

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MONTEREY, CA – Monterey Peninsula College Theatre Arts Department to open...

20,000 Leagues Under the Seas

Based on the novel by Jules Verne
Dramatized by David Kersnar and Althos Low

Directed by David Kersnar

July 20 – August 06, 2017

**The Morgan Stock Stage
Monterey Peninsula College
980 Fremont Street
Monterey CA 93940**

*Tickets available from the MPC Theatre Box Office ([831-646-4213](tel:831-646-4213)) or online
at www.mpctheatre.com*

20,000 Leagues Under the Seas

When a terrifying sea monster is spotted off the coast, renowned scientist Professor Aronnax and fellow explorers set out to investigate. They soon find themselves kidnapped and held under the command and spell of the mysterious Captain Nemo. As they circle the globe aboard the most advanced submarine the world has ever seen, they confront giant squid, bizarre seas creatures, and the monsters that lurk below and – within!

About the MPC production of 20,000 Leagues Under the Seas

“First,” says director David Kersnar, fending off what has become a common question, “It is not a typo, it is *20,000 Leagues Under the Seas*...plural, with an ‘s’ at the end.” While most folks know the more commonly used “...Under the Sea,” the original French novel was actually titled *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Seas: An Underwater Tour of the World*...plural, as in ‘the Seven Seas.’ That is not the only difference you’ll notice if, like most people, you are more familiar with various cinematic versions of Captain Nemo and his submarine, the Nautilus.

Director Kersnar has fleshed out the enigmatic Nemo’s back story, something Jules Verne did not do until his sequel, “The Mysterious Island.” The director has also built upon themes of ecology and conservation that were hinted at in the original novel. “We are using up and destroying our world’s resources at a dizzying rate,” says David. “Must we harness and exploit the natural world and other cultures to survive, or can we live in harmony with the world and each other?” Captain Nemo doesn’t seem to think so.

Something not in the original novel was women. In casting Chicago actress Jenny Lamb as Professor Aronnax, the director has added a bold level of complexity and social commentary to Verne's tale. "Aronnax is a female scientist trying to enlighten society to the wonders of nature," David explains, "but in a scientific community dominated by men, she has to hide her gender to be taken seriously."

And then there's the 420 ton gorilla in the room...or onstage, to be more accurate. "The Nautilus?" Kersnar asks with a smile. "Everyone does want to know how we're going to have a submarine onstage!" The starting point was Chicago designer Todd Rosenthal's beautiful steam-punk style set, which has been brought to life by MPC Theatre Technical Director Doug Ridgeway, with the help of Technical Director Emeritus Dan Beck, and Master Carpenter Eric Maximoff.

It also involves some futuristic technology that Jules Verne would have loved. The front of our Nautilus is a giant Oculus window," David Kersnar explains. "An Oculus uses virtual reality projections that allow us to go places and see adventures that you can only imagine." Like a fight with a Giant Squid? "You'll just have to come see the show!" says the director with another smile.

20,000 Leagues Under the Seas is being produced in collaboration with The Lookingglass Theatre of Chicago. It premieres in Monterey on the Morgan Stock Stage of the MPC Theatre Company, then opens professionally in Chicago later next year at the Lookingglass Theatre.

About the Director

Director and co-playwright of this new adaptation, David Kersnar joined Monterey Peninsula College last year as interim chairman of the MPC Theatre Department. He directed **As You Like It** in November and **The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe** in April. David is a founding ensemble member of Lookingglass Theatre in Chicago. Kersnar has performed, designed and directed with the company since co-founding it in 1988. He served as the Lookingglass Artistic Director from 1988 to 1990 and from 1997 to 2000. With his diverse experiences as a teacher and professional artist, David has brought a new excitement and energy to the MPC Theatre Department. He has promoted student involvement in all aspects of the theatre's productions, giving students new opportunities to learn and develop their skill.

About the Design Team

The Design team includes **David Kersnar** (*Director*), **Doug Ridgeway** (*Technical Director*), Todd Rosenthal (*Set Design*) **Carey Crockett** (*Scenic Artist*), **Eric Maximoff** (*Master Carpenter*), **Gloria C. Mattos Hughes** (*Costume Design*), **David Rigmaiden** (*Audio Design*), **Rick Simms** (*Composer*), **Derek Duarte** (*light Design*) and Justin **Gordon** (*Fight Choreographer*).

About the MPC Theatre Charitable Trust

The Monterey Peninsula Community Theatre Company Charitable Trust is an independent 501(c)(3) that supports the MPC theatre program by funding costs not covered by the State educational budget.

Performance Dates & Times:

20,000 Leagues Under the Seas previews Thursday, July 20 at 7:30 PM and opens Friday, July 21 at 7:30 PM. Performances run for three weeks through Sunday, August 6. Show times are Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays at 7:30 PM and Sundays at 2:00 PM. The full performance schedule is:

Thursday	July 20	7:30 PM – Preview/Discount Thursday
Friday	July 21	7:30 PM – Opening night
Saturday	July 22	7:30 PM
Sunday	July 23	2:00 PM – Matinee
Thursday	July 27	7:30 PM – Discount Thursday
Friday	July 28	7:30 PM
Saturday	July 29	7:30 PM
Sunday	July 30	2:00 PM – Matinee
Thursday	August 3	7:30 PM – Discount Thursday
Friday	August 4	7:30 PM
Saturday	August 5	7:30 PM
Sunday	August 6	2:00 PM – Matinee & Final performance

Where:

The Morgan Stock Stage in the MPC Theatre Arts building on the Monterey Peninsula College Campus, located at 980 Fremont Street, Monterey California.

Ticket Prices:

Tickets are \$25 for Adults and \$22 for Seniors at the door, \$15 for Young Adults (16-21) and Military, and \$10 for Children 15 and under. Group discounts are also available for parties of 15 or more.

Adults & Seniors can also purchase tickets 24-hours in advance for \$20 each.

Tickets to Thursday performances are \$12.50 each and \$10 for children 15 and under.

20,000 Leagues Under the Seas is a live theatrical performance recommended for children 7 years old and above. Please note that infants, babes-in-arms, and children in strollers or carriers are not permitted.

Please Note: Campus Parking is required for Thursday evening performances and is \$2.00

Some kiosks take quarters and others take dollar bills.

Tickets are now available from the MPC Box Office on the Monterey Peninsula College Campus at 980 Fremont Street. The Box Office ([831-646-4213](tel:831-646-4213)) is open Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 3:00 – 7:00 PM, and two hours prior to performances. Tickets are also available online at www.mpctheatre.com

Press Photos to follow – Photos also available at: <http://www.mpctheatrec.com/Photos.htm>

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