issued in an edition of just five copies.

Melville the Manhattanite, case 1 of 4
Country Life, City Life

34. Joseph Edward Adams Smith (as Godfrey Greylock)
Taghconic, or, Letters and Legends about Our Summer Home
Published in Boston by Redding and Co. in 1852
Call number and to request viewing: [Melville F72 .B5 S75 1852](#)

Taghconic celebrates the Berkshire Mountains and Pittsfield, Massachusetts, where Melville and his family lived in the 1850s and early 1860s in a farmhouse that he named Arrowhead. There he met Nathaniel Hawthorne, the poet Sarah Morewood, and other writers, and wrote *Moby-Dick*. Stung by the lukewarm response to that book, he wrote *Pierre* and “Bartleby, the Scrivener,” sinister views of the city and its literary establishment, which had failed to appreciate his masterpiece. This copy belonged to members of the Melville family: Melville’s sister Augusta, and his brother-in-law, John Hoadley, who worked in Pittsfield. It was purchased by the Newberry along with other Melville family books in 1967.

35. *Blunt’s Stranger’s Guide to the City of New-York*
Published in New York by Edmund M. Blunt in 1817
Call number and to request viewing: [Case F128.18 .B58 1817](#)

This New York guidebook was inscribed by Allan Melvill, Herman’s father, to the Earl of Leven and Melville, a Scottish nobleman, in December 1818, around nine months prior to Herman’s birth. Allan Melvill was an importer of luxury goods from Europe to New York at this time.

36. Herman Melville
Bartleby, the Scrivener: A Story of Wall-Street, 1853
Published in Minneapolis by Indulgence Press in 1995
Acquired with support from the John M. Wing Fund
Call number and to request viewing: [Wing folio ZP 983 .I46](#)

The reasons why the title character of this story “would prefer not to,” as he frequently says in response to queries from his employer and others to work or move, have remained tantalizingly enigmatic to this day. Bartleby works (or prefers not to) and takes up residence in a law office on Wall Street, copying documents by hand. The story is a masterpiece of tone and ambiguity, lending itself to a wide variety of interpretations, from a protest against the dehumanizing effects of city living to an absurdist view of the mystery of the human heart to Melville’s mournful commentary on the waning of his literary fortunes.

37. Herman Melville and Joe Scanlan

Two Views: Herman Melville, Bartleby, the Scrivener; Joe Scanlan, The Window Stunt

Published in Brussels by Bartleby & Co. in 2003

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville folio PS2384 .B28 2003](#)

This artist’s book includes a “stereoscopic kit” for viewing a stereograph of Wall Street (a reproduction of a nineteenth-century original), where the action of “Bartleby” takes place, allowing the reader to immerse themselves in the story using the three-dimensional technology of the nineteenth century. See the case on The Civil War for an example of a stereoscope.

38. Charles Sutton

The New York Tombs: Its Secrets and Its Mysteries

Published in New York by the United States Publishing Co. in 1874

Call number and to request viewing: [I 20851 .855](#)

At the end of “Bartleby,” the title character is taken to the Tombs, a real Manhattan prison built in the Egyptian Revival style, where the narrator finds him “standing all alone in the quietest of yards, his face towards a high wall.”

Melville the Manhattanite, case 2 of 4

Young America

In the 1840s and 1850s, New York was the hub of the Young America movement. Editors and writers like Evert Duyckinck, John L. O’Sullivan, Cornelius Mathews, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Melville sought freedom from European models in both politics and literature. Melville was broadly sympathetic to the movement’s aims for an American literature and for democratic reforms, but critiqued some of its methods, writers, and political ideas—including Manifest Destiny.

39. Evert A. Duyckinck, editor

The Literary: A Miscellany for the Town... no. 1

Published in New York by H. Greene in 1836

Call number and to request viewing: [Case A 5 .5165](#)

This first and only issue of *The Literary* included an “Envoi,” presumed to be by the young Evert Duyckinck, giving an idealized view of the state of American literature: “Happy is the American author that he may rise to reputation without the meanness of patronage. . . . Genius sinks or rises by the opinion of the world. There are no false media of an ‘imprimatur’ from closeted inquisitors, or a royal seal ‘by authority,’ or of fawning sycophancy upon wealth and station. . . . The judicious reader is his only and true right ‘friendly patron’ . . .” Duyckinck would become one of Melville’s most important friends and literary contacts in New York.

40. *United States Magazine and Democratic Review: Prospectus*
Published in Washington, D. C. by Langtree & O’Sullivan in 1837
Acquired with support from the Rudy L. Ruggles Fund
Call number and to request viewing: [VAULT folio Ruggles 541](#)

John O’Sullivan coined the term Manifest Destiny in the pages of this periodical, which was the central printed platform for Young America.

41. P. H. Vanderweide
Young America Polka
Published in New York by T. S. Berry in 1853
James Francis Driscoll Collection of American Sheet Music
Call number and to request viewing: [Driscoll](#) box 308

The Young America movement supported democratic reform movements around the world; for this sheet music, the cover shows the American flag topped with a Phrygian cap, which is both an ancient symbol of freedom and a reference to a Hungarian freedom fighter and American immigrant, Martin Koszta, involved in a diplomatic dispute between the United States and Austria in 1853.

42. Herman Melville
“Authentic Anecdotes of ‘Old Zack,’ Anecdote No. III,” in *Yankee Doodle*, vol. 2, no. 43 (July 31, 1847)
Published in New York by William H. Graham in 1847
Call number and to request viewing: [A 5.99](#)

In a series of fictitious anecdotes for *Yankee Doodle*, edited by the Young American Cornelius Mathews, Melville skewered the prevalent hero worship of General Zachary Taylor, who was then leading American forces in the Mexican-American War. Taylor would be elected president (from the Whig party) the next year. The illustration by an unidentified artist is shown here as a facsimile of the preceding right-hand page.

Melville the Manhattanite, Wall Item

43. Richard Caton Woodville, artist; Alfred Jones, engraver

Mexican News

Published in New York by the American Art-Union in 1853

Engraving

Acquired with support from the Rudy L. Ruggles Fund

Call number and to request viewing: [VAULT oversized Ruggles 527](#)

This well-known image attempts a snapshot of the United States at the time of the Mexican-American War of 1846-1848. Like many Americans, Melville held ambivalent views about this war, and about the supposed Manifest Destiny of the United States to become a benevolent democratic empire stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific. He was excited by the nation's youthful energy and the ideal of democracy, but frustrated by its moves towards imperialism and the persistence (and expansion) of slavery within its borders. Also see the case on Young America to the south in this room.

Melville the Manhattanite, Wall Item

44. John William Hill, artist; Henry Papprell, engraver

New York, with the City of Brooklyn in the Distance, from the Steeple of St.

Paul's Church, Looking East, South and West

Published in New York by Joseph Laing & Co. in 1855

Engraving

Call number and to request viewing: [map6F G3804.N4:2M3 1855 H5](#)

Melville the Manhattanite, Case 3 of 4

From Novels to Magazines

45. Herman Melville

Pierre, or, the Ambiguities

Published in New York by Harper & Brothers in 1852

Call number and to request viewing: [Case Y 255 .M5153](#)

Melville compared *Pierre* to the Kraken (sea monster) that would surpass the Leviathan of *Moby-Dick*—a work that would dive even deeper into the dangerous waters of his own psyche. Its overwrought language, sexual content, and critique of the publishing world led to scathing reviews from which Melville's career never fully recovered.

46. *The Lantern*, vol. 2 no. 39

Published in New York by Stringer and Townsend on October 2, 1852

Call number and to request viewing: [folio A 5 .282](#)

The most severe of *Pierre's* reviewers leveled accusations that Melville was "crazy" or morally bankrupt, and that the book was simply unreadable. This comic periodical makes light of the book's reputation with a joke on the "Fatal Occurrence" of "an intelligent young man" buying a copy and attempting to read it.

47. *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, vol. 10, no. 60
Published in New York by Harper & Brothers in April 1855
Call number and to request viewing: Modern MS Melvilleana

After the critical and commercial failure of *Pierre*, Melville turned to writing stories for popular literary magazines. Most of these stories were not attributed to him in the issues in which they appeared—as is the case with his story "The Paradise of Bachelors and the Tartarus of Maids." The story, contrasting lawyers enjoying life in London and women working in the New England mill that supplies their paper, was not collected in a book or otherwise reprinted during Melville's life.

48. Herman Melville
The Piazza Tales
Published in New York by Dix & Edwards in 1856
Call number and to request viewing: [Melville PS2384 .P4 1856](#)

The Piazza Tales collects five short works of fiction by Melville that had appeared in *Putnam's Monthly Magazine of American Literature, Science and Art* between 1853 and 1855, along with one new story ("The Piazza"). It includes three of the highlights of Melville's fiction: "Bartleby," "Benito Cereno," and "The Encantadas."

Melville the Manhattanite, Case 4 of 4
[The Civil War](#)

49. Herman Melville
"Inscription for the Slain at Fredericksburgh," in *Autograph Leaves of Our Country's Authors*
Published in Baltimore by Cushing & Bailey in 1864
Lithographic facsimile of manuscript
Call number and to request viewing: [Case Z 28 .055](#)

Melville was asked to contribute a manuscript in his hand to this volume, issued to raise funds for the United States Sanitary Commission. It memorializes the Union soldiers killed at the Battle of Fredericksburg in December, 1862. The volume also includes the first facsimile of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address.

50. Unknown photographer

Burial of the Dead

Published probably around 1880 by Taylor & Huntington in Hartford, Connecticut

Albumen prints on stereograph card, with stereoscope

From the Oliver Barrett-Carl Sandburg Papers

Gift of Roger Barrett

Call number and to request viewing: [Midwest MS Barrett-Sandburg](#) box 8

Stereograph cards are a photographic technology that allow for the creation of three-dimensional images using a stereoscope, shown here. They were popular in the late nineteenth century for both education and entertainment. The card shown here depicts burial of Union soldiers at a temporary cemetery in Fredericksburg, Virginia, in 1864.

51. Herman Melville

Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War

Published in New York by Harper & Brothers in 1866

Call number and to request viewing: [Case Y 274 .56](#)

Battle-Pieces is a poetic, polyphonic journal of the Civil War's progress and immediate aftermath. As might be expected, many poems focus on naval matters. In the poem displayed here, Melville cuts through the cloying artificiality of much commemorative war poetry with recognition of war's horror and deep psychological toll—and a startling final image.

52. James F. Gibson, photographer

Iron-clad Gunboat "Galena," Showing the Effect of Rebel Shot

Published probably around 1880 by Taylor & Huntington in Hartford, Connecticut

Albumen prints on stereograph card

From the Oliver Barrett-Carl Sandburg Papers

Gift of Roger Barrett

Call number and to request viewing: [Midwest MS Barrett-Sandburg](#) box 8

Melville was fascinated and shocked by the new steam-powered ironclad warships that came to dominate the Civil War's naval battles. In poems such as "A Utilitarian View of the Monitor's Fight," he presented a typically multifaceted view of the good and ill that might come from the more mechanized and impersonal warfare the country had developed and employed.

Melville the Modernist, Case 1 of 6

[The Lakeside Press *Moby-Dick*](#)

53-55. Herman Melville

Moby-Dick, or, The Whale

Published in Chicago by the Lakeside Press in 1930
53, Acquired with support from the John M. Wing Fund
54 and 55, Gift of H. Howard Hughes
Call numbers and to request viewing: [Wing folio ZP 983 .L1468](#) and
[Melville folio PS2384 .M6 1930](#)

The Lakeside Press, an imprint of Chicago printing giant R. R. Donnelley & Sons, published its *Moby-Dick* as one of four illustrated editions of nineteenth-century American literary classics. The series was intended as a showcase of American printers' aesthetics and technical capabilities, seen at the time as inferior to those of Europeans. Rockwell Kent, at the height of his popularity in the U. S. as a writer and artist, agreed to illustrate it in 1926. He worked with Donnelley's director of design and typography, William A. Kittredge, on virtually every aspect of the edition over the next four years, including the striking Art Deco elements of the aluminum slipcase and stylized whales on the covers and spines. The limited edition of 1,000 sold out quickly. Proofs of Kent's illustrations hang on the north wall.

56. Herman Melville

Moby-Dick, or, The Whale

Published in New York by Random House in 1930

Acquired with support from the John M. Wing Fund

Call number and to request viewing: [Wing ZP 983 .L14682](#)

The beauty and popularity of the expensive Lakeside Press limited edition led Random House to publish a more affordable trade edition with reproductions of Kent's illustrations. Rockwell Kent inscribed this copy to William Kittredge; Kent also designed Kittredge's bookplate, seen on the facing page.

57. Herman Melville

Moby-Dick, or, the Whale

(*Mobi Dik, ili, Belyi kit*)

Published in Moscow by the State Publishing House of Geographical Literature (Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo Geograficheskoi Literatury) in 1961

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville PS2384.M6 R8 1961](#)

Kent's left-wing politics and advocacy of friendship between the Russian and American people helped make him popular in the Soviet Union, and palatable to its state-run publishing house. Soviet critics could counter arguments for Captain Ahab as a warning against totalitarianism with a reading of the novel as an indictment of the inequities in American society and government.

58. Rockwell Kent

Letter to William A. Kittredge, November 11, 1926

From the William A. Kittredge Papers
Acquired with support from the John M. Wing Fund
Call number and to request viewing: [Wing Modern MS Kit](#) box 1 folder 1

In this remarkable letter, Kent presents his sense of *Moby-Dick's* style in the context of discussing possible typefaces: "Its prose is ample, voluminous, rich, warm; it is above all not refined, not studied... It is literary woodcutting, not engraving."

Melville the Modernist, Wall Item

59. Rockwell Kent

Proof sheets for the Lakeside Press *Moby-Dick*, 1930

Gift of Dan Burne Jones

Call numbers and to request viewing: [Case Wing oversize ZX 983 .K37](#) and [Case Wing oversize ZX 983 .K371](#)

Rockwell Kent's illustrations for *Moby-Dick* have become iconic. Their deep, brooding shadows, expressionistic composition, and monumentality reveal Kent as a sensitive and sympathetic reader of the novel. These are surely the most influential illustrations of *Moby-Dick*; their bold aesthetic, timeless but fresh, helped readers of the 1930s and 1940s perceive it as a rediscovered classic and understand its themes. They have also appeared in dozens of international, translated editions as the quintessential American illustrations for the book.

In addition to the complete set of illustrations that appeared in the original Lakeside Press edition, the Newberry also holds ten proofs for illustrations that were not published, six of which are displayed to the left.

For more on these illustrations, see the case on Rockwell Kent and the Lakeside Press edition to the south in this room.

Melville the Modernist, Case 2 of 6

Modernist Critical Appraisals

60. Raymond M. Weaver

Herman Melville: Mariner and Mystic

Published in New York by George H. Doran Co. in 1921

Gift of H. Howard Hughes

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville PS2386 .W4 1921](#)

Commissioned by *Nation* editor and fellow Columbia University faculty member Carl Van Doren to write an article for Melville's centenary, Weaver became intrigued by the writer and the lack of scholarship on his life and works. He wrote this, the first book-length biography of Melville, in response.

Weaver's portrayal of Melville's life after *Moby-Dick* as a tragic failure has been roundly criticized by later scholars, but was very important in generating interest in his life and writings.

61. Charles Olson

Call Me Ishmael

Published in New York by Reynal and Hitchcock in 1947

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville PS2384.M62 O4 1947](#)

A hybrid work of creative nonfiction, *Call Me Ishmael* focuses on Melville's literary influences, such as Shakespeare, and on *Moby-Dick* as a reflection of the American character. "The *White Whale* is more accurate than [Walt Whitman's] *Leaves of Grass*," he writes. "Because it is America, all of her space, the malice, the root." This copy bears annotations by Harrison Hayford, co-editor of the Northwestern-Newberry Edition of the Writings of Herman Melville.

62. D. H. Lawrence

Studies in Classic American Literature

Published in New York by Thomas Seltzer in 1923

Gift of James Albert FitzSimmons

Call number and to request viewing: [Case 5A 299](#)

In addition to chapters on Franklin, Poe, Cooper, Hawthorne, and other canonical American authors, Lawrence included impressionistic studies of Melville's books *Typee*, *Omoo*, and *Moby-Dick*, lesser-known and lesser-read in the early 1920s. Lawrence's treatment of Captain Ahab's ship, the *Pequod*, as "ship of the American soul" remains immensely influential.

63. Malcolm Cowley

"The Writing of *Moby Dick*" and journal entries on Melville, 1978

From the Malcolm Cowley Papers

Call number and to request viewing: [Midwest MS Cowley box 112 folder 5114](#)

The foremost critic and editor of the Lost Generation (writers of the World War I era), Cowley prepared this short essay for a one-man adaptation of *Moby-Dick* sponsored, ironically, by oil giant ExxonMobil.

Melville the Modernist, Wall Item

64. Everett Henry

The Voyage of the Pequod from the Book, Moby Dick, by Herman Melville

Published in Cleveland by Harris-Seybold Co. in 1956

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville broadside G3201.E65 1956 .H4](#)

This chromolithographic pictorial map is a detailed visualization of the plot, characters, and geography of *Moby-Dick*. The vivid colors of the ship's path follow the emotional weather of the book, from the hopeful green of departure at Nantucket to the bloody finale.

Everett Henry produced the map for the annual advertising calendar of a printing company. For more on Melville in popular culture, see the case High Culture and Popular Culture in the center of this room.

Melville the Modernist, Case 3 of 6 High Culture and Popular Culture

By the late 1920s, critical appreciation and scholarly exploration of Melville's writings (*Moby-Dick*, in particular) worked symbiotically with artistic interest and commercial opportunism to create a market in which adaptations, abridgments, parodies, and other derivative works proliferated—from highbrow adaptations for the opera and theatre by Benjamin Britten and Orson Welles to movies, comic books, and many other media. Many more people, from children to sophisticates, have experienced Melville's stories and ideas (or some distorted version of them) in such forms than have read his original works. They are essential to the sense of Melville as a central, canonical American author.

65. Comic book adaptations of Melville's books

Left to Right: *Classics Illustrated* n. 36: *Typee* (Gilberton, 1947); *Marvel Classics Comics* n. 8: *Moby Dick* (Marvel, 1976); *Dell Four Color* n. 717: *Moby Dick* (Dell, 1956); *Illustrated Classics* n. 3: *Moby Dick* (King Classics, 1977); *Moby Duck* n. 10 (Gold Key, 1970)

Collection of Melvilleana

Call number and to request viewing: Modern MS Melvilleana

66. Unknown author

The Story of Moby Dick, the Great White Whale

Published in Racine, Wisconsin by Whitman Publishing Company in 1934

Gift of Robert C. Ryan

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville PS2384 .M62 1934](#)

This "Big Little Book" features photographs from *The Sea Beast*, the first film adaptation of *Moby-Dick*. A silent film released in 1926 and starring John Barrymore as Captain Ahab, *The Sea Beast* is a very loose adaptation, completely reversing the ending so that Ahab kills Moby Dick and returns to shore to reconcile with his lost love.

67. Program for *Billy Budd, Opera in Two Acts*

Published in London by the Royal Opera House in 2000

Collection of Melvilleana

Call number and to request viewing: Modern MS Melvilleana

Benjamin Britten's acclaimed opera *Billy Budd*, with libretto by E. M. Forster and Eric Crozier, debuted at London's Royal Opera House in 1951. See the case on Melville on the Chicago stage to the west in this room for more about this adaptation.

68. Orson Welles

Moby Dick—Rehearsed

Typescript created in New York by Hart Stenographic Bureau in 1962

Gift of H. Howard Hughes

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville folio PS3545.E522 M6 1962](#)

Welles's play, about a nineteenth-century troupe performing an adaptation of *Moby-Dick*, was first performed in London in 1955. This script dates from the Broadway production of 1962.

Melville the Modernist, Wall Item

69. Film poster for *Billy Budd*

Published by Allied Artists in 1962

Collection of Melvilleana

Call number and to request viewing: Modern MS Melvilleana

Peter Ustinov co-wrote, directed, and starred as Captain Vere in this film adaptation of Melville's last, unfinished novel. Terence Stamp made his screen debut as the innocent "handsome sailor" who accidentally kills his ship's vicious master-at-arms. The tale's tension between military discipline and moral imperatives must have held added meaning less than a year after Dwight Eisenhower's warning against the growing military-industrial complex.

Melville the Modernist, Case 4 of 6

World War and Cold War

70. Herman Melville

Moby Dick

Published in New York by Editions for the Armed Services in 1944

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville PS2384 .M6 1944](#)

The Armed Services Edition of *Moby-Dick* was one of over 1,200 different titles produced for free distribution to United States troops during World War II. One of the Council on Books in Wartime's main "weapons in the war of ideas," the books were chosen for entertainment and educational value, but also to promote and demonstrate American ideals of freedom of thought and expression. *Moby-Dick* (slightly abridged for this edition) almost certainly found its widest readership to date in this edition. Soldiers and

sailors could find a mix of relevance and relief in its short and eclectic chapters, scenario echoing the circumstances of men at war, and explorations of tyranny, madness, and destruction.

71. Herman Melville, author; Pierre Leyris, translator; Patrick de Manceau, illustrator
Benito Cereno
Published in Paris by Lafarge Éditeur in 1946
Call number and to request viewing: [Melville folio PS2384 .B4 1946](#)

Melville's fictionalized account of an 1805 revolt on a Spanish slave ship was first published in 1855. Arguably a warning against the exploitation and moral rot endemic to empires (and aspiring empires, such as the United States of the 1850s), the work would find new resonance in the anticolonial and antiracist movements of the twentieth century, such as the protests that sprang up in the French colony of Algeria and elsewhere in 1945.

72. C. L. R. James
Mariners, Renegades, and Castaways: The Story of Herman Melville and the World We Live In
Published in New York by C. L. R. James in 1953
Gift of James Albert FitzSimmons
Call number and to request viewing: [Melville PS2388.P6 J36 1958](#)

James, a Trinidadian socialist historian, activist, and theorist, wrote this book while imprisoned on Ellis Island, detained for having overstayed his visa. He was eventually deported, a victim of the Red Scare of the 1950s. After his release, he self-published the book and sent a copy to each U. S. Senator. He writes in his introduction, "a hundred years ago in two novels, *Moby-Dick* and *Pierre*, and two or three stories, [Melville] painted a picture of the world in which we live, which is to this day unsurpassed."

73. Herman Melville
The Confidence-Man: His Masquerade
Published in New York by Dix and Edwards on April 1, 1857
Call number and to request viewing: [Case Y 255 .M511](#)

In Melville's last completed novel, a shape-shifting con artist—perhaps the Devil—infiltrates a Mississippi River steamboat on April Fool's Day and encounters a cross-section of American society, testing their faith in religion, institutions, and each other. While it speaks to Melville's historical context, the novel was a commercial and critical failure at the time. It was not embraced until the middle of the twentieth century, when it came to seem a precursor of Atomic Age postmodernism in its ambiguous message, bleak satirical humor, questioning of ideologies, and exploration of identity.

Melville the Modernist, Wall Items

74. Press book and lobby cards for the film *Moby Dick*

Published by Warner Bros. in 1956

Collection of Melvilleana

Call number and to request viewing: Modern MS Melvilleana

Director John Huston's film adaptation, from a script by himself and Ray Bradbury, introduced millions of viewers to the story of Captain Ahab and his quest for revenge on the white whale. Actor Gregory Peck's distinctive scarred face and Quaker beard have influenced depictions of Ahab ever since.

The film includes subtle allusions to totalitarianism, the Cold War, and fears of nuclear war, such as Ahab indicating that he would find Moby Dick at Bikini Atoll, where the United States conducted nuclear arms tests.

Melville the Modernist, Case 5 of 6

Making the Northwestern-Newberry Edition

The Northwestern-Newberry Edition of the Writings of Herman Melville is the standard scholarly edition of his works. The fifteen-volume edition was the product of over fifty years of work, with the first volume published in 1968 (*Typee*) and the last in 2017 (*"Billy Budd, Sailor" and Other Uncompleted Writings*). A collaboration between Northwestern University Press and the Newberry Library, the edition's guiding light was Northwestern Professor Harrison Hayford. After his death in 2001, Associate General Editor Hershel Parker became General Editor. G. Thomas Tanselle served as Bibliographical Editor, and Alma MacDougall was editorial coordinator starting in 1982.

75. Prospectus for the Northwestern-Newberry Edition of the Writings of Herman Melville

Published in Evanston by Northwestern University Press, probably in 1966

Northwestern-Newberry Edition of the Writings of Herman Melville Records

Call number and to request viewing: Midwest MS Melville

76. Herman Melville

The Whale

Published in London by Richard Bentley in 1851

Call number and to request viewing: [VAULT Case Y 255 .M5131](#)

77. Herman Melville

Moby-Dick, or, The Whale

Published in New York by Harper and Brothers in 1851

Call number and to request viewing: [VAULT Melville PS2384 .M6 1851g](#)

These first English and American editions of *Moby-Dick*, used in the creation of the Northwestern-Newberry Edition of *Moby-Dick*, illustrate one of the main reasons the edition was needed: significant differences existed among the editions produced during Melville's lifetime, with no surviving authorial manuscripts or proofs for most works to confirm changes desired by the author and those imposed by publishers or accidentally made by printers. Perhaps the most famous and glaring difference is displayed here: in the first English edition of *Moby-Dick*, publisher Richard Bentley omitted the Epilogue in which it is revealed that Ishmael survives the sinking of the *Pequod*, and moved the prefatory "Etymology" and "Extracts" to the end of the book as an Appendix.

78. Richard Colles Johnson

"Rules for Collators," October 21, 1965

Northwestern-Newberry Edition of the Writings of Herman Melville Records
Call number and to request viewing: Modern MS Melville

The process of establishing texts for the Northwestern-Newberry Edition depended on collation, or rigorous comparison of copies of books to find changes in typesetting, punctuation, spelling, and other variations. Such differences could establish distinct impressions or printings of editions, and provide evidence of Melville's changes to the texts. This work was done on a device called the Hinman Collator, which superimposed images of pages from two copies of a book to highlight differences between them. Richard Colles Johnson, a librarian and bibliographer at the Newberry from 1963 to 1998, helped to oversee this work, and wrote this memorandum of instructions and reminders for the collators.

79. Harrison Hayford, initiator

Four pages of "Basic and Applied Research Proposal: Preparation of a Complete Edition of the Writings of Herman Melville in a Clear Text," August 21, 1964

Northwestern-Newberry Edition of the Writings of Herman Melville Records
Call number and to request viewing: Modern MS Melville

The creation of an edition as rigorous as the Northwestern-Newberry Edition required a large staff and multiple sources of funding. Besides Northwestern University and the Newberry, the U. S. Office of Education and the National Endowment for the Humanities provided major funding for the project.

Melville the Modernist, Case 6 of 6
Global Melville

Interest in Melville's works grew through the twentieth century and into the twenty-first, in conjunction with the rise of the United States' worldwide power and influence. Translated and illustrated editions appeared around the world. For their

producers and readers, understanding Melville was a part of understanding the literature and character of the free world superpower. At the same time, Melville's works critiqued American society, engaged with other nations and cultures, and sought basic truths about humanity in ways that made them appealing and adaptable around the globe.

80. Herman Melville, author; Raghuvīra Sāmanta, translator

Moby-Dick (Rākṣasa)

Published in Mumbāi by Mējestika Buka Stōla in 1962

Gift of H. Howard Hughes

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville PS2384.M6 M37 1962](#)

This is the first translation of *Moby-Dick* into Marathi, the language of over 80 million people in western India.

81. Herman Melville, author; Inga Lindsjö, translator

Typee (Taipi)

Published in Stockholm by Forum in 1954

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville PS2384.T8 S9 1954](#)

82. Herman Melville, author; Karl Federn, translator

Omoo (Omu)

Published in Berlin by Verlag von Th. Knaur Nachf. in 1927

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville PS2384.O6 G43 1927](#) c. 2

83. Herman Melville, author; Andrés Barba, translator; Gabriel Pacheco, illustrator

Moby Dick

Published in Madrid by Sextopiso in 2014

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville PS2384.M6 S7 2014](#)

84. Baraeti Ato Wakusu

Moby Dick (Hakugei)

Published in Tokyo by Isutopuresu in 2009

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville PS2384.M6 J32 2009](#)

85. Unknown adapter

Moby Dick, in *Pimpinela* volume 2, number 11

Published in Buenos Aires by Editorial Codex in 1952

Call number and to request viewing: Modern MS Melvilleana

86. Herman Melville, author; Elisabeth Ciccione, translator and adapter; Alessandro Biffignandi and Giorgio De Gaspari, illustrators

Moby Dick

Published in Paris by Éditions des Deux Coqs d'Or in 1965

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville folio PS2384.M6 F72 1965](#)

Melville the Muse, Wall Items

87-89. Matt Kish

Original artwork for *Moby-Dick in Pictures*, left to right:

Page 1, "Call Me Ishmael." Unpublished alternate version.
Created around December 2009
Pen and ink on found paper

Page 375, "But far beneath this wondrous world upon the surface..."
Created September 14, 2010
Ink and marker on watercolor paper

Page 472, "...this velvet paw but conceals a remorseless fang."
Created December 1, 2010
Ink and marker on found paper
Gift of Will Hansen
Call number and to request viewing: [VAULT Melville folio N8215 .K56 2009](#)

Matt Kish is an artist currently living and working in Ohio. He created a series of 552 illustrations for the main text of *Moby-Dick*, one for each page of his Signet Classics paperback, between 2009 and 2011. The series was published as *Moby-Dick in Pictures* in 2011. A few selections of the original art from that series are seen here, including an alternate, unpublished version of his illustration for page 1, "Call me Ishmael."

Kish uses recycled found paper in his work, including pages from technical manuals, government documents, and other sources. These create palimpsests, appropriate for vibrant illustrations of Melville's dense layers of allusion and meaning.

Other works by Kish can be found in the first room of the Trienens Galleries.

Melville the Muse, case 1 of 6

Book Arts

90. Herman Melville

Moby Dick, or, The Whale

Published in San Francisco by the Arion Press in 1979

Call number and to request viewing: [VAULT Melville folio PS2384 .M6 1979](#)

The colophon for Andrew Hoyem's Arion Press *Moby Dick* lists the details that made the edition a great achievement in fine press bookmaking: "The

type is handset Goudy Modern with Leviathan Titling, display capitals designed for this book. Illustrated with 100 wood engravings by Barry Moser. Printed in black and blue ink on dampened Barcham Green handmade paper, bearing a whale watermark, made specially for this edition. Bound in full blue Moroccan goatskin, contained in blue cloth slipcase. Edition of 250 copies.”

91. Herman Melville, author; Moussa Kone, artist
“Etymology” (*Moby Dick Filet*, no. A)
Published in Vienna by Harpune Verlag in 2012
Call number and to request viewing: [Melville PS2384.M6 2011](#) no. A

The Austrian publisher Harpune Verlag’s *Moby Dick Filet* series comprises 137 limited-edition pamphlets, one for each chapter of *Moby-Dick*, which pair a contemporary artist with Melville’s text. The series is ongoing; the Newberry holds all pamphlets published to date. Another pamphlet in the series is in the case to the north, on Women Rewriting Melville.

92. Herman Melville, author; Florian Unterberger, artist
“The Pacific” (*Moby Dick Filet*, no. 111)
Published in Vienna by Harpune Verlag in 2013
Call number and to request viewing: [Melville PS2384.M6 2011](#) no. 111

Florian Unterberger translated the words of this chapter into a series of blue and white rectangles, forming a stylized Pacific Ocean out of the language itself.

93. Herman Melville, author; Aylin Langreuter, artist
“The Lee Shore” (*Moby Dick Filet*, no. 23)
Published in Vienna by Harpune Verlag in 2011
Call number and to request viewing: [Melville PS2384.M6 2011](#) no. 23

Melville the Muse, case 2 of 6
Conceptual Literature

94. Herman Melville, author; Fred Benenson, editor; Amazon Mechanical Turk, translators
Emoji Dick, or, The Whale
Published, probably in New York, by Fred Benenson in 2010
Call number and to request viewing: [Melville PS2384.M6 2010](#)

Ostensibly, *Emoji Dick* is a translation of *Moby-Dick* into emoji, the Japanese pictographic symbols popular in digital communication. Decisions on which emoji to choose were made by anonymous individuals working for Amazon’s Mechanical Turk service for fractions of pennies. In reality, the “translation”

is mostly nonsensical, and the work serves as a commentary on crowdsourcing, labor, and the idea of authorship.

95. Paul Graham

The Whiteness of the Whale: American Photographs, 1998-2011

Published in London by MACK and in San Francisco by Pier 24 in 2015

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville folio TR659.8 .G73 2015](#)

The 2015-2016 exhibition of British photographer Paul Graham's work took its name from a memorable chapter of *Moby-Dick*. The exhibition catalog prints the chapter in its entirety—placing Melville's freewheeling disquisition on the sinister aspects of colorlessness in conversation with Graham's bleached-out photographs of African Americans and cityscapes. Graham positions Melville to be read in the context of the Black Lives Matter movement.

96. Herman Melville and Richard Kostelanetz, authors; Thorsten Baensch, designer

Thrice: Herman Melville, Bartleby, the Scrivener. Richard Kostelanetz, Kosty, the Ghostwriter. Facsimile, Bartleby, the Scrivener

Published in Brussels by Bartleby & Co. in 2009

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville folio PS2384 .B28 2009](#)

For this artist's book, Baensch and Kostelanetz collaborate on three "attempts to make a favorite classic text happen today." The story of the scrivener, employed in copying legal documents, is copied in three different senses—"repaired and restored" in a manually rewritten text by Baensch, updated to a contemporary setting in an original story by Kostelanetz, and mechanically photocopied in a facsimile of its original magazine appearance.

Melville the Muse, Wall Item

97. Nicholas Rougeux

Published in Wheeling, Illinois by C82.net in 2016

Call number and to request viewing: [Wing broadside ZPP 2083 .R5881](#)

For this poster, "All letters, numbers, spaces, and line breaks were removed from Melville's *Moby Dick*—leaving only the punctuation in one continuous line of symbols in the order they appear in the text," arranged in a spiral. It is part of the artist's series entitled *Between the Words*.

See also the nearby case, *Conceptual Literature*.

Melville the Muse, Case 3 of 6

Women Rewriting Melville

98. Sara Mesa and Pablo Martín Sánchez

Agatha

Published in Segovia, Spain by Ediciones La Uña Rota in 2017

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville PQ6713.E823 A33 2017](#)

In an 1852 letter to Nathaniel Hawthorne, Melville described a potential story or novel based on the real-life story of Agatha Hatch, the wife of a sailor who impregnated and abandoned her, and appeared to have another wife and family. Thought to be a lost novel titled *The Isle of the Cross*, it would have been Melville's only novel with a female protagonist. The Spanish poet and novelist Sara Mesa imaginatively reconstructs the story for her contribution to this volume, entitled "Un Reloj y Tres Chales" ("A Clock and Three Shawls").

99. Herman Melville, author; Jean Giono, translator; Paula Cohen, copyist

Moby-Dick, or, The Whale

Published in Brussels by Bartleby & Co. in 2017

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville folio PS2384.M6 F76 2017](#)

In this artist's book, Paula Cohen obliquely comments on the unsung role of women who served as copyists for male authors—such as Melville's sister and wife, Augusta Melville and Elizabeth Shaw Melville. Cohen attempted to retype the French translation of *Moby-Dick*, but used "a self-developed software program" requiring her to type at constant speed and allowing no correction of mistakes. The title page is a hand-drawn reconstruction of the title page of the first American edition, with Cohen's name inserted as "copyist."

100. Herman Melville, author; Marguerite Gay, translator and abridger

The White Whale (Moby Dick): American Novel (Le Cachalot Blanc [Moby Dick]: Roman Américain)

Published in Paris by Librairie Gedalge in 1928

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville PS2384.M6 F76 1928](#)

This was the first translation of *Moby-Dick* into French, in an abridged version. The cover illustration is by the Art Deco illustrator Maggie Salcedo.

101. Herman Melville, author; Maruša Sagadin, artist

"The Carpenter" (*Moby Dick Filet*, no. 107)

Published in Vienna by Harpune Verlag in 2012

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville PS2384.M6 2011](#) no. 107

102. Caroline Hack

Cetology

Published in Norfolk, England by Caroline Hack in 2017

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville QL737.C4 H33 2017](#)

For this project, the book artist Caroline Hack created twelve volumes, one for each of the cetaceans described in the "Cetology" chapter of *Moby-Dick*, in which Melville sorts whales and their relatives according to size into folio, octavo, and duodecimo "books."

103. Sara Jeter Naslund

Ahab's Wife, or, The Star-Gazer

Published in New York by William Morrow and Co. in 1999

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville PS3564.A827 A76 1999](#)

In this bestselling novel, Naslund tells the story of Una Spenser, the wife that Captain Ahab left behind to seek revenge. Spenser has her own seafaring adventures, and becomes an abolitionist and advocate for women's rights.

Melville the Muse, Case 4 of 6

Chicago Adaptations

Why has Chicago been a hub for stage adaptations of Melville's works over the past fifty years? Perhaps there is a kinship between Melville's style and the distinctive style of Chicago's theater world. The emotional impact of *Moby-Dick*, complex ensemble dynamics of "Benito Cereno," and quest for central human truth in *Billy Budd* seem well suited to the Chicago theater community's commitments to emotional depth and to collaboration over individual star turns and elaborate staging. The digressive, nearly improvisational style of much of Melville's writing could also appeal to writers and actors in the cradle of improv.

104. Ellen Goldsmith

Photographs from the Lyric Opera of Chicago's production of Benjamin

Britten's *Billy Budd*, 1970

Gelatin silver prints

From the Ellen Goldsmith Papers

Gift of Steven Baruch

Call number and to request viewing: [Midwest MS Goldsmith](#) box 3 folder 89

The Lyric Opera mounted the U. S. stage premiere of Britten's revised two-act *Billy Budd* in 1970, with Theodore Uppman in the title role that he had originated in 1951. Melville's novel included a searing indictment of war as "the abrogation of everything but brute Force," in step with protests of the Vietnam War at this time.

105. Remains Theatre

Program for *Moby Dick*, 1982

Theater Programs Collection

Call number and to request viewing: Midwest MS Theater box 58

This adaptation by Steven Rumbelow (who also directed) featured a standout cast of Chicago stage actors, including William L. Petersen as Ahab, Lindsay McGee as Melville himself, and Amy Morton as “the Guide.” The play won four Joseph Jefferson Awards.

106. Shawn Pfautsch

Late revisions of playscript for *Season on the Line*, 2014

From the Shawn Pfautsch Papers

Gift of Shawn Pfautsch

Call number and to request viewing: [Midwest MS Pfautsch](#) box 1 folder 10

One of three *Moby-Dick* adaptations mounted in Chicago between 2014 and 2016, *Season on the Line* follows a Chicago theater company mounting a season’s worth of plays, leading up to a production of *Moby-Dick*. Pfautsch’s handwritten note compares his character Ishmael’s message for members of the theatrical world to Melville “challeng[ing] us to rethink the American soul.”

Melville the Muse, Wall Item

107. University of Illinois Chicago Circle Players

Program for *Benito Cereno*, 1969

Collection of Melvilleana

Call number and to request viewing: Modern MS Melvilleana

Robert Lowell adapted Melville’s story of a slave ship revolt, “Benito Cereno,” as part of his trilogy of plays, *The Old Glory*, paired with adaptations of two stories by Nathaniel Hawthorne.

Melville the Muse, Wall Item

108. Michael Horowitz, photographer

“The Satire of Second City: Ahoy There!,” in: *Aardvark*, unknown issue

Probably published in Chicago by Aardvark Publications between 1961 and 1964

Collection of Melvilleana

Call number and to request viewing: Modern MS Melvilleana

Melville the Muse, Wall Item

109. Blair Thomas & Co.

Scenes from *Moby Dick: The Brotherhood of the Monastic Order of Ancient Mariners Purges the Ills of Society through a Reading of the Tales of Moby-Dick*

Digital video of performance in Charleville, France, 2017

Gift of Blair Thomas

Call number and to request viewing: Midwest MS ThomasB

This performance combines elements of puppet theater, performance art, musical theater, and religious practice in an adaptation and commentary on *Moby-Dick*. It was developed in Chicago and performed at the Museum of Contemporary Art in 2016. Greg Allen directed and co-adapted the work. The songs are by Michael Smith. The performers are Blair Thomas, Michael Montenegro, Michael Smith, and Michael Zerang.

Excerpts shown in this video: "Call Me Ishmael" (3:40); "The Parable of Perth the Blacksmith" and "The Business of Whaling" (22:36); "The Parable of Queequeg the Harpooner" (6:45); "Ahab and Moby Dick" (6:03).

Melville the Muse, case 5 of 6
[Gay Responses to Melville](#)

Melville lived as a straight man, with a wife and children. Nevertheless, his writings' more consistent interest in the homosocial worlds of the nineteenth-century rather than in romantic relationships between men and women, his descriptions of beautiful men, his passionate letters to Nathaniel Hawthorne, and other details from his life and works have raised questions about his sexuality. Such questions are unanswerable, but Melville has undeniably been a touchstone for gay artists.

110. Herman Melville, author; Benjamin Benno, illustrator
The Piazza Tales

Published in New York by Elf Publishers in 1929

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville PS2384 .P4 1929](#)

Benjamin Benno, born Benjamin Greenstein, immigrated to the U. S. as a child in 1912. He trained as an artist at the anarchist Ferrer School in New York and became a well-known painter and sculptor. For this edition of *The Piazza Tales*, his illustrations evoke both his own work as a merchant seaman for over twenty years, and Melville's interest in male beauty.

111. Herman Melville, author; Hershel Parker, editor; Maurice Sendak, illustrator

Pierre, or, the Ambiguities

Published in New York by HarperCollins in 1995

Gift of Harrison Hayford

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville PS2384 .P5 1995](#)

Maurice Sendak, best known for his children's books such as *Where the Wild Things Are*, was an avid reader and collector of Melville's writings. His powerful, erotic illustrations for this edition of *Pierre* reveal his intimacy with the text; in the illustration on display, young Pierre Glendinning gazes at his father's portrait, which Sendak based on a painting of the young Allan Melvill, Herman's father.

112. Unknown author

Intimate Diaries of Homosexual Geniuses

Published in Los Angeles by Echelon Book Publishers in 1967

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville HQ75.7 .I58 1967](#)

This explicit gay pulp fiction purports to publish Melville's sexual confession, from discovering his homosexuality in Polynesia to a romance with Nathaniel Hawthorne.

113. David Diamond, composer; Herman Melville, author

"Billy in the Darbies"

Published in Philadelphia by Elkan-Vogel Co. in 1946

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville folio M1621.D53 B5 1946](#)

David Diamond lived openly as a gay man by the 1940s. *Billy Budd's* themes of repressed homosexual attraction and the reactionary violence that can ensue surely struck a chord with him. His was the first musical setting for "Billy in the Darbies," the ballad that ends *Billy Budd*.

See also the poster "You Were Archangel Enough" on the west wall in this room.

Melville the Muse, Wall Item

114. Jared Pechacek

"You Were Archangel Enough"

Published in Santa Monica, California by Society6 in 2018

Giclée inkjet print from digital image

Call number and to request viewing: [Melville broadside PS2386 .P43 2018](#)

This cartoon depicts Melville and Nathaniel Hawthorne. Melville met Hawthorne in 1850, and was inspired to read his writings—where he found a kindred spirit. Their sudden, intense friendship in the early 1850s helped to inspire Melville to write *Moby-Dick*. The erotic charge in Melville's few surviving letters to Hawthorne at this time, and the cooling of their relationship shortly thereafter, has led to speculation that Hawthorne was startled and rejected Melville's overtures, be they physical or soulful.

The title of the print comes from Melville's famous letter to Nathaniel Hawthorne in November 1851, shortly after publication of *Moby-Dick* (which Melville dedicated to Hawthorne.) In the letter he wrote, "Whence come you, Hawthorne? By what right do you drink from my flagon of life? And when I put it to my lips—lo, they are yours and not mine. I feel that the Godhead is broken up like the bread at the Supper, and that we are the pieces....You were

archangel enough to despise the imperfect body [of the book *Moby-Dick*], and embrace the soul.”

Also see the case Gay Responses to Melville near the center of this room.

Melville the Muse, Case 6 of 6

115. Catherine Kanner, artist; John Sheller, editor

Cetus: The Whale

Published in Pacific Palisades, California by the Melville Press in 1996

Acquired with support from the John M. Wing Fund

Call number and to request viewing: [Wing ZP 983 .T69](#)

The crew of the *Pequod*, Captain Ahab's ship in *Moby-Dick*, is illustrated in this edition. Shown here are Queequeg, the Polynesian harpooner who befriends the narrator, Ishmael; Pip, the young black boy who is nearly lost at sea; Starbuck, the pious first mate; and Captain Ahab.