



THE WHIPPING MAN



PRESS HIGHLIGHTS



REVIEWS

THEATER REVIEW

Raw nerve of South surrender exposed in 'Whipping Man'

By James Hebert

THEATER CRITIC

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Matthew Lopez's affecting, suspenseful and at times searing play strips the skin off such lofty ideas as freedom and honor to peer at the raw nerves underneath, and lay bare the cost paid for such lofty notions.

As directed with a spare intensity by Giovanna Sardelli for the Old Globe Theatre (in a West Coast premiere), the work's sense of the visceral sometimes gets close to literal. In the very first scene, a Confederate casualty has his festering leg amputated amid the ruins of a once-grand Virginia plantation.

When the soldier's former slave, now savior, puts down the saw to sop up the blood, the sound of a soaked rag wrung into a bucket is its own grisly hymn to misery and perseverance.

The soldier, Caleb (Mark J. Sullivan); the grandfatherly former slave, Simon (Charlie Robinson); and another, younger ex-slave, John (Avery Glymph), have made their way back to the mansion just after the Southern surrender at Appomattox has ended the Civil War.

The momentous consequences of that event become apparent right away, when Caleb, despite his injury, starts barking orders at Simon.

"All these things you're tellin' me to do, by rights you should be askin' me to do," Simon replies in his wise, measured way.

John, who treats Caleb with an unsettling blend of friendliness and contempt, is considerably more direct: "War is over," he sums up. "You lost. We won."

What still unites these three is their shared religion, and this is where Lopez has tapped into some

DETAILS

"The Whipping Man"

Old Globe Theatre

When: Tuesdays-Wednesdays, 7 p.m.; Thursdays-Fridays, 8 p.m.; Saturdays, 2 and 8 p.m.; Sundays, 2 and 7 p.m., through June 13.

Where: Old Globe's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, Balboa Park

Tickets: \$29-\$62

Phone: (619) 234-5623

Online: TheOldGlobe.org

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fascinating and deeply relevant history. Caleb's wealthy family is Jewish, and the slaves in the household followed the faith, too (a situation based on some Southern families' real lives).

It so happens that the South's surrender took place on the eve of Passover — the Jewish holiday period that commemorates the freeing of the Israelites from servitude. So when Simon conducts a makeshift Seder signifying Passover's beginning, his reciting of the traditional words about slavery and dreams of freedom hits home on several levels.

Although Lopez wrote "The Whipping Man" in 2006, the story's connection to our present moment — with a president who shares skin color with former slaves, and all the bliss and friction arising from that fact — is likewise never far from the surface.

Robinson, a veteran actor known mostly for his TV roles, is an ideal center of gravity (despite a few minor line bobbles) as the wise, stoical Simon. His deadpan gets some of the play's better laughs (and despite the tough subject matter, there is plenty of humor to the work), as when he responds to one of Caleb's pointed but clueless questions about the state of the plantation's amenities by noting gently: "There ain't been no chickens for a while."



As wounded Confederate soldier Caleb, whose leg is amputated in the first scene, Mark J. Sullivan performs much of his role lying prone in "The Whipping Man" at The Old Globe. *Craig Schwartz*

Glymph makes a glorious contrast as the jittery, razor-tongued John, badgering Caleb ("On your foot, soldier!" he cruelly taunts the former master after the amputation) and lending the show an edgy physicality, but also showing flashes of the character's fears and uncertainties.

It's clear there's a history between these two contemporaries, and it goes back to the ghoulish figure of the title — the man to whom Caleb's family sent the slaves (usually John) to be bullwhipped when they misbehaved.

John, who has a weakness for larceny and other vices, has not forgiven Caleb for what he endured in the De Leon household. Now that Caleb's father is gone (along with, according to John, Simon's wife and daughter), he's free to exact some payback on his childhood friend and nemesis.

Sullivan has what might be the most difficult role, because Caleb must lie prone for much of the play. But his dawning sense of a world turned upside down, and an incipient shame that seems to grow like an unchecked infection, are conveyed with quiet impact.

Robert Mark Morgan's war-blasted set, with its shattered windows suspended from the blackness above, provides a chilling sense of doom

and decay. Lap Chi Chu's lighting evokes a feel of nearly eternal twilight, and Jill BC Du Boff's sound design, with its insistently dripping rain and distant, artillery-like rumbles of thunder, becomes like a fourth character.

In the hands of Lopez and Sardelli, plot twists that could risk taking a turn into soap opera come off as genuine, and genuinely startling. And the periodic hints of Scripture are reminders of the ironies these characters suffer under.

At the start of Act 2, Caleb — on his feet now, reading a letter in flashback while still on the battlefield — utters the phrase, "Know me. Know me." The second time, it almost sounds like "No me" — as if Caleb fears he might disappear entirely into the mud and madness.

Through happenstance or not, those words also echo a passage from the Haggada, the text that guides the Passover Seder. It reads: "No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the Lord. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

But should God forget, these three might well still remember.

‘Whipping Man’ exposes raw nerve of surrender

By [James Hebert](#), UNION-TRIBUNE THEATER CRITIC

Saturday, May 15, 2010 at 12:04 a.m.



/ Craig Schwartz

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May 18, 2010

THEATER REVIEW

'Whipping Man' in grips of faith

DARYL H. MILLER
FROM SAN DIEGO

The story resembles something from the Old Testament or from the Tanakh. It involves a prophet of sorts and two young men who could greatly benefit from this wise elder's ideas about morality, compassion and mutual respect. In a momentous but unsettled time, these men — and untold others like them — will help to shape a nation's future.

Such is the essence of "The Whipping Man," a powerful play by Matthew Lopez, being given its West Coast premiere by the Old Globe.

The play springs from Lopez's observation that Passover in April 1865 began the day after Lee's surrender at Appomattox. On this, Lopez hinges a tale about a young Jewish Confederate soldier who returns, wounded, to his family home in Richmond, Va. He won't last the week unless he confronts a legacy of division and finds a new way forward. And beyond that, he won't fully understand his faith — or his nation — until he grasps the notions of freedom and equality that resonate at their core.

Guiding Caleb — tense and cautious yet maturing by the moment, as played by



CRAIG SCHWARTZ

STRUGGLE: A Confederate soldier (Mark J. Sullivan) and a former slave (Avery Glymph) lock heads.

Mark J. Sullivan — is one of the family's former slaves, Simon. With experience lining his face and age graying his beard, Charlie Robinson is every inch the Everyman prophet the story suggests.

War has rotted the once-grand home, symbolism that is viscerally evoked by Robert Mark Morgan's design for this in-the-round staging. Simon and Caleb are joined there by John, a former slave who is Caleb's age. Avery Glymph exudes the fierce intelligence of a young man who has always challenged the system and paid a horrific price for it (hence the play's rather gruesome title).

The play comes down to

three people talking, but director Giovanna Sardelli keeps the action so grounded in emotional truth that it never feels static. As events build toward the centerpiece — a Passover Seder — Lap Chi Chu's lighting brightens and turns honey-gold.

Some of the storytelling feels a bit rushed, but then Lopez has a lot to say in a short time. The 33-year-old playwright is not one you're likely to have encountered, but his work has been developed or produced by some of the nation's top regional companies, and he will spend two years in residence at the Old Globe.

One of his central conceits

'The Whipping Man'

Where: The Old Globe's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, Balboa Park, San Diego

When: 7 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 8 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays, 2 and 8 p.m. Saturdays, 2 and 7 p.m. Sundays. Ends June 13.

Price: \$29 to \$62

Contact: (619) 234-5623 or www.theoldglobe.org

Running time: 2 hours

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Words for all of us, in a still deeply divided nation, to live by.

daryl.miller@latimes.com

Los Angeles Times

Theater review: 'The Whipping Man' at the Old Globe

May 17, 2010 | 5:15 pm



SAN DIEGO -- The story resembles something from the Old Testament or from the Tanakh. It involves a prophet, of sorts, and two young men who could greatly benefit from this wise elder's ideas about morality, compassion and mutual respect. In a momentous but unsettled time, these men – and untold others like them – will help to shape a nation's future.

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Guiding young Caleb – tense and cautious, yet maturing by the moment, as played by Mark J. Sullivan – is one of the family's former slaves, Simon. With experience lining his face and age graying his beard, Charlie Robinson is every inch the Everyman prophet that the story suggests.

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Photo: Charlie Robinson, left, and Mark J. Sullivan in "The Whipping Man" at the Old Globe. Credit: Craig Schwartz.

THEATER REVIEWS

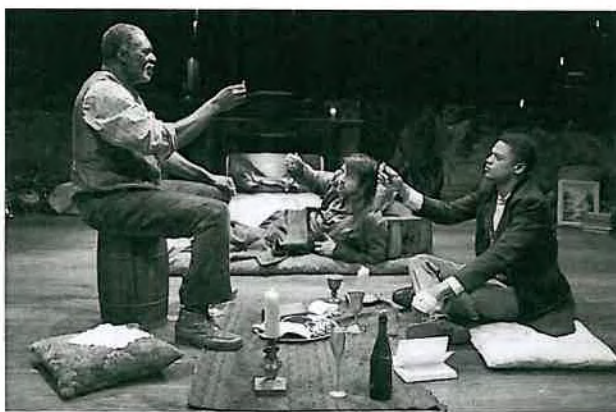
Globe's 'Whipping Man' interesting but flawed by cliches

BY ANNE MARIE WELSH
For the North County Times

Playwright Matthew Lopez shines a light on a couple of unexplored corners of Confederate-era life in "The Whipping Man," his interesting, if structurally skewed, tragicomedy now in a sturdy production at the Old Globe.

Imagine a recently freed slave conducting a Passover Seder, blessing hardtack instead of matzo and chanting Hebrew prayers — this, after amputating the leg of his Jewish master's son with the help of an emancipated house slave with big-city dreams. Such is Lopez's unusual angle of vision on themes of bondage, freedom, and the challenges facing the South after the Civil War.

But jostling with the originality in this three-character history play is a tendency toward the cozy cliches and reassuring comedy of a TV mini-series. At the Globe, a compelling performance by Avery Glymph as the wily,



Charlie Robinson, left, Mark J. Sullivan and Avery Glymph in "The Whipping Man." Craig Schwartz photo

troublemaking freedman John lends the production some of the edge the script lacks.

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The soldier is Capt. Caleb de Leon (Mark J. Sul-

livan), who claims to have dragged himself back there after the surrender at Appomattox. His leg wound is gangrenous, and so Simon, who handily had worked at a hospital during the war, serves as "surgeon" with the wisecracking black youth, John, assisting at the gruesome surgery. Stolen whiskey anesthetizes patient and helper, with what's left of it splashed on the wound as antiseptic.

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TICKETS \$29-\$62

INFO 619-234-5623
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Caleb and John grew up together in the house. Despite the difference in skin color, they were like "two peas in a pod," Simon contends, though, as John

acidly repeats, they were also, far more important, master and slave.

Some of the better theme-laden dialogue comes from loyal Simon, a spiritual seeker who quotes Leviticus and raises the question of whether the once-enslaved Jews should hold slaves.

As Simon, Robinson dropped many of his lines early on and stumbled through others, but ultimately he created an appealing, expansive character whose insight and wisdom provide the moral center and the fulcrum upon which the plot turns.

Sullivan gives a solid performance as Caleb, a sensitive young man, tormented by the war, yet naive and unaware of his own privilege. His steady Virginia accent and aura of sincerity were impressive, given some of the sentimental and improbably romantic writing for the character.

Much of the energy on hand, however, came from Glymph's John, a mysteri-

ous man on the run with no desire to look back. But toward the end, even John has to come to terms with the consequences of his actions, and Glymph creates layers of fear and confusion that enrich the character and make the play's final scene both surprising and compelling.

Director Giovanna Sardelli kept the pacing as brisk as the script allowed and varied the visuals at the in-the-round White Theatre, while Robert Morgan's set and Lap Chi Chu's lighting sustained the gloomy atmosphere.

Despite the brutality recounted and the blood onstage, "The Whipping Man" continues a series of mild, mainstream plays at the Globe, where nostalgia has for too long been the order of the day.

Lopez is the Balboa Park theater's new playwright-in-residence. He has an ear for dialogue, a range of interests, and a sly wit. He's also just 33, so we can hope for juicier results when his next work premieres there.

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THEATER REVIEW: 'Whipping Man' interesting but flawed by cliches

- Story
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By ANNE MARIE WELSH - For the North County Times | Posted: May 19, 2010 12:04 pm | No Comments Posted | Print

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[Buy this photo](#) Craig Schwartz Charlie Robinson as Simon, left, Mark J. Sullivan as Caleb and Avery Glymph as John in the West Coast Premiere of "The Whipping Man" at the Old Globe. Photo by Craig Schwartz.

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Posted: Thurs., May 20, 2010, 3:25pm PT

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Regional

(Old Globe, San Diego; 250 seats; \$62 top)

By BOB VERINI

An Old Globe presentation of a play in two acts by Matthew Lopez.
Directed by Giovanna Sardelli.

John - Avery Glymph
Simon - Charlie Robinson
Caleb - Mark J. Sullivan

In Matthew Lopez's "The Whipping Man," the Confederacy's surrender finds returning rebel soldier Caleb DeLeon (Mark J. Sullivan) once more shouting orders in the burnt-out Virginia family manse, but the antebellum tables have definitely turned, and the former slaves still on the premises have other ideas. Without fully encompassing the themes it raises, "The Whipping Man" powerfully explores emancipation's strains through impressive acting and stagecraft in the Old Globe's arena space.

The Whipping Man

Lopez's vision of Reconstruction is multilayered and credible. Though grizzled Simon (Charlie Robinson) and sardonic scrounger John (Avery Glymph) are understandably eager to test out their freedom wings, removed shackles have no effect on more indelible psychic bonds, not least of which is the Jewish faith the DeLeons passed on to their former property.

Yet self-interest rather than tribal loyalty persuades them to tend to Caleb's gangrenous leg (harrowingly staged by Giovanna Sardelli): Reward will be in the offing when, and if, old man DeLeon returns with Simon's wife and daughters in tow. For now, it's time for Passover's celebration of the chosen people's liberation -- on a night Abraham Lincoln will go to the theater, coincidentally enough.

Since "The Whipping Man" plays a mostly waiting game, some forward momentum is sacrificed as the men lie around spouting exposition and gradually revealing long-held secrets. Lopez oddly leaves open the intriguing questions of how the DeLeons' Judaism originally caught on in the slave quarters and why it retains its hold.

Equally puzzlingly, he never raises the paradox of Jews as slave owners, bargainers in flesh who condemned human bondage at every Sabbath meal. While Simon and John duet on "Go Down, Moses" as Caleb lies there a living representative of wicked Pharaoh, the family's hypocrisy and culpability are, no pun intended, passed over.

These missed opportunities take nothing away from the strength of what's there, as the characters' conflicts actually deepen over time.

Their makeshift seder is more moving than the average real-life Pesach feast, with Robinson exuding a Biblical patriarch's moral authority as he indicts the younger men's continued slavery: "Bein' free means more than just broken chains, you know that, right? It means anything that breaks your spirit or muddies your mind....How deeply those enslavements have scarred the world!"

Robinson's low-key authenticity is downright thrilling, as is Glymph's portrait of a hothead whose choices are limited by calculation and fear. Sullivan offers sturdy support in a less-showy role keeping him on his back throughout.

Sardelli's meticulous pacing is complemented by an impeccable physical production, Robert Mark Morgan evoking the Confederacy's shattered grandeur with only a few set pieces. Jill BC DuBoff's rain sounds serve as a constant reminder of gloom without, while Lap Chi Chu's lighting offers poetic commentary on the fires within.

Sets, Robert Mark Morgan; costumes, Denitsa D. Bliznakova; lighting, Lap Chi Chu; sound, Jill BC Du Boff; stage manager, Diana Moser. Opened May 13, 2010. Reviewed May 19. Runs through June 13. Running time: 2 HOURS

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'Whipping Man' a searing Civil War drama at Old Globe

Play receives first West Coast production

By [Pat Launer](#), [SDNN](#)

Wednesday, May 19, 2010

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Mark J. Sullivan as Caleb (left) and Avery Glymph as John in "The Whipping Man" at The Old Globe. (Photo by Craig Schwartz)

THE PLAY: "The Whipping Man"

Three men on a precipice. The world has changed, the life they've known is behind them, and their next step is momentous.

Yesterday, Simon and John were slaves. Now they're free men. And the battered, badly wounded soldier who just staggered into the manor house they're occupying was their master, his father the owner of the estate.

Caleb DeLeon was a captain in the Confederate Army. The War nearly killed him — in more ways than one. Now Simon, the older, more temperate ex-slave, determines that Caleb's gangrenous leg has to come off.

The gut-wrenching amputation that ensues in the West Coast premiere of Matthew Lopez's 2006 drama, "The Whipping Man," is both real and symbolic. Relationships and family ties have also been severed. Each of these hapless men has to make do without, has to go on in an irrevocably altered state.

Countless Civil War stories have been told. The fascinating framing device Lopez has chosen is making

Caleb's well-heeled Richmond family Jewish (there were 10,000 Jews in the Confederate army, and in the Southern big cities, 80% of Jewish families owned slaves). This family's slaves, like those brought up in Christian homes, have adopted the faith of their owners. And in April of 1865, Passover, a holiday all about the emergence from slavery to freedom, happens to have fallen just one day after Lee's surrender at Appomattox.

Although the DeLeon manor house has been ransacked and nearly demolished, Simon is determined to hold a Seder, to observe the holiday as he has nearly every year of his life. Both John and Caleb are reluctant. The war seems to have robbed the white man of his faith. John, whose literacy has allowed him to read the Torah and many other books, is a doubter and eternal questioner.



Pat Launer

And in the midst of all their adjustments, plans and confrontations, President Lincoln is assassinated, just five days after the end of the War. "Father Abraham, who set us free," Simon says, with tears in his eyes. "There's your Moses, John."

As Simon scrambles to accumulate the ceremonial needs of the Seder (John steals an egg; hard tack stands in for matzo), the solemnity of the "service" compels John and Caleb to come clean — to uncover the secrets they're harboring.

John recalls his many visits to The Whipping Man — the "outsourced" punisher of errant non-plantation slaves. He can't forget one particularly traumatic time, when Caleb, his peer and constant companion, accompanied him. John forces Caleb to confront his own painful past. Only Simon, we come to see, has a genuine sense of morality; the other two are desiccated men. But none of them will be able to put his life back together.



Lopez has created a harrowing, moving, personal story of the toll of war, and how the residue of slavery, as we see so clearly today, even (or perhaps especially) in the era of an African American President, cannot be easily wiped away.

Although the play has been produced in New Jersey, Florida and Minnesota, the young playwright tweaked and revised it for this production. Lopez so impressed his hosts that he's just been named Playwright-in-Residence at the Old Globe.

The issues his drama raises are searing, painful and disarmingly relevant. The performances are uniformly potent and convincing.

Charlie Robinson, who has the calm, centered focus and demeanor of Morgan Freeman, makes Simon wise and compassionate, by far the most sympathetic of the three. His moving presentation of the seder includes the Four Questions (variations on "Why is this night different from all other nights?") and the heartfelt singing of "Let My People Go." He also gets to show a flash of anger and resentment at the end. His is the most affecting dramatic arc. Avery Glymph's John is restless, reckless and tormented.

But it's Mark Sullivan who faces the most daunting challenge. Despite rewrites, and the addition of a flashback, Caleb remains the least deep and defined. Sullivan is solid and believable, but we crave further insight into the character and how he's changed by the night's revelations.

Director Giovanna Sardelli (who directed "Taking Flight" at the San Diego Repertory Theatre in 2007) keeps the action intense and intimate, making excellent use of the White Theatre's arena stage. Designer Robert Mark Morgan (an SDSU MFA alumnus who won a Patté Award for his stunning design of "The Kentucky Cycle" at the college in 1998) has created the evocative remains of a manor house, with cracked, dingy, rain-soaked windows suspended from above. The lighting (Lap Chi Chu) is aptly dim, with candles and lanterns serving to keep the action in eerie shadow. The sound (Jill BC Du Boff) is underscored with the endless drip of April rain and the periodic crack of thunder that sounds disturbingly like gunfire. The costumes (Denitsa D. Bliznakova) are suitably ragged. From a design and direction standpoint, both the amputation and the stump are excellently, realistically conveyed.

This is a single story ripped from our collective past, inventively linking the slavery of blacks and Jews, and taking wonderful advantage of the coincidences of timing (Appomattox, Passover and Lincoln's death) to give us a peek into one home on the days following a cataclysmic historical event. Lopez poses the question that forms in every mind after a major upheaval: How exactly do we pick up the pieces and go on?

THE LOCATION: the Old Globe's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, Balboa Park. (619) 23-GLOBE; www.theoldglobe.org

THE DETAILS: Tickets: \$29-\$62. Tuesday-Wednesday at 7 p.m., Thursday-Saturday at 8 p.m., Sunday at 7 p.m., Saturday and Sunday at 2 p.m., through June 13

Bottom Line: BEST BET

NEWS AND VIEWS:

... **GLEEful:** If you're a fan of the **Fox TV** show, "**Glee**" (and who isn't? – Gleeks unite!), you can catch the cast in the concert tour at the Gibson Amphitheatre in L.A. this week: May 20-21 at 8 p.m. Most of the cast members will appear, including Broadway star Lea Michele, who plays overzealous student performer Rachel Berry. But everyone's favorite teachers – niceguy Will Schuester (Mathew Morrison) and meanie Sue Sylvester (Jane Lynch) are not scheduled to be in attendance. Tickets range from \$35 to a whopping \$390 for a VIP package that includes a pre-show party. Go for it! (866) 321-8499; www.gibsonamphitheatreticket.com

... **Yes, he Cannes:** Tijuana actor/film director **Giancarlo Ruiz** won a Patté Award for his stellar performance in "Kiss of the Spider Woman" in 2004, and was the riveting center of The Theatre Inc.'s production of "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" in 2008. Now he's indulging his filmmaking skills, with a 17-minute short, "**St. Jacques**," which is being shown at the Cannes Film Festival's Short Film Corner this month. Ruiz's 15th short film, in Spanish with English subtitles, is a love story on the theme of death. It's a coup, of course, to be accepted at Cannes; and even more triumphant since the film's total production budget was \$650.

PAT'S PICKS: BEST BETS FOR THE WEEK

- "**The Whipping Man**" – searing Civil War drama, excellently performed

The Old Globe, through 6/13

- "**Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune**" – poignant, funny and wonderfully acted

ion theatre, through 6/1

THE WHIPPING MAN at the Old Globe Theatre

By Welton Jones

Posted on Sat, May 15th, 2010

Last updated Sat, May 15th, 2010

The more that slavery retreats into the American past, the more incomprehensible it seems. As in: “How COULD we?”

We did, though. It’s plainly recorded fact. ALL of us in most states were apt to own slaves. Even the freed blacks did, in greater quantity, apparently, than Jewish Southerners.

It’s these rare Virginia Jews that have caught the attention of Matthew Lopez, whose play on the subject, *The Whipping Man*, is now on view at the Old Globe’s White Theatre.

In Richmond, Virginia, a few days after General Lee surrendered at Appomattox, things are in a real mess. At the DeLeon mansion, there are empty larders, looted rooms and holes in the roof from exploding munitions. Everybody has fled except for old Simon, the longtime backbone of the household left as caretaker.

He’s there when Caleb, the former “young master,” staggers home with gangrene eating at his wounded leg. So is John, another house slave about Caleb’s age, whose stubborn nonconformity has turned him into a surly scavenger. Both newly freed men anxiously await the return of Old Man DeLeon, convinced he will be giving them money toward their new lives.

Simon first amputates Caleb’s leg, with John’s reluctant help, to save his life then, presumably using the same tools, he butchers the dead horse who has carried Caleb home.

“Horse ain’t kosher,” observes John. “Stealing ain’t neither,” retorts Simon, and that’s how we begin to realize they all consider themselves Jewish. And, it being Passover, plans soon are afoot for a very makeshift seder.

It’s a moment in time – the day Lincoln was assassinated –from a period of slippery history: Post-Civil War Reconstruction. The accepted narratives from those days remain contradictory and subject to emotional interpretation.

Lopez is certainly on to something, though. For two thousand years, the traditional seder has celebrated the freeing of the Jews from slavery in Egypt. The parallels in 1865 must have been overwhelmingly poignant to Southern Jews both black and white.

But the play is better at finding and presenting the situation than it is at extracting meaning from it. The three men are locked in interdependence, like “Waiting For Daddy,” until their

burdensome secrets begin to seep out. Then there's a lick of melodrama and a final fade-out with no better immediate solution than a whiskey bottle.

Giovanna Sardelli has directed with an error-prone hand on the detailing lever and an ear to tinny for truly meaningful character nuance. Lopez' hasn't helped her with his schizoid stylistic veerings between breezy blitheness and dark menace.

Charlie Robinson blends natural dignity with bucolic innocence and calm maturity as Simon. Avery Glymph makes what he can of John's restless contradictions. But Mark J. Sullivan as Caleb resorts so much to rant and pout that there's little room for illumination.

The Robert Mark Morgan set is worn, wrecked and fussy in details hard to make out in the murky lighting of Lap Chi Chu. Denitsa D. Bliznakova has provided tired period tatters and Jill BC Du Boff (great name for a sound designer!) supplies convincing battle racket.

The Whipping Man asks good questions but isn't in the business of delivering answers.

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Dates	7 p.m. Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays; 8 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays; 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays through June 13, 2010.
Keywords	<u>San Diego</u> <u>The Whipping Man</u> <u>Arts</u>
Organization	The Old Globe Theatre
Phone	619 234-5623
Production Type	<u>Play</u>
Region	<u>Balboa Park</u>
Ticket Prices	\$ 29-\$62
URL	www.theoldglobe.org
Venue	The White Theatre, Old Globe, Balboa Park

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SAN DIEGO

Regional Reviews by Bill Eadie

The Whipping Man The Old Globe

Also see Bill's review of [Footloose](#)

In Matthew Lopez's *The Whipping Man*, playing through June 13 at the Old Globe's White Stage, a Jewish Confederate soldier comes home from the war to find the family home in ruins but occupied by two of the family's former slaves. The soldier's arrival sets off an intense, multi-layered and well-performed drama about what it means to be a Jew and what it means to be a slave.

To tell much of the story would provide too many opportunities to spoil it, but some context (not provided by Mr. Lopez, which is a problem) helps to understand the plot's twists and turns. At the end of the Civil War, General Ulysses S. Grant laid siege to General Robert E. Lee's army in Petersburg, a city strategically located south and east of Richmond, the capitol of the Confederacy. The siege lasted nine and a half months and created horrific living conditions for the Confederate troops. Lee finally abandoned Petersburg on April 2, 1865, and one week later, he surrendered to Grant at Appomattox, a small town west of Richmond. Five days after that, on April 14, 1865, John Wilkes Booth assassinated President Abraham Lincoln at Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C.



Charlie Robinson, Avery Glymph and Mark J. Sullivan

The Whipping Man takes place in the few days between the surrender and the aftermath of the assassination. Caleb (Mark J. Sullivan) has served as a captain in the Confederate Army for the duration of the war, and he was at Petersburg during the siege. He arrives at the family home in Richmond wounded and on a horse that is nearly dead. He finds the home to be in tatters, made so by Southerners who wanted to pre-empt looting by Grant's forces. Caleb finds Simon (Charlie Robinson) still living at the house. While Simon was freed by the Emancipation Proclamation issued by Lincoln in 1863, he and other slaves had remained on the property with the promise that he would eventually be compensated for his continuing services. One of those other slaves is John (Avery Glymph), a young man who has been living by his wits and who also makes his way back to the family's estate following the surrender.

Caleb's father had taught his slaves to practice Judaism, and Simon in particular has become quite devout. He stages a Passover Seder for the three that becomes revelatory, both in terms of the parallels between the emancipation of the Jews from slavery in Egypt with the current situation, and in terms of the emancipation of these particular former household slaves.

Mr. Lopez has produced an intimate spectacle where the action is mostly described rather than shown. There are a number of characters who are named and discussed but who never appear (including the title character), and keeping the relationships straight can lead to confusion. And, Mr. Lopez's surprises (of which there are many) make sense in the end but can be jarring as they are introduced. The writing is gritty, and the squeamish may find

some of the language and the action to be hard to take.

The Old Globe has given its new playwright-in-residence a top-notch production of his work. There is fine work all around by the designers, and director Giovanna Sardelli uses the White Theatre's arena configuration to fine advantage. The performers, each of whom gets to shine as the story progresses, are uniformly excellent.

While Mr. Lopez still has some developing to do as a playwright, audiences for *The Whipping Man* should be glad to have experienced the early work of someone so promising.

The Old Globe presents *The Whipping Man* through June 13 at the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre. Tickets (\$29 - \$62) may be purchased at the box office, by phoning (619) 23-GLOBE, or online at [The Old Globe's website](#).

The Whipping Man, by Matthew Lopez. Directed by Giovanna Sardelli, with scenic design by Robert Mark Morgan, costume design by Denitsa D. Bliznakova, lighting design by Lap Chi Chu, and sound design by Jill BC Du Boff. Diana Moser was the stage manager, Claudia Hill-Sparks was the voice and dialect coach, Samantha Barrie, CSA, did the casting, and George Yé was the fight choreographer.

Cast: Mark J. Sullivan, Charlie Robinson, and Avery Glymph.

Photo: courtesy of The Old Globe

See the [current season schedule for the San Diego area](#).

- [Bill Eadie](#)

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[The Whipping Man, San Diego \(/index.php?view=article&catid=7%3Atheater&id=264%3Athe-whipping-man-san-diego&tmpl=component&link=aHR0cDovL3d3dy5jdWx0dXJldnVsdHVyZS5uZXQvaW5kZXgucGhwP29wdGlvb1j1b211format=pdf&print=1&layout=default&option=com_content&page=&Itemid=10\)](/index.php?view=article&catid=7%3Atheater&id=264%3Athe-whipping-man-san-diego&tmpl=component&link=aHR0cDovL3d3dy5jdWx0dXJldnVsdHVyZS5uZXQvaW5kZXgucGhwP29wdGlvb1j1b211format=pdf&print=1&layout=default&option=com_content&page=&Itemid=10)

The Whipping Man

By Matthew Lopez

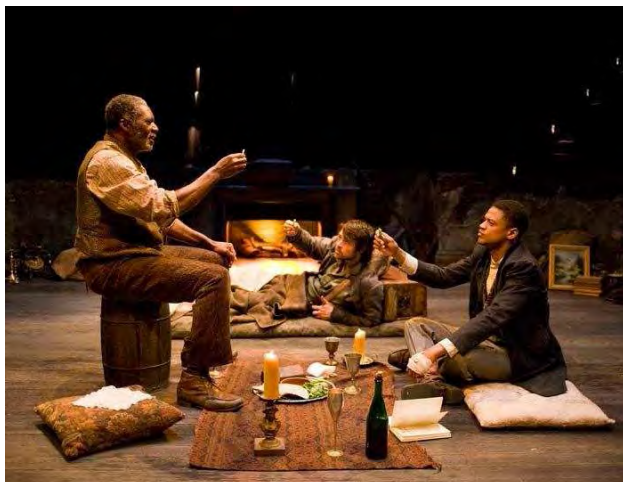
Directed by Giovanna Sardelli

With Mark J. Sullivan, Charlie Robinson, and Avery Glymph

Old Globe Theater, San Diego

May 8 – June 13

www.theoldglobe.org/tickets/production.aspx?PID=7522 (<http://www.theoldglobe.org/tickets/production.aspx?PID=7522>)



Simon (Charlie Robinson), Caleb (Mark J. Sullivan), and John (Avery Glymph) hold an improvised Seder in "The Whipping Man" at the Old Globe. *Photo by Craig Schwartz*

Matthew Lopez's "The Whipping Man" is a Civil War story set in Richmond a few days after Lee's surrender. Caleb DeLeon, a wounded Confederate officer played by Mark J. Sullivan, arrives mysteriously at his ancestral home, where he only finds ruins and two of his family's former house slaves—Simon and John. He is greeted by Simon, who has been with the family since Caleb's grandfather's time. Caleb's father and Simon's wife and daughter are ominously missing.

Played by Charlie Robinson, Simon is proud but deferential by habit. He quickly tends to Caleb's week-old leg wound and soon discovers the leg is gangrenous and must be amputated. After some argument, Simon performs the operation on the ruined mansion's floor, with help from John and a bottle of whiskey. The scene is powerful and squirm-inducing and perhaps the dramatic highlight of the

play.

Simon is both compliant and fully aware that he need no longer be compliant. Unsure of what any of this means, he is hedging his bets in hopes of future security. John, played by Avery Glymph, is the young angry one, subsisting on the whiskey, books and food scraps he steals from deserted mansions. As might be expected, the distinction between former and current slave is somewhat lost on Caleb.

The confused former slave-holder, the respectful, older former slave, the angry, younger former slave, the differing points of views held by slaves and slave holder—this is all well-worn ground. The uniqueness stems from the DeLeon family's Jewish faith, which the former slaves adopted years before. While Caleb recuperates, Simon and John prepare a makeshift Passover Seder.

The overlapping ironies of Jews (whose identity is tightly meshed with their own slave heritage) holding slaves, and black former slaves celebrating Passover within days of their emancipation provide the basic structure while these three try to figure out what happens next. John stalks the room. Simon tends to things. Caleb props himself up on an elbow.

As the play continues Caleb, who is now dependent on his former property, must endure uncomfortable revelations as both John and Simon seek to impress upon him that slaves—even relatively well-treated slaves—are still slaves.

Robinson and Glymph do a nice job, though the former trips over a few more lines than you would like. Sullivan seems quite capable, but is limited by his character's inability to walk. Giovanna Sardelli's direction is competent, if uninspired. The set (by Robert Morgan) is minimal and nicely done and the Old Globe's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre is a gem. The Globe production is the play's West Coast premiere.

Joshua Baxt

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DEL MAR TIMES

Suspense drives drama in 'The Whipping Man'
By Diana Saenger

The dark, somber and desolate stage of the Globe's West Coast Premiere of "The Whipping Man" is immediately brought to life when Caleb (Mark J. Sullivan) enters the shattered door of his family's now destroyed Southern plantation home. It's just another blow that Caleb faces as he struggles to get down the stairs on one leg; his other was severely damaged in a Civil War battle.

Instantly staring down the nose of a rifle, once again Caleb fears for his life. He and his assailant enter into a shouting match until Caleb recognizes the voice of Simon (Charlie Robinson), his family's former slave - now a free man.



Simon (Charlie Robinson), John (Avery Glymph) and Caleb (Mark J. Sullivan) face a difficult reunion after the Civil War.
Photo: Craig Schwartz

This fact doesn't register with Caleb at first as he orders Simon to bring him some water. There's hesitancy in Simon's demeanor as the impact of the demand settles in, yet gives way to the fact he's known this boy since he was a young lad. Simon tells him things are different now, but dutifully brings Caleb the water.

Playwright Matthew Lopez's captivating story reveals how three men - lifelong inhabitants of the same house - find themselves on new ground just days after the Civil War ends. Caleb faces losing his leg, but he's unsure of where his family is and can't bear that his home is ravaged and empty. Simon is excited by his Lincoln-given freedom and waiting for the right time to head North.

Then John (Avery Glymph), another of the house servants, comes in, running from someone who's chasing him because he stole something. The three men, all with different outlooks on their situations, spend each moment in a poker-hand face-off. Should they help one another? Or look out for themselves? Caleb is in no condition to do that, but his cantankerous attitude does

not lend itself to others wanting to stick around.

But there's one thing that brings these men together, even if only for a momentary connection: They are all Jewish.

Caleb's family taught its slaves the Jewish faith, and now it's time for Seder, the first night of Passover. Gathering whatever they can to resemble the traditional elements of the dinner, the three men make peace for a short while. Soon the dark clouds of uncertainty return, and each man in this empty house must find his own way to refill his now vacant life.

All three actors provide wonderful performances. Sullivan ("To Be or Not to Be," "The Dining Room") probably has the hardest task staying on a blanket on the barren floor throughout the play. Yet as Caleb, he manages to offer a glimpse of his former life.

Glymph ("The Tempest," "Fences") is the ticking clock in this drama. His John has an agenda, but because he can't see outside his own plan, he's unable to forge a steady path toward it. Instead, he's full of anger, disillusionment, and one setback after another. His unwillingness to forgive and forget is at times frightening and keeps the audience in constant suspense.

Robinson ("The Piano Lesson," "Night Court," "Antwone Fisher") instills in Simon an awareness of what is really happening.

He tries to make Caleb and John understand that not all is lost. Yet deep emotional and psychological scars will have to be healed before that happens, and just when Simon thinks he's ready to move on, more deep secrets and scars surface for this trio.

'The Whipping Man'

- Where: The Globe's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park
- When: 7 p.m. Tuesdays-Wednesdays; 8 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays; 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays; 7 p.m. Sundays, through June 13
- Tickets: \$29-\$62; (619) 23-GLOBE, TheOldGlobe.org



Curtain call

The Old Globe's *The Whipping Man* begins our listing of plays in local production

By [Martin Jones Westlin](#)

Check this out

Lashing out: Will somebody please step up and tell me what *The Whipping Man*, a current Old Globe Theatre entry, is supposed to be about? I know what the press release says—that Caleb (Mark J. Sullivan) returns to his Virginia home following the Civil War's final days, only to find his former slaves preparing for a Passover Seder. 'Scuse me, but I just can't get my arms around a show that singles out post-Civil War Jewry for no apparent reason, especially when the Jews are black and straight out of the Bible Belt—and neither can playwright Matthew Lopez. His characters develop way, way too late, and his references to Jewish tradition are as isolated as they are scant. Giovanna Sardelli's direction is as tentative as the rest of the show, which makes it the production's only consistent element. The actors give it their best shot; the problem is, there's nothing here to shoot. The show, such as it is, runs through June 13 at The Globe's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park. \$29-\$62. oldglobe.org

Doctor in the House?

So, Simon asks, “Were we Jews, or were we slaves?”

Playwright Matthew Lopez discovered a surprising parallel in U.S. history. On April 9, 1865, General Robert E. Lee signed the documents of surrender at the Appomattox Court House; on the 12th, the Army of Northern Virginia disbanded. Though fighting continued in some areas, this breakup officially ended the Civil War. On Good Friday, April 14, John Wilkes Booth assassinated Abraham Lincoln, who died the next day. Lopez discovered that the Jewish Passover took place the same week that the Civil War ended.

Like the Jews leaving Egypt thousands of years earlier, African-American slaves were set free. And in both instances, liberation didn’t happen overnight. Lopez concentrates on a period of transition that continues to this day.

Caleb De Leon, a Southern Jew who fought for the Confederacy, comes home to a plantation in ruins. Hobbled by a week-old wound, he can find few traces of his past, save for old Simon. The former slave remains faithful to the family and guards the charred mansion against intruders.

Young John, a black man the same age as Caleb, is torn between heading north or staying behind until the De Leon patriarch gives his former slaves promised money. In the

meantime, John pilfers abandoned houses. Part of his freedom, he’s convinced, means changing the usage of words: what used to be “stealing,” he says, is now “discovering” (as the play proceeds, Old Globe costume designer Denitsa D. Bliznakova adds a witty touch: John’s “discovered” duds escalate from Tobacco Road grit to haute Antebellum couture).

Simon and John adopted their owner’s faith. They are Jews who, in effect, have been set free twice: with Moses and then again with Lincoln. The gap between the two puzzles them. “The Bible says that Jews cannot enslave Jews,” says Simon, who wants to celebrate Seder — the ritual meal commemorating the Exodus — on the Sabbath. According to Leviticus, a Hebrew “servant” can only serve six years and leave “for nothing” on the seventh. So, Simon asks, “Were we Jews, or were we slaves?”

The latter and, as the title suggests, brutalized ones at that. If the black Jews didn’t do as they were told, they went straight to “the whipping man.” Simon and John have the scars to prove that, in the De Leon family, racism trumped religion.

The Whipping Man has an insight into history and all the makings for riveting theater. But it is not a well-crafted play. It begins with a

wreck; *Alive and Well*, also about the Civil War, was only half a play that dwindled into set-piece speeches and a comfy resolution. And now the relatively new *Whipping Man* (performed elsewhere but “revised” for this production) is, like the others, a fairly interesting concept but far from fully realized.

A few years back, the Globe had one of America’s finest play doctors. Jerry Patch had nurtured 100 world premieres (most at the South Coast Rep), including two Pulitzer prize winners: Margaret Edson’s *Wit* and Donald Marglies’s *Dinner with Friends*. Patch was so talented he could handle the toughest job of all: turn a flimsy or mediocre script into something at least passable. Patch went to the Manhattan Theatre Club — and took his stable of top American playwrights with him. Patch’s absence raises the question: at the Old Globe, who’s minding the text?



The Whipping Man: The former slave remains loyal to the family.

The Whipping Man by Matthew Lopez

Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park

Directed by Giovanna Sardelli; cast: Avery Glymph, Charlie Robinson, Mark J. Sullivan; scenic design, Robert Mark Morgan; costumes, Denitsa D. Bliznakova; lighting, Lap Chi Chu; sound, Jill B.C. Du Boff
Playing through June 13; Sunday, Tuesday and Wednesday at 7:00p.m. Thursday through Saturday at 8:00p.m. Matinee Saturday and Sunday at 2:00p.m. 619-234-5623.

boffo effect: gangrene is eating Caleb’s leg; Simon must amputate it with found implements and whiskey for anesthetic. High drama: after which the script devolves into exposition and lengthy discussions (the lighting, approximating candles, darkens the stage for long periods and contributes to the sense of immobility).

Revelations brew beneath the surface but arrive late in a hasty, almost afterthought-like conclusion.

There’s a pattern here. Each new work at the Globe this year has had a weak script: the libretto for *The Whisper House*, hailed by its creators as “the musical of the future,” was a train,

The play requires rain and cannon-like thunder. Sound designer Jill B.C. Du Boff (the name a soundscape in itself)

struts the new White Theatre’s ear-thumping capabilities. Director Giovanna Sardelli’s staging, however, favors the north wall of the in-the-round theater. And though she stresses physical movement, having Caleb stuck in one spot for most of two acts doesn’t help her efforts.

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Doctor in the House?

By [Jeff Smith](#) | Published Wednesday, May 26, 2010



Playwright Matthew Lopez discovered a surprising parallel in U.S. history. On April 9, 1865, General Robert E. Lee signed the documents of surrender at the Appomattox Court House; on the 12th, the Army of Northern Virginia disbanded. Though fighting continued in some areas, this breakup officially ended the Civil War. On Good Friday, April 14, John Wilkes Booth assassinated Abraham Lincoln, who died the next day. Lopez discovered that the Jewish Passover took place the same week that the Civil War ended.

Like the Jews leaving Egypt thousands of years earlier, African-American slaves were set free. And in both instances, liberation didn't happen overnight. Lopez concentrates on a period of transition that continues to this day.

Caleb De Leon, a Southern Jew who fought for the Confederacy, comes home to a plantation in ruins. Hobbled by a week-old wound, he can find few traces of his past, save for old Simon. The former slave remains faithful to the family and guards the charred mansion against intruders.

Young John, a black man the same age as Caleb, is torn between heading north or staying behind until the De Leon patriarch gives his former slaves promised money. In the meantime, John pilfers abandoned houses. Part of his freedom, he's convinced, means changing the usage of words: what used to be "stealing," he says, is now "discovering" (as the play proceeds, Old Globe costume designer Denitsa D. Bliznakova adds a witty touch: John's "discovered" duds escalate from Tobacco Road grit to haute Antebellum couture).

Simon and John adopted their owner's faith. They are Jews who, in effect, have been set free twice: with Moses and then again with Lincoln. The gap between the two puzzles them. "The Bible says that Jews cannot enslave Jews," says Simon, who wants to celebrate Seder — the ritual meal commemorating the Exodus — on the Sabbath. According to Leviticus, a Hebrew "servant" can only serve six years and leave "for nothing" on the seventh. So, Simon asks, "Were we Jews, or were we - slaves?"

The latter and, as the title suggests, brutalized ones at that. If the black Jews didn't do as they were told, they went straight to "the whipping man." Simon and John have the scars to prove that, in the De Leon family, racism trumped religion.

The Whipping Man has an insight into history and all the makings for riveting theater. But it is not a well-crafted play. It begins with a boffo effect: gangrene is eating Caleb's leg; Simon must amputate it with found implements and whiskey for anesthetic. High drama: after which the script devolves into exposition and lengthy discussions (the lighting, approximating candles, darkens the stage for long periods and contributes to the sense of immobility). Revelations brew beneath the surface but arrive late in a hasty, almost afterthought-like conclusion.

There's a pattern here. Each new work at the Globe this year has had a weak script: the libretto for *The Whisper House*, hailed by its creators as "the musical of the future," was a train wreck; *Alive and Well*, also about the Civil War, was only half a play that dwindled into set-piece speeches and a comfy resolution. And now the relatively new *Whipping Man* (performed elsewhere but "revised" for this production) is, like the others, a fairly interesting concept but far from fully realized.

A few years back, the Globe had one of America's finest play doctors. Jerry Patch had nurtured 100 world premieres (most at the South Coast Rep), including two Pulitzer prize winners: Margaret Edson's *Wit* and Donald Marglies's *Dinner with Friends*. Patch was so talented he could handle the toughest job of all: turn a flimsy or mediocre script into something at least passable. Patch went to the Manhattan Theatre Club — and took his stable of top American playwrights with him. Patch's absence raises the question: at the Old Globe, who's minding the text?

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The Whipping Man by Matthew Lopez

Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park

Directed by Giovanna Sardelli; cast: Avery Glymph, Charlie Robinson, Mark J. Sullivan; scenic design, Robert Mark Morgan; costumes, Denitsa D. Bliznakova; lighting, Lap Chi Chu; sound, Jill B.C. Du Boff

Playing through June 13; Sunday, Tuesday and Wednesday at 7:00p.m. Thursday through Saturday at 8:00p.m. Matinee Saturday and Sunday at 2:00p.m. 619-234-5623.

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There is a Jewish story everywhere

Old Globe's 'The Whipping Man' grips and troubles

Posted on May 19, 2010 by [dhharrison](#)

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Charlie Robinson as Simon, Mark J. Sullivan as Caleb and Avery Glymph as John in the West Coast Premiere of *The Whipping Man* by Matthew Lopez, at The Old Globe May 8 - June 13, 2010. Photo by Craig Schwartz.

By Carol Davis



Carol Davis

SAN DIEGO—That May is Jewish Heritage Month is evidenced by the two plays, both bearing Jewish content, now running in repertory at the Old Globe Theatre in Balboa Park: William Gibson's *Golda's Balcony* is on the main stage and Matthew Lopez's *Whipping Man* is in the theatre in the round or the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre next door.

Golda's Balcony ([reviewed earlier](#)), opened at the Helen Hays Theatre on Broadway in 2003. Before that, his *Golda* was produced in 1977 without the fanfare of the 2003 version. Now it is the hit it should be.

The two plays are connected by history or if you prefer, by historical events. Meir was the fourth Prime Minister of Israel at a

time that Israel was in a survival mode of pushing back an enemy that was hell bent on obliterating her and running her people into the sea. It's a pretty well known and documented historical chapter in the scheme of things.

Lopez's themes revolve around the Civil War, slavery, Reconstruction and a Jewish legacy some might not be too proud of. It might very well have been a non-issue to many before seeing this play since the topic of slavery comes up for most Jews but once a year at Passover. And as for owning slaves? Biblical history testifies Jews were the ones owned not owners, right? Yes and no answers Lopez in his eye opening new play *The Whipping Man*.

Caleb DeLeon (Mark J. Sullivan) grew up in Richmond, Virginia. His southern Jewish family was privileged, proud and wealthy. They also owned household slaves. Southern Jews who were merchants as many were, not only owned slaves they were also active in the slave trade.

When DeLeon left his home in Richmond, Virginia, to join up with the Confederate Army, he left behind his parents and his slaves. When he limps back to his barely recognizable house after leaving the battlefield of Vicksburg, he finds his old slave Simon (Charlie Robinson) living among the ruins of his once proud Richmond mansion. Hiding out in the shadows is the much younger John, John (Avery Glymph), another of the DeLeon slaves.

Caleb is wounded and confused and without thinking of what he was fighting for and that his side lost, begins barking orders at Simon to get him this and get him that. With reluctance and reminding him that is no longer in servitude, the grandfatherly Simon complies.

But when Simon sees Caleb's infected leg, it is he who takes charge and insists Caleb either go to the Army hospital to have the leg amputated, or he, Simon, will do it at the house, and immediately! What follows is pretty gruesome and horrific.

John, on the other hand is belligerent and angry. He still remembers being taken to the Whipping Man (rather than the slave owner) for punishment when he disobeyed (he was only 6) and Caleb, watching, wanting a shot at it. He is about Caleb's age and one rebel to be reckoned with. Even so he reluctantly helps Simon remove Caleb's leg, but he continues his ranting sarcasm not sympathy towards Caleb.

We see him sneaking in and out carrying a burlap sack over his shoulder filled with pilfered items from vacant homes in the neighborhood. Sometimes he finds food that is very scarce these days, other times objects he will sell when he leaves, he declares.

Both men are waiting for the return of the DeLeon family who fled taking Simon's daughter and wife with them. They reassure Caleb that his mother and father were fine when they left and when they get back, the former slaves were hopeful that his father would give them money to begin their lives as freed slaves. The war is over. Lee surrendered at Appomattox and now hopefully, the business of Reconstruction will begin.

There is business to tend to at home, though. The holiday of Passover is about to commence and the ritual of Passover, minus a few necessities will go on as usual. Based on some research the young playwright landed upon, that of the sometimes practice of slaves adopting their master's religion, we learn John and Simon have been celebrating Passover over the years. So they all read from the Haggadah with Caleb, the youngest, asking the Four Questions.

It seems Grandfather DeLeon schooled both Simon and John in the practices of Judaism. John still kisses the mezuzah when he enters the household. Coincidentally, the surrender of Appomattox took place around the time of the first night of Passover 1865. It lasts seven days and the first night or first Seder is celebrated on the eve of the beginning of the holiday.

Simon and John recognize the significance and the irony of this year's celebration particularly since they are now free men as were the Jews in Egypt after Moses led them out of Egypt, out of bondage and into freedom. The comparisons to Moses and Lincoln, The Great Emancipator doesn't go unnoticed by Simon. The contrasts in the way the three men see the comparisons play an important role in the judgments, revelations, attitudes and actions as the play itself moves forward.

John questions the sincerity of their ever being accepted into the Jewish faith or of truly being free. He has read Leviticus and quotes it back verbatim to Simon and Caleb: "if thou buy a Hebrew servant, six years shall he serve. And in the seventh shall go for nothing." Nonetheless, the ritual Passover Seder takes place amid the ruins of the DeLeon house with each man's thoughts veering off into different directions.

As for Caleb, who seems to have lost his religious beliefs during his time in the army, the question begs as to whether or not he has fully accepted the surrender and its ramifications. Simon, the most liberated and aware of the significance, will have his own demons to deal with especially the fate of his daughter, who is still with the DeLeon's for one, and his own coming to grips with the hypocrisy of Jews owning slaves and of his being a Jew himself for another.

Lopez has surely done his homework in showing a slice of life seldom spoken of or seen and the Globe's production shows that,

even though more questions are raised than answered. Under the careful direction of Giovanna Sardelli the actors hit all the right highs and lows of the Lopez script. Set in the ruins of the war (Robert Mark Morgan), with the only lights cast in the partially destroyed DeLeon house (Lap Chi Chu) are a few lightning bursts coming from a storm (Jill BC Du Boff) heard outside, candles from the Passover table and lanterns held to light the way.

The outstanding three-member cast has its ups and down but mostly ups. On opening night Robinson had a few memory lapses but picked up steam, as he got more involved. His performance is stellar going from jubilation to utter despair when he learns that Lincoln was assassinated. From amputating Caleb's leg to slopping up the blood soaked floor to singing "Let My People Go" to the painful stance he took about the punishment he received as a slave, there was no mistaking that he was able to maintain his dignity, courage and quiet strength throughout.

Avery Glymph held his own as the rebel surely with cause. Being a free man has given him options he probably never thought of before. Young and agile, his role is a bit more difficult to figure out in this particular context until almost the very end (which I will not reveal) but there are little hints of what's to come.

Mark J. Sullivan's character is probably the most difficult of the three characters. While some today might be color blind, it's quite clear that the two African Americans, who used to take orders from Caleb's white family as well as himself, are clearly in charge of his life at this juncture of it. Sullivan does the best he can with the most thankless role and the fact that he seemed clueless to the history that was being made is even more evident when he keeps asking where all the food is, and still maintaining a superior attitude. While that might have been acceptable then, since it was a culture shock to most slave owning Southerners, there are those who to this day still don't get it.

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See you at the theatre.

Dates: May 8 – June 13

Organization: Old Globe Theatre

Phone: 619-

Production Type: Drama

Where: Balboa Park 1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego

Ticket Prices: \$29.00-\$62.00

Web: theoldglobe.org

Venue: Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre

*

Theatre critic Davis is based in San Diego

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OLD GLOBE'S "THE WHIPPING MAN" GRIPPING AND TROUBLING

May 19, 6:52 PM · [San Diego Theater Examiner](#) · Carol Davis



The Whipping Man" By Matthew Lopez at The Old Globe Theatre
Craig Schwartz

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The Whipping Man

By Patricia Morris Buckley



Robert Mark Morgan as Caleb and Avery Glymph as John in the West Coast Premiere of The Whipping Man by Matthew Lopez, at The Globe Theatre May 8 - June 13, 2010. Photo by Craig Schwartz.

The days following the Civil War were confusing ones, especially in the Old South. Roles changed dramatically, the upper class was suddenly impoverished and soldiers returning home had no idea where they fit in. That's the world Matthew Lopez's "The Whipping Man" captures perfectly. In the microcosm of his three-person show, all these changes, class upheaval and the pain of a war lost are played out in brilliant detail. And in that microcosm, we see the race issues the entire country went through and continued to struggle with for decades to come. And yet, the play never feels like a history lesson.

The play begins as Jewish Confederate soldier Caleb returns to his family's mansion in Richmond, Virginia only days after Lee's surrender. Caleb is badly wounded by a gunshot to the leg, but refuses to travel to a hospital. A former family slave, Simon, is still at the house, protecting it as best he can from vandals and thieves. Simon sees immediately that Caleb's leg needs to be amputated or the boy will die. After Caleb pleads for his help, Simon does just that.

Simon and Caleb decide to wait for Caleb's parents to return. Meanwhile, chaos enters their home when John, another former slave, comes into the mix. John and Caleb were practically raised together, and they were best friends until a whipping made clear who was the master and who was the slave. Now that Simon and John are free, they and Caleb are just beginning to realize how their relationships must change.

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see Whipping, page 20

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WHIPPING

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Making this production so seamless are the performances of the three excellent actors. Mark J. Sullivan's Caleb is wonderfully conflicted between family honor, his own selfish needs and loyalty to these two former slaves. He swings easily from petulant and scared to defiant and faithless — all while sitting in one spot most of the show.

The anchor of the show is Charlie Robinson as the elderly Simon, who wants to remain loyal to the family he belonged to, but also wants freedom. Robinson, who is best recognized as Mac the bailiff from TV's "Night Court," brings an emotional resonance to an old man who wants to cling to what he knows and the place he called home, yet also craves the freedom he's dreamed of for decades.

Most conflicted of all is John, who is the catalyst in the

play, pushing and manipulating the other characters and at the same time, dealing with the guilt that will keep him from ever being truly free. Avery Glymph finds a balance between the character's need for family and his ever-present hate for a lifetime of whippings. His manic energy calls up the image of a trapped fox.

Robert Mark Morgan's in-the-round set just barely captures a room in a burnt out plantation, but could have gone much further. The broken windows hung high above the audience seem disconnected from the stage, although the staircase is the only element that hints at the building's former glory.

Denitsa D. Bliznakova's costumes are not flashy or colorful, but perfectly show the inner life of each character. John's ever-fancier costumes, as he plunders from other plantations in an attempt to adopt the appearance of a white and wealthy Southern gentleman, are wonderfully subtle.

Giovanna Sardelli's hand is practically invisible, which is the greatest compliment one can give a director. Between her simple yet cohesive direction and the actors' natural performances, this production feels so real you may feel as if you've slipped back in time.

Proving that the best history lesson is the one you don't know you're getting.

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Posted by [admin](#) on 6/01/10 • Categorized as [Arts & Entertainment](#), [Theater](#)

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SDUN Theatre Critic



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Denitsa D. Bliznakova's costumes are not flashy or colorful, but perfectly show the inner life of each character. John's ever-fancier costumes, as he plunders from other plantations in an attempt to adopt the appearance of a white and wealthy Southern gentleman, are wonderfully subtle.

Giovanna Sardelli's hand is practically invisible, which is the greatest compliment one can give a director. Between her simple yet cohesive direction and the actors' natural performances, this production feels so real you may feel as if you've slipped back in time.

Proving that the best history lesson is the one you don't know you're getting.

"The Whipping Man"

Through June 13

Old Globe Theatre

Tickets: \$29-\$62

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Entertainment :: Theatre

The Whipping Boy

by Steve Heyl
EDGE Contributor
Thursday May 20, 2010


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(l. to r.) Charlie Robinson, Avery Glymph and Mark J. Sullivan star in the West Coast Premiere of *The Whipping Man* by Matthew Lopez, at The Old Globe May 8 - June 13, 2010. Photo courtesy of The Old Globe.


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aftermath of the war. Pieces of each man's past and their shared past are revealed as they grapple with the new reality around them, threatening the family and faith that has bonded them.

Playwright Matthew Lopez's superb three-person script is features Mark J Sullivan as Caleb, Avery Glymph as John and Charlie Robinson as Simon (yes, the Charlie Robinson of *Night Court* fame). These three amazing actors deliver some of the best

Reconstruction is one of those "in between" periods of American history that get short shrift in most curricula - students study the Civil War, touch on the Spanish American War and zoom off into twentieth century studies, all but ignoring the aftermath of the former. Likewise, May is one of those "in between" periods of the typical theater season - after the winter dramas and spring comedies, but before the summer staples, it is inhabited by a variety of offerings that often appear to be randomly selected to fill out a subscription season. How appropriate it is then, that The Old Globe has chosen a show set during Reconstruction for May. How refreshing it is that the chosen show is not merely filler but rather one of the most gripping productions this year.

Set the week after Lee's surrender at Appomattox, **The Whipping Man** captures the uncertainty that marked Reconstruction. Caleb, a severely injured Jewish Confederate soldier, returns to his childhood home, now in ruins and empty except for two of his family's former slaves, Simon and John. Uncertain of the whereabouts of loved ones, uncertain of their safety, and even uncertain how to relate to each other in the post-slavery world, the three men prepare for the coming Seder. The Seder theme of delivery from slavery takes on new meaning in the

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performances of the year.

This show is not for the faint of heart. History books tend to gloss over such details as urine filled battlefield trenches, but they are described in graphic detail, along with flogging and a violent murder. When a pant leg is ripped open, the gangrenous leg that appears is realistic enough to elicit a visceral reaction. A step by step explanation of the procedure for amputating a leg, accompanied by the tools involved had the audience squirming.

The Old Globe recently named Matthew Lopez as Playwright-in-Residence; given that The Whipping Man is quite possibly the best production The Old Globe has presented this season that is cause for celebration.

The Whipping Man continues through June 13 at the Old Globe theater in San Diego. For more information visit the

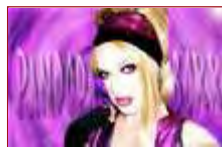
A computer geek by day, one of Steve's evening loves is San Diego theater (the other is his husband of 20 years), which he enjoys sharing with others (theater, not the husband).



COMMENTS

"The Whipping Boy"

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The Whipping Man

By January Riddle



Robinson, Glymph

Photo by Craig Schwartz

Passover was the day after Lee's surrender at Appomattox. "...as Jews across the nation were celebrating this sacred ritual commemorating their ancestors' freedom from bondage in Egypt, a new kind of exodus was occurring all around them." Matthew Lopez, author of The Whipping Man, in Performances magazine.

Even nature is in conflict. Thunder and lightening introduce the Old Globe Theatre's West Coast premier of Matthew Lopez's well-wrought and superbly presented drama focusing on our nation's dark days following its darkest era. Set in the antebellum south during the Reconstruction's dawn, this extraordinary play features

three members of a family shattered by the war that destroyed their culture and way of life. Robert Mark Morgan's stark set and Lap Chi Chu's shadowy lighting design portray the forbidding mood.

This is a history play, but it is not the stereotypical chronicle of an era, a time, or a timeline. It is about the heart of history, which beats with the stories of ordinary folks rather than icons. It is a serious story, told with moments of wit and humor that temper the gravity. And it succeeds brilliantly because it contains none of the expected or the ordinary.

Take the concept of a wealthy Richmond family, for instance. This one includes Caleb, a wounded Confederate soldier (convincingly and intensely played by Mark J. Sullivan) and two of the family slaves, Simon (an astute Charlie Robinson) and John (a fiery Avery Glymph). The slaves are now free, but they remain confined by their own limitations and fears, preferring to stay in the ravaged home they know to venturing out in the confounded world.

Add the fact that all three of them are Jews, a small minority in the South that included wealthy European immigrants and the slaves that adopted the religion of their masters, and you have a conundrum within a conflict. The puzzle becomes increasingly complex as each man fights with the person he used to be and some soon-to-be uncovered family secrets.

Director Giovanna Sardelli takes advantage of an experienced Broadway, Off-Broadway, and television cast, pulling out every scripted stop to create a production that is both personal and universal.

As the play opens, Caleb arrives at his family's ruined home, near death from exposure and an infected bullet wound in his leg. Instead of the family he was born into, he is welcomed at rifle point by his home's current patriarch, the former slave Simon.

The two are soon joined by John, a fugitive and thief, who has come home to hide. In a nail-biting scene that brings home war's horrors, Simon and John amputate Caleb's gangrenous leg, leaving him an invalid during what promises to be a painful recovery. The soldier is no longer at war, but his mind and his body are sorely maimed. Struggling to comprehend the change that makes him totally dependent on the kindness of his former servants, Caleb cannot even depend on the faith he lost during the war.

Ironically, the slaves find comfort and hope in their Jewish religion, its rituals, and its holy days. Discovering that they are on the eve of Passover, they set about gathering the ingredients for a seder, the traditional meal of that Jewish holy day. John is a clever and resourceful thief, and between his stolen booty and Simon's inventiveness, the meal, the ritual ingredients, and the men are quickly assembled.

But before they sit down for the meal commemorating the Israelites' liberation from Egypt, the men learn of Lincoln's assassination. Their own liberator is gone. Yet, their white neighbors are rejoicing at his murder, and they dare not go out into the streets full of rioting, vanquished Southerners.

Their confinement forces them, individually and collectively, to confront the past that molded them. As the youngest member at the seder table, John asks the first of the four ritual questions, "Why is this night different from all other nights?" The play's answers are not obvious, as the characters--both present and remembered--reveal their personal parables.

The whipping man, to whom slave owners dispatched their errant servants to be punished, is only one of the characters from the memoirs they share. Others include Elizabeth and Sarah, Simon's wife and daughter, who play integral roles in the story but are not present in the play.

As tales are told and secrets are revealed, the men discover that who they are is not what they thought they were and that the post-war world demands that they confront their demons and their futures in very short order. Their survival depends on how or if they will win the battles. The thunder will not cease anytime soon.

"The Whipping Man" continues on the Sheryl and Harvey White stage of San Diego's Old Globe Theatre in Balboa Park through June 13. Performances are: 7:00 pm Tues-Weds; 8:00 pm Thurs-Sat; 7:00 pm Sun. Matinees Sat-Sun at 2:00 pm. Tickets are \$29-\$62, with discounts for full-time students, patrons 29 and under, seniors and groups. Reservations: www.TheOldGlobe.org or (619) 23-GLOBE.

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Curtain Calls

Week ending May 20

By Charlene Baldrige

Appomattox again

THE SHOW: Old Globe production of Matthew Lopez's 2003 three-character drama, *The Whipping Man*, directed by Giovanna Sardelli at the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, Old Globe, through June 13

THE STORY: It's 1865. Robert E. Lee has surrendered at Appomattox, and Confederate officer Caleb DeLeon (Mark J. Sullivan) returns to the ruins of his father's plantation near Richmond, VA. There he finds former household slaves living in the once grand salon. Everything has been stolen. The roof is bombed out. There is no furniture and the only food is greens from the garden and some corn meal that the old and resourceful slave Simon managed to save. The younger liberated slave is the opportunistic John, who grew up with Caleb. He has no compunction about raiding other ruined plantations for whiskey, silver, and books. Though he is literate and a voracious reader, the older former slave is not. The rest of their families, Simon's wife and daughter and Caleb's mother and father, are scattered.

Caleb has a bullet wound in his gangrenous leg, which Simon removes above the knee in a scene not for the squeamish. In the next scene, Simon tends Caleb as he cleans up the gore. The three men argue about what should be done as with the weak and helpless Caleb. They discuss the past and memories of the Whipping Man, to whom slaves were sent for regular floggings. They also prepare to celebrate Passover with a Seder, the slaves having been raised in Judaism because the DeLeons are Jewish. The three men have long-held and more recent secrets.

Though the play is not without humor, it is gritty beyond gore and explosive beyond expectation as these secrets are revealed and fear takes over the younger men, who depend on each other far more than they know.



Charlie Robinson (Simon), Mark J. Sullivan (Caleb) and Avery Glymph (John) observe Seder amid the squalor
Photo: Craig Schwartz

THE PERFORMERS: All are excellent. Veteran stage and TV actor Charlie Robinson, who was acclaimed for his recent portrayal of Troy Maxson in *Fences* at South Coast Repertory, seemed to stumble over dialogue opening night, but he soon settled down as the older Simon, who's awaiting the return of Caleb's father so he can collect monies promised to him to make a fresh start. The man has a great deal of dignity, a wry sense of humor and an ability to make do in order to get the job done, whether its taking off Caleb's gangrenous leg or gathering elements of the Seder. "We let the place go a bit," he says to the stunned Caleb soon after the younger man stumbles into the formerly grand living room of the estate. As Caleb, Mark J. Sullivan is prone after surgery, acting mostly with his face; nonetheless, he shows the none-too-admirable boy he was and the man he is, a rather tough row to hoe. It's tough on the audience, as well, discovering that the protagonist one hoped to admire has feet of clay.

Avery Glymph is perfect as John, a self-serving, light-fingered opportunist, who decides to stick around when he learns there's money in his future.

THE PRODUCTION: The finest moment achieved by playwright and director is the silence at the end of the play. The work is oddly musty and overwrought, though admittedly the author strives mightily to deliver an unknown, neglected part of Civil War history. Despite revisionism since this child was educated in the mid-twentieth century, what northerner would know or imagine, for instance, that white southerners rejoiced when they learned that Simon's "Father Abraham" had been assassinated? Lopez bites off huge chunks of material with this story, in which he draws a parallel between the release of captive Jews from Egypt and the emancipation of African slaves brought about by Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. In his excellent program note, which everyone should read before attending this play, he points out that his three characters, two former slaves and their former owner, have a shared history as self-identifying Jews. Like suddenly free African-Americans all over the nation, and like their counterparts who walked through the dry bed of the Red Sea, Simon and John are about to embark on a new life, a "long, painful, hopeful journey that began in April 1865 and continues today." The heavily laden play and its complex characters are affecting and one must admire the playwright's ideal of capturing them. I wanted to like the work much more than I did, and I will

spend a long time pondering what personal burdens of guilt, sorrow and historical bewilderment prevented me from doing so.

Director Giovanna Sardelli has Simon make all his entrances from the White Theatre's vomitorium, which seems to indicate the kitchen area must have been that way, which makes good sense. Likewise, when John retreats to another "room" to stash his ill-gotten goods, it is halfway up an aisle. These are good devices to give one a feeling of space in a playing area that sits below eye level of the audience. What doesn't work is having all entrances from outside the house be down one long aisle with a broken-glass door at the top, testing logic and setting up spatial anxiety as we ask ourselves why the play is set in a root cellar. The creative team comprises scenic designer Robert Mark Morgan, costume designer Denitsa D. Bliznakova, lighting designer Lap Chi Cu and sound designer Jill BC De Boff. Presenting its own dankness, the sodden southern spring pervades the physical production giving one a feeling of decay. Within, all is darkness. One man escapes into the light. Hopefully he will be rewarded with his heart's desire. The two that remain stare silently at one another.

THE LOCATION: Through June 13, 7 pm Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays; 8 pm Thursdays-Saturdays; 2 pm Saturdays and Sundays, Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, Old Globe, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park, www.theoldglobe.org or (619) 23-GLOBE.

NOTE: Lopez is the Old Globe Theatre's Donald and Darlene Shiley playwright in residence for 2010-2011. Included in this is a play commission. Perhaps we shall see what we shall see.
BOTTOM LINE: Not for the faint of heart or the impatient. Contains gore and robust and possibly offensive content. [WORTH A TRY](#)

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THE PHILADELPHIA STORY
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BEHIND THE SCENES

with Jenni Prisk



Email Jenni

Column May 20, 2010

Hello! Can you believe it's almost Memorial Weekend. How times flies!

My 2 Cents

Have managed to see two plays in the past 10 days or so, and looking forward to seeing a great many more after June 6!

The Whipping Man, penned by playwright-in-residence Matthew Lopez and playing through June 13 at the Sheryl & Harvey White theatre is a very interesting piece of history, conveyed by three men. Mark J. Sullivan (Caleb) has the most challenging requirements as he plays the whole piece on his back after a grueling amputation of his left leg. His role could be fleshed out some more so that we can more fully understand his inner life. He returns to his home in Virginia home from the Civil War to find his house in very different order, it is now being run by his former slaves, Simon (a very warm and wise Charlie Robinson) and John (angry and full of need as played by Avery Glymph.) Through a rain-filled night, the men engage in a Seder that reflects the freeing of the Jews from Egypt in parallel to the freeing of the slaves in America. The production, directed by Giovanna Sardelli is absorbing and interesting.



King John, newly opened at The Theatre, Inc. at 899 C Street, and running in repertory through June 6 with *The Taming of the Shrew* is a must-see. And like a comet that passes through the skies only rarely, this play has not been produced in San Diego for 40 years, until now. Co-directed by Intrepid Shakespeare Company's founders Christy Yael and Sean Cox, this Shakespeare history is wordy and wonderful. The cast is a seamless ensemble of fine talent, each of whom understands his and her place on the stage and in the history and plays it with finesse. Tom Hall as the tormented King John is intense and ever-changing as he slips from confidence to terror to demise. His face is an open book of emotions as he and we watch his power dissipate. Even his powerful scheming mother Queen Eleanor (Glynn Beddington) cannot save him. Sean Cox as the Bastard son of Richard the Lionheart is the Puck of this play. He weaves his tale with devilish delight, as he pits characters against each other and wins the confidence of the King. Young Arthur, played with sympathy and success by Austyn Myers is the rightful king, but dies tragically and too early. Eddie Yaroch plays a wise and insightful King Phillip of France. Michael Salimitari as Lewis the Dauphin shows strength in his stand against Cardinal Pandolph of Rome (played with tenacity and toughness by Wendy Waddell). This two-hour production will hold you, and compel you to research even further this dark time in British history that is seeing the light of day in a marvelous production.

Theatre News:

"ENGAGED" by WS. Gilbert will be staged during three weekends, from June 11 through June 27 -- Friday & Saturdays at 8:00 p.m. and Sundays at 7:00 p.m. (no performance on Sunday, June 20) -- at SWENDBORG HALL, 1531 Tyler Avenue, San Diego 92103, in University Heights. TICKETS are \$15 for adults, \$13 for seniors/military and groups of 10 or more, \$10 for children 12 and under.. For reservations and further information call (619) 233-9407.

Lamb's Players Theatre opens *Smoke on the Mountain* by Connie Ray, and directed by Kerry Meads, at the Horton Grand Theatre on June 3 at 7:30pm.

Sullivan Players presents *The Hot I Baltimore* running May 8-30, 2010 at Swedenborg Hall. The play, by [Lanford Wilson](#), is set in the lobby of the Hotel Baltimore. Tickets are available at the door one hour prior to each performance. For ticket information, please call 858-274-1731.



Unexpected Guests at ‘Supper’ for Returning War Vet

Wednesday, May 19, 2010
Old Globe Theatre
San Diego, California

Review by *Palm Springs Guides* Theatre & Cinema Critic/Reviewer Jack Lyons
Photos by Craig Schwartz

I’m not sure if “what we have here is a failure to communicate” (a now iconic quote from the movie “Cool Hand Luke”), or a case of on-going denial (the Civil War — known as “the late unpleasantness” south of the Mason-Dixon line) or a combination of both, but Matthew Lopez’s drama, “The Whipping Man,” currently in its West Coast premiere at The Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre in The Old Globe Theatre complex, simply does not ring true.



Theatre has always been the preferred venue for ideas, for intelligent discourse and for self-examination and introspection. However, it’s generally not a good idea to trump believability for theatricality and then sacrifice both on the commercial altar of an intriguing challenge that could be developed into a play. That path has always been fraught with danger and is strewn with unproduced plays, or plays that quickly closed after opening, along with the bodies of the

playwrights who wrote them.

The story is set in Virginia following Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox, Virginia, which ends the Civil War. The tale involves a wounded Jewish Confederate soldier who is near death, as he crawls back to his childhood home, only to find it in ruins and occupied by two of his family's former slaves who are preparing for a Passover Seder.



The once-divided-but-soon-to-be-reunited country is embarking on a new chapter in its history. The relationship between the cultures of the North and the South is tenuous at best. A similar unsettling personal relationship is put to the test when Caleb (Mark J. Sullivan), the son of a Jewish slave owner, must confront the new reality — a society of freed slaves — of his relationship with Simon (Charlie Robinson), the grandfatherly, but savvy in-charge former senior slave, and John (Avery Glymph), a younger, jumpy and belligerent, law-bending former slave and a contemporary of Caleb. When you add the ingredient of a shared religion into the equation, in this case, Judaism (frequently the religion of the owner was taught to their slaves), dichotomies occur, and each man has to reinvent himself in order to survive. Along the way, dangerous secrets bubble up to the surface and threaten to destroy, not only their family and their connected history, but their shared faith, as well.



One of the more interesting points presented by playwright Lopez is that we rarely see ourselves as others see us. For example, how could Jews with a history as an enslaved people and hundreds of years of enduring anti-Semitism and prejudice, even consider enslaving others, let alone actually doing it? It should be anathema to them. The question then becomes, does assimilation come at too high a price? What happens to one's core values when one becomes part of this new,

noble, “melting pot American experience”? Is it a case of join in or move out?

Interesting and intriguing as the premise of the play is, I still have to question the credibility of whether these characters have the philosophical bent or education to deliver such prescient, albeit heartfelt dialogue concerning religion, slavery and the new freedoms in the South of 1865.

However, I suppose, if one buys the premise, then one can buy into the bits that follow. How much of this “willing suspension of disbelief” is acceptable must be for each audience member to decide for himself.



Having said the above, it should be noted that the cast, under the direction of Giovanna Sardelli, is uniformly excellent. Robinson, Glymph and Sullivan deliver the goods when it comes to showing how each character confronts his particular situation. Sullivan, however, has the uncomfortable task of playing most of his scenes in the supine position, especially after his leg is amputated above the knee in a vivid scene. I must say however, that the excess of blood on the stage floor being mopped up — in the next scene — is not only gruesome, but is over-the-top and is an unnecessary visual distraction.

In the technical department, the production’s creative team: Scenic Designer Robert Mark Morgan, Costumer Designer Denitsa D. Bliznakova, Lighting Designer Lap Chi Chu and Sound Designer Jill BC DuBoff, are the talents responsible for the evocative look and feel of the production. (Speaking of feel, inside the theatre, kudos to Executive Producer Louis Spisto for quickly solving the air conditioning problems in the White Theatre. No longer is the cold air roaring up from under my seat!)

The production runs through June 13.

For more [about the Old Globe Theatre](#), click here.

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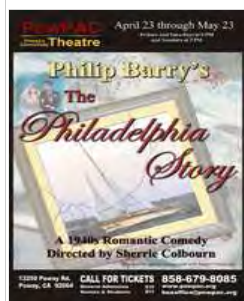
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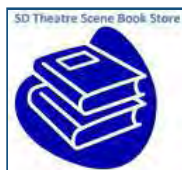
After reading a really good book I think I'm not the only one who sits there for a few minutes, in a state of rapture and contemplation. I've noticed that, similarly, after a good play and the standing ovation that follows immediately, the audience exits without much talking, each person wrapped up in very personal ecstasy; each person takes a minute to absorb and reflect. This is why I mean it as a great compliment when I say that the exiting crowd from The Old Globe's The Whipping Man seemed especially quiet.



The Whipping Man, written by Mathew Lopez, is the engaging southern gothic drama. Caleb, a Jewish confederate soldier returns to his ransacked home after the end of the civil war. Wounded with no way to take care of himself he is left at the mercy of, Simon - wise, generous, and kind and John, who takes Caleb's weakened position as an opportunity to settle a score. It explores the issue of slavery, as expected, but also enters into a more interesting and original dialogue that connects Jewish culture and Black culture. The second act especially breaks free from the clichés of the Southern Gothic style as Simon, John, and Caleb celebrate the Seder, a part of the Jewish Passover, and a satisfactory and poignant understanding is achieved.

The play was staged in Sheryl and Harvey White Theater, a theater in the round, meaning the set had to be structured differently as opposed to a typical stage. Built by Robert Mark Morgan it couldn't block any view, but it managed though to create some sense of height by suspending cracked windows above the stage and the entrance a similarly broken down door. The stage had to be sunk into the floor like a tomb which seemed appropriate for the setting. The grimy bricks and real fire undoubtedly set the tone with subtle realism.

The cast was superb. Mark J. Sullivan as Caleb, the returning confederate soldier, is convincing even as he plays an amputee who delivers the majority of lines from the floor. Avery Glymph plays John, a former slave of Caleb's who seems to be reveling in the new turn of events which allows him to torment Caleb among other selfish acts such as thievery. One of the most memorable moments in the play is Glymph's monologue about "the Whipping Man" to whom he had been set many times. Glymph plays John deftly able to give the character complexities.



SAN DIEGO THEATRE SCENE BOOK STORE

Finally Simon, played by Charlie Robinson, is the former slave and a devout Jew. Through the first act Simon remains a predictable mediator, almost unfailingly good. In the second act Simon broke free. Though the character never steps into corruption the second act provides provocative substance and some moments to not be the dignified, respectable man we were lulled into thinking he was.

Directed by Giovanna Sadelli, The Whipping Man is a beautifully grimy play that ends, dare I use the cliché, full of hope. Written by Matthew Lopez it never panders with just enough originality to make the typical characters fresh and endlessly watch-able.

It will be playing at the globe until early June. Go see it now!



“The Whipping Man:” Lesson

by Barbara Smith



Shared experiences forge strong bonds and often strange and strained brotherhoods. Such is the premise of “The

Whipping Man,” a riveting drama that soars in its West Coast premiere at San Diego’s Old Globe Theater. Originally

debuted in 2006 in New Jersey, this Matthew Lopez *tour de force* is compelling and thought-provoking in its imaginative examination of historical and personal perspectives on freedom and slavery as experienced by Blacks and Jews in this country. Set in April of 1865, shortly after Lee’s surrender to Grant at Appomattox, the play explores a complex set of emotions and familial relationships as seen through the lens of history.

As the play opens, Caleb DeLeon, a young Confederate soldier returns to his childhood estate in Virginia only to find it in ruins and occupied by two of his former slaves, Simon, a father and husband, now separated by the war from his family, and John, who grew up alongside Caleb and for a time enjoyed as close to a brotherly kinship as could be possible during slave times. A fourth character, pivotal to the plot but never appearing onstage is “the whipping man,” a looming unseen presence who was responsible for meting out punishment to slaves for alleged misconduct. From the opening scene in which Caleb painfully drags himself through the door of his cherished childhood home to the gripping final scene where piercing revelations open new, even more painful wounds, the

play’s battleground of emotion is one that makes fine theater.

Three significant historical events define the plot: the surrender of the Confederate Army at Appomattox; the arrival of Passover, the celebration of Jews’ exodus from Egyptian slavery; and the assassination of President Lincoln. The intersection of these events with the lives of the three main characters is the stuff of great drama.

The play poses disquieting questions, exploring the conundrum of Jewish slave owners. “How could a people whose identity was forged in part by their experience as slaves own slaves themselves?” playwright Lopez asks in his program notes. “How could a family sit every year at the seder, speaking the words of the Haggadah and look at the faces of the slaves serving their meal and not make the connection between what they were saying and what they were practicing?” Indeed, parallels in oppression and enslavement of Blacks and Jews in history has long been discussed, but Lopez takes it a step further by developing an intriguing plot and complex, compelling characters whose lives connect in a cleverly drawn story line. Directed by Giovanna Sardelli, the ensemble cast gives powerful performances. Those who



ons in History

have sat at Passover seders and absorbed the rich ritual of prayers would have an especially satisfying experience in observing this seder conducted by Simon, who, along with John and many other slaves of that era, adopted Judaism as their religion while working and living in a Jewish household. Uttering the blessings, Simon invokes the rich cadence and inspirational rhythms of his own heritage in the Black church. For a moment audience members were transported and some had to consciously restrain themselves from spirited hand-clapping and shouting "Amen!"

Charlie Robinson (many remember him as Mac, the dry-humored clerk from "Night Court,") as Simon is a citadel of strength and multi-layered complexity. He addresses his inability to reconcile the faith he adopted with the injustice of slavery: "I can't square anything I don't understand... That's why we always asking... You don't lose your faith by not getting answers. You lose your faith by not asking questions... This is what we do. This is our family." He literally bears the scars of slavery on his back and crumbles in grief when learning of the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln, who he refers to as "Father Abraham,"

an American Moses.

The younger John's anger is much closer to the surface. Played with searing intensity by Avery Glymph, the newly freed man, running from his own demons, questions Simon's steadfastness to his faith having lived in the hypocrisy of the DeLeon household. Much of his anger is directed at Caleb for reasons revealed only in the play's final moments.

Caleb's character too bears the scars of conflict and contradiction. He leaves, the son of a privileged family, and returns afraid, alone, with an injury to his leg so severe, it requires amputation. Mark J. Sullivan ably portrays the anguish and confusion of a man who, seemingly, has lost everything.

It is not insignificant that one of the photos in "The Whipping Man" program shows President Obama and his family hosting a seder this past March, the first ever conducted in the White House. That image and the lessons of this play are reminders that alliances, though sometimes unconventional, can take us a long way in the journey to peace and understanding.

"The Whipping Man," continues through June 13. Tickets can be purchased online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, or by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE.

Suspense drives drama in 'The Whipping Man'

The dark, somber and desolate stage of the Globe's West Coast Premiere of "The Whipping Man" is

Let's Review



immediately brought to life when Caleb (Mark J. Sullivan) enters the shattered door of his family's now destroyed Southern plantation home. It's just another blow that Caleb faces as he

struggles to get down the stairs on one leg; his other was severely damaged in a Civil War battle. Instantly staring down the nose of a rifle, once again Caleb fears for his life. He and his assailant enter into a shouting match until Caleb recognizes the voice of Simon (Charlie Robinson), his family's former slave — now a free man.

This fact doesn't register with Caleb at first as he orders Simon to bring him some water. There's hesitancy in Simon's demeanor as the impact of the demand settles in, yet gives way to the fact he's known this

'The Whipping Man'

■ **Where:** The Globe's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park

■ **When:** 7 p.m. Tuesdays-Wednesdays; 8 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays; 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays; 7 p.m. Sundays, through June 13

■ **Tickets:** \$29-\$62; (619) 23-GLOBE, TheOldGlobe.org

boy since he was a young lad. Simon tells him things are different now, but dutifully brings Caleb the water.

Playwright Matthew Lopez's captivating story reveals how three men — lifelong inhabitants of the same house — find themselves on new ground just days after the Civil War ends. Caleb faces losing his leg, but he's unsure of where his family is and can't bear that his home is ravaged and empty. Simon is excited by his Lincoln-given freedom and waiting for the right time to head North.

Then John (Avery Glymph), another of the house servants, comes

in, running from someone who's chasing him because he stole something. The three men, all with different outlooks on their situations, spend each moment in a poker-hand face-off. Should they help one another? Or look out for themselves? Caleb is in no condition to do that, but his cantankerous attitude does not lend itself to others wanting to stick around.

But there's one thing that brings these men together, even if only for a momentary connection: They are all Jewish.

Caleb's family taught its slaves the Jewish faith, and now it's time for Seder, the first night of Passover. Gathering whatever they can to resemble the traditional elements of the dinner, the three men make peace for a short while. Soon the dark clouds of uncertainty return, and each man in this empty house must find his own way to refill his now vacant life.

All three actors provide wonderful performances. Sullivan ("To Be or Not to Be," "The Dining Room") probably has the hardest task staying on a blanket on the barren floor throughout the play. Yet as Caleb, he manages to offer a glimpse of his former life.

Glymph ("The Tempest," "Fences") is the ticking clock in this



Simon (Charlie Robinson), John (Avery Glymph) and Caleb (Mark J. Sullivan) face a difficult reunion after the Civil War. CRAIG SCHWARTZ

drama. His John has an agenda, but because he can't see outside his own plan, he's unable to forge a steady path toward it. Instead, he's full of anger, disillusionment, and one setback after another. His unwillingness to forgive and forget is at times frightening and keeps the audience in constant suspense.

Robinson ("The Piano Lesson,"

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LOS ANGELES TIMES

May 23, 2010

Critics' Choices

Absinthe, Opium & Magic: 1920s Shanghai, Debbie McMahon piles her unique fusion of Grand Guignol with commedia dell'arte, puppetry, music and dance in this highly entertaining immersive staging aboard a fanciful shipboard voyage to the heart of decadence; the pre-show is a big part of the experience (P.B.). Onboard entertainment begins at 8. For mature audiences. Ivy Substation, 9070 Venice Blvd., Culver City. Thu.-Sat., 8:30 p.m.; ends Sat. \$25-\$30. (310) 828-4264

Dementia Evelina Fernandez's surreal 2002 dramedy about an AIDS-stricken stage director planning his own farewell party receives a stunning return engagement. Director Jose Luis Valenzuela stages this Latino Theater Company production with unerring tonal control, and his ensemble could not be better, with originator Sal Lopez beyond praise as the dying protagonist (D.C.N.). Los Angeles Theatre Center, 514 S. Spring St., L.A. Today and next Sun., 3 p.m.; Thu.-Fri., 8 p.m.; Sat., 3 and 8 p.m.; ends next Sun. \$35. Tickets are \$10 on Thursday. (213) 489-0994, Ext. 107.

Life Could Be a Dream Roger Bean outdoes his own winning formula with this charming 1960s jukebox musical (F.K.F.). Hudson Mainstage Theatre, 6539 Santa Monica Blvd., Hollywood. Today and next Sun., 3 p.m.; Thu.-Fri., 8 p.m.; Sat., 3 and 8 p.m.; ends next Sun. \$45-\$47.50. (323) 960-4412.

Love, Loss and What I Wore Nora and Della Ephron's stage adaptation of Illene Beckerman's sweet sartorial memoir is an evening of monologues performed by Rita Wilson, Carol Kane and others. Nothing too demanding here, just the kind of affirming chick outing that makes you want to rip off your Spanx and have another Cosmo (C.S.). Audrey Skirball Kenis Theater at the Geffen Playhouse, 10886 Le Conte Ave., Westwood. Today and next Sun., 2 and 7 p.m.; Tue.-Fri., 8 p.m.; Sat., 3 and 8 p.m.; ends July 4. \$69-\$74. (310) 208-5454.

The Marriage of Figaro A shrewd use of artifice as content distinguishes Frédérique Michel and Charles Dun-

combe's new adaptation of Beaumarchais' 1784 assault on the aristocracy, the source of Mozart's deathless opera. Director Michel and designer Duncombe use the convolutions of farce to strike more profound cultural targets, sending the stalwart cast pirouetting around with calibrated panache (D.C.N.). City Garage, 1340 1/2 4th St. Alley, Santa Monica. Today and next Sun., 5:30 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 8 p.m.; ends June 20. \$25. Pay what you can on Sundays. (310) 319-9939.

See What I Wanna See Michael John LaChiusa's 2005 chamber musical about the subjective nature of truth enjoys an arresting West Coast premiere. LaChiusa's post-Sondheim writing blurs opera and musical theater to electrifying effect, and Daniel Henning's minimalist staging of a first-rate cast is brilliant. Nobody who values the American musical as mature art form should miss it (D.C.N.). Blank Theatre Company at 2nd Stage Theatre, 6500 Santa Monica Blvd., Hollywood. Today and next Sun., 2 p.m.; Thu.-Sat., 8 p.m.; ends next Sun. \$30-\$34.99. (323) 661-9827.

The Whipping Man This powerful new play hinges on Matthew Lopez's observation that Passover in 1865 began the day after Lee's surrender at Appomattox. In his tale, a young Jewish Confederate soldier navigates a new relationship with two of the family's former slaves while coming to a

deeper understanding of his faith's and his nation's core principles. Splendid (D.H.M.). The Old Globe, 1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego. Today and next Sun., 2 and 7 p.m.; Tue.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Thu.-Fri., 8 p.m.; Sat., 2 and 8 p.m.; ends June 13. \$29-\$62. (619) 234-5623.

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CINEMATIC MECHANIC

THE WHIPPING MAN: 100% – Sweet

[Colin Mitchell](#) | May 22, 2010 | [Comments 0](#) |



Photo: Charlie Robinson, left, and Mark J. Sullivan in "The Whipping Man" at the Old Globe. Credit: Craig Schwartz.

SWEET

This show is not for the faint of heart. History books tend to gloss over such details as urine filled battlefield trenches, but they are described in graphic detail, along with flogging and a violent murder. When a pant leg is ripped open, the gangrenous leg that appears is realistic enough to elicit a visceral reaction. A step by step explanation of the procedure for amputating a leg, accompanied by the tools involved had the audience squirming. The Old Globe recently named Matthew Lopez as Playwright-in-Residence; given that The Whipping Man is quite possibly the best production The Old Globe has presented this season that is cause for celebration.

[Steve Heyl – EdgeLosAngeles](#)

SWEET

One of his central conceits here, which he has admitted he's had trouble documenting, is that Simon and John have been brought up in their owner's religion, and therefore practice Judaism. However faithful this may or may not be to history, it leads to larger truths. Jews "talk with God, we wrestle with him," Simon explains to the younger men. "Sometimes we even argue with him. But we never stop asking, looking, hoping for answers." Words for all of us, in a still deeply divided nation, to live by.

[Daryl H. Miller – LA Times](#)

SWEET

In Matthew Lopez's "The Whipping Man," the Confederacy's surrender finds returning rebel soldier Caleb DeLeon (Mark J. Sullivan) once more shouting orders in the burnt-out Virginia family manse, but the antebellum tables have definitely turned, and the former slaves still on the premises have other ideas. Without fully encompassing the themes it raises, "The Whipping Man" powerfully explores emancipation's strains through impressive acting and stagecraft in the Old Globe's arena space.

[Bob Verini – Variety](#)

"The Whipping Man," the [Old Globe's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre](#), Balboa Park, San Diego. 7 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 8 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays, 2 and 8 p.m. Saturdays, 2 and 7 p.m. Sundays. Ends June 13. \$29 to \$62. (619) 234-5623. Running time: 2 hours.

For an explanation on our **Lemon Meter Rating System** click [here](#)

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About the Author: COLIN MITCHELL: Actor/Writer/Director/Producer, award-winning playwright and screenwriter, Broadway veteran, Marvel comics scribe, Van Morrison disciple, Zen-Catholic, a proud U.S. citizen conceived in Scotland and born in Frankfurt, Germany, currently living in Los Angeles and doing his best to piss off as many people as possible.

← [Under the Spotlight: Kurt Swanson – Producer](#)

["Addison DeWitt" Responds](#) →



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05/16/2010

Jewish Slave-owners in the American South?

Apparently they existed, or at least, that's the premise of *The Whipping Man*, now playing at the San Diego Old Globe theater. The show featured all the tropes of Southern Gothic you'd expect: a disillusioned (and dishonored) Confederacy Vet, a wise old black man, an angry former slave, and, of course, the old plot-device of miscegenation. But with a Jewish twist. The play takes place over Passover, which allows for plenty of explorations on the themes of exodus and freedom. A jolly good show.

Wish I could write more, but I'm feeling tired.

Posted via email from [jamesperkins's posterous](#)

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PREVIOUS POST

Nice Atheists? Mean Atheists? [I don't necessarily agree with everything on this blog, but I find tihs post intriguing. I really like Dawkins \(he's one of the most passionate evangelicals I've ever seen\), but I think he's giving Atheism a very, very bad name. I'm wondering what you all think of him, and others....](#)

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FEATURES

May 9, 2010

Why is this play different from other ...

... plays? There's the Civil War, the Passover Seder ...

By James Hebert
THEATER CRITIC

It's 1865, the Deep South, and a black man named Simon is holding forth about "the bitterness of slavery." Not because he has been a slave (though, in fact, he has been). But because he is Jewish.

Simon, recently freed from a Virginia planta-

DETAILS

"The Whipping Man"
Old Globe Theatre

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tion, is conducting a Passover Seder in "The Whipping Man," the Matthew Lopez drama opening this week at the Old Globe. The words about slavery, straight from Seder rituals, refer to Jews' servitude in ancient Egypt. But the twist of the play is that American Jews, too, owned slaves, who sometimes (like Simon) converted to the faith.

For Lopez, what proved just as eye-opening as this bit of history was the realization that the end of the Civil War

coincided with the beginning of Passover, which commemorates the freeing of the slaves in Egypt.

The Globe playwright-in-residence says he had encountered few dramatic works set during the Emancipation, much less "anything that dealt with the happy coincidence of Passover

'WHIPPING MAN'

CONTINUED FROM E1

Playwright 'saw the theater' in re-enactment

occurring at the same time."

He adds with a laugh: "I heard someone say that If you think something is a good idea, and no one's done it, you'd better do it fast."

Though "The Whipping Man" premiered in 2006, the Globe production is its West Coast premiere. And speaking of happy coincidences: The theater's just-opened mainstage show is "Golda's Balcony," which tells the story of the late Israeli leader Golda Meir and her role in building a nation for the Jewish people.

Not only that, but the previous production in the Globe's White Theatre — the arena-style second stage that's now home to "The Whipping Man" — was "Alive and Well," which drew

heavily on the Civil War for its themes and was likewise set in Virginia.

That play also featured a Civil War re-enactor as a main character. It so happens that Lopez — a Florida native who's still in his early 30s but has worked with such top companies as Manhattan Theatre Club and the McCarter Theatre Center — grew up in a household of re-enactors.

His brother was the first to get into the hobby, which involves dressing up meticulously in period uniforms and re-creating historic battles. Then, his parents joined in.

"I thought they were lunatics at the time," Lopez admits. "But it did instill in me this interest in the Civil War."

Just not quite in a way that made him want to grab a canteen and head for Gettysburg.

"It was really not my thing," Lopez says of re-enactment. "For one thing, I was not interested in camping. But I really saw the theater in it. The first time I ever saw a re-enactment, it felt like being on a movie set."

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"Whipping Man" director Giovanna Sardelli says the play challenged her understanding of the Civil War. David Brooks / Union-Tribune

SEE 'Whipping Man,' E5

Hollywood about the situation in "The Whipping Man," whose first scene involves an amputation. The story centers on Caleb (Mark J. Sullivan), a wounded Confederate fighter who has returned home to find his family's ex-slaves, Simon (Charlie Robinson) and John (Avery Glymph), occupying the place.

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her own understanding of what was behind the war.

"I'd never really invested in the arguments of the South," she says. "I'd always just (viewed it) as: 'They wanted to own slaves. That was wrong. They lost.' Very simplistic."

Her research gave Sardelli new insight into such matters as "the belief of fighting for home,

One connection between the themes of the play and the pressing issues of our own time, she adds, is "a resurgence of racism in this country — palpable racism. Along with a resurgence of hope."

"I think we are again at a time in our history when we have to decide who we are. Do we really believe that all men are created

ries of suffering and slavery, and a hope for better things.

"It makes me happy if people make a sort of line between the events of the play and what's happening today," Lopez says. "With any historical play, you want people to look at the society they're in now. If not, it's just a boring history lesson."

"I hope people see in the play

"I think we are again at a time in our history when we have to decide who we are. Do we really believe that all men are created equal and free, or not? To me this is a very scary time. I keep going back to Abraham Lincoln, and saying, I hope we listen to the better angels of our nature." **GIOVANNA SARDELLI**, *"Whipping Man"* director

struggle to reconcile the past with their new places in postwar America.

For "Whipping Man" director Giovanna Sardelli, whose credits include world premieres of four plays by Rajiv Joseph (a Pulitzer finalist this year for "Bengal Tiger in the Baghdad Zoo"), the attraction of the play was not just the surprising history it explores, but the way it challenged

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Lopez likewise sees a lot of the contemporary in his chronicle of events from 145 years ago. And much of it has to do with the fact that African-Americans were able to find at least some common ground with Jews in their histo-

the connection to the civil-rights movement, and the profoundly impactful role Jewish Americans played in that movement.

"We (as Americans) have both common and separate pasts. It's that intersection that makes this country what it is."

James Hebert: (619) 293-2040; jim.hebert@uniontrib.com; blog: houseseats.uniontrib.com

Why is this play different from other plays? There's the Civil War, the [Passover](#) Seder ...

By [James Hebert](#), UNION-TRIBUNE THEATER CRITIC

Sunday, May 9, 2010 at 12:05 a.m.



David Brooks / UNION-TRIBUNE

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"Some of it you read and think (of the South's attitudes): 'How could you?' The argument that Matthew makes fun of in such a lovely way is that 'We weren't going to be told what to do with our lives.' And yet ...?"

One connection between the themes of the play and the pressing issues of our own time, she adds, is "a resurgence of racism in this country — palpable racism. Along with a resurgence of hope."

"I think we are again at a time in our history when we have to decide who we are. Do we really believe that all men are created equal and free, or not? To me this is a very scary time. I keep going back to [Abraham Lincoln](#), and saying, I hope we listen to the better angels of our nature."

Lopez likewise sees a lot of the contemporary in his chronicle of events from 145 years ago. And much of it has to do with the fact that African-Americans were able to find at least some common ground with Jews in their histories of suffering and slavery, and a hope for better things.

"It makes me happy if people make a sort of line between the events of the play and what's happening today," Lopez says. "With any historical play, you want people to look at the society they're in now. If not, it's just a boring history lesson.

"I hope people see in the play the connection to the civil-rights movement, and the profoundly impactful role Jewish Americans played in that movement.

"We (as Americans) have both common and separate pasts. It's that intersection that makes this country what it is."

James Hebert: (619) 293-2040; jim.hebert@uniontrib.com houseseats.uniontrib.com

THEATER

'Whipping Man' examines little-known facet of slave history

BY PAM KRAGEN
pkragen@nctimes.com

When playwright Matthew Lopez was studying the Civil War back in college, he was amazed to learn that some of the South's slaveholders were Jews — like Confederate secretary of war Judah P. Benjamin, who owned 140 slaves on his New Orleans sugar plantation before selling the farm in 1850 to enter politics.

How, Lopez wondered, could someone whose ancestors endured centuries of slavery not find the practice immoral?

"For me, the question was how these families who come from a history of slavery can make the emotional disconnect from that," said Lopez, whose play on this subject, "The Whipping Man," opens in previews Saturday at the Old Globe. In the play, gravely wounded Confederate soldier Caleb DeLeon returns to his Jewish fami-

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TICKETS \$29-\$62

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ly's manor in Richmond, Va., to find it in ruins and two newly emancipated slaves, Simon and John, preparing a Jewish Seder service for Passover.

Filled with twists and turns, Lopez's play examines Caleb's moral ambiguity, Simon's guileless loyalty to his former owner, John's ideas as a newly radical freeman, and the approaching Exodus in the post-Emancipation South.

In a phone interview



Matthew Lopez, foreground, the playwright of "The Whipping Man," with the play's Old Globe cast, from left, Charlie Robinson, Avery Glymph and Mark J. Sullivan. Photo courtesy of the Old Globe.

from his home in Brooklyn last week, Lopez talked about the 2006 play, which is making its West Coast premiere at the Globe.

Question: What was your inspiration for the play?

Answer: I was interested in writing something about how life returns to normal after a historic calamity, and I wanted to write on American themes. The Civil War was the dual American calamity of war and slavery. I was interested in exploring the question of how do you go from being a slave to being free?

Q: Did you model Caleb's family after any famous Jewish slaveholders?

A: Jews were a small percentage of the U.S. population, but there were some who were Southerners and slaveholders. My question was how pernicious and all-encompassing was it, and the answer is almost totally. Even Jews owned slaves. The family in this play don't own a plantation. They live in an ur-

ban environment, and they considered their slaves servants. The idea is that by calling them "servants," you can distance yourself from the idea of owning another human being.

Amongst Southern families of note, there was this sort of pride in how well you cared for your slaves because they were your representatives in the town, and if you treated your slaves well, you were seen as a "moral" slave owner. Of course, no matter how beneficent you believe yourself to be, you're morally compromised by owning slaves in the first place.

Q: Where does the play's title come from?

A: The idea sprang from a lot of the research I did on the lives of slaves. In an urban environment, again where slaves are the reflection of the owner, you wouldn't want your neighbors to overhear your slaves screaming when they're being whipped. So in many Southern towns, there would be a man you would

outsource your whippings to and he would earn a very nice living. The whipping man looms like a specter over the characters in this play.

Q: Did your research uncover any slaves who practiced Judaism, like the characters in this play?

A: That is where my history research ended and my fiction began. The fictive leap I took here is that the majority of African-Americans were Christian because the majority of slave owners were Christian. The slaves were encouraged to practice the religion of their owners. So it seemed logical to make that leap. In the subsequent years since this play was first produced, I've heard from people who say they know of Jewish slave-holding families whose slaves practiced the same religion.

Q: How do you keep the character of the slave owner Caleb from being a stock villain?

A: It was important to find an honest and sympathetic way to depict a slave owner who's being confronted with his complicity in the practice. I hope that Caleb will be seen as being as much a victim of slavery as these other characters are. His life is forever changed by his actions.

Q: What do you hope people take away after watching this play?

A: That American history is a succession of crossroads and intersections, and we're a product of those intersections and all of our compromises. This is just one example of historic events colliding and becoming the past.

Q: It's interesting that the Globe is producing this play while our first black president is in office.

A: I wrote this play long before I'd ever heard of Barack Obama. I think that there's a temptation now that we have a black president to say that we've reached the mountaintop and we're done, and that is

so far from the truth. I would hope that people would look at this play — which depicts the very beginning of that journey — and remind ourselves that from 1865 to that day in November when we elected our first African-American president represents only the close of one chapter and the start of another.

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'Whipping'

Continued from Page 20

Rican performers who are evicted from their home in 1959 to make way for Lincoln Center.

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'Whipping Man' playwright examines little-known facet of slave history

- Story
- Discussion

By PAM KRAGEN - pkragen@nctimes.com | Posted: May 5, 2010 9:34 am | No Comments Posted | Print

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Jeffrey Weiser The Whipping Man playwright Matthew Lopez (front) with actors Charlie Robinson, Avery Glymph and Mark J. Sullivan. The West Coast Premiere of The Whipping Man runs at The Old Globe May 8 - June 13, 2010. Photo courtesy of The Old Globe.

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"The Whipping Man"

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Posted in Theatre on *Wednesday, May 5, 2010 9:34 am* | Tags: Entertainment Preview, Nct, Theater,
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A-LISTS theatre

MATTHEW LOPEZ

by david vera

WHIPS THEATRE INTO SHAPE



Baby-faced New Yorker Matthew Lopez has discovered the perfect formula for success. Part writer, part actor, all visionary—this relatively fresh face on the scene blends hard work and endless energy with a great sense of humor and charming modesty as he details his surprise to the widespread praise of his onstage creation, *The Whipping Man*. "...as long as they know *The Whipping Man* isn't a play about S&M," playfully jokes Lopez. No, it's certainly not...but it's every bit as fascinating. Picture it: Post-Civil War America. A bloodied Confederate soldier returns to his home where two of his family's former slaves are adjusting to the reality of becoming free men. Not bad so far! Oh, by the way, this former slave-owner is Jewish. Yup, the same kind of Jewish whose followers were enslaved forever-ago in ancient Egypt. This will certainly make for an interesting Passover!

"This play is from a Confederate point of view," cleared Lopez. "These people honestly believed that what they were doing was right—to no less degree than the people in the North did. Today I see these tea-partiers...these 'tea-baggers'...they scare the hell out of me because I see the same vitriol that was exhibited in the build-up to the Civil War."

A writer's responsibilities with cultural sensitivity are often held under a fiercely exacting lens. Under these circumstances, our young Mr. Lopez has two such groups keeping his story straight.

"The first production was done at Luna Stage in Montclair, NJ—which has a healthy population of both African Americans and Jews. I had all these African American women coming to me in tears and then right after I talked with them, a Jewish woman would come up to me in tears. Having belonged to neither group, I feel I've been able to touch and speak to members of both groups. All I ever wanted to do was tell a story that was very poignant in our understanding of ourselves as Americans."

As wonderfully dynamic as this story is, slavery and the Civil War are not topics one would immediately expect a young writer to tackle. Matthew explains why this particular notch in history called to him.

"I'd always been really fascinated by history being this succession of great events. What the history books always overlook are the average people like you and me who are living their lives and are swept up in these grand events. History is always about kings and presidents, soldiers and generals. It's never about 'us'! I've always been fascinated about 'us' in history! There was no greater calamity in U.S. history than the Civil War—as well as the idea of, 'How do you start a life as a free man after being a slave your whole life?' And the idea of Jewish slave owners. If Jews were not immune from it in the South, it must've been this all-powerful thing. I saw it as proof that we as Americans were destroyed by slavery. It was a poison pill at the center of our national identity. It warped everything and it made good men do bad things. It started our nation on very precarious footing that we are to this day still trying to get over. I don't think the election of Barack Obama, as wonderful and joyous an occasion as that was for our country, has ended the story. This isn't the end of a journey, it's merely a placeholder among many."

But who is this kid and how does he know so much? Well...a kid he's not. Matthew is actually 33 and he used to wonder whether he should lie about his age to better fit his youthful appearance and lively, upbeat demeanor. Ultimately too virtuous to do so, he relied on his work ethic to bring him success, as his immersion approach to Judaism research demonstrates.

"Having been raised Episcopalian, it was research I needed to do. I've consulted with rabbis, I've consulted with Judaic scholars, I've done my own private version of gentile Hebrew school (laughter). I know that when you are not of a group, and you're writing about that group to which you do not belong, you have a responsibility to get it right."

Writing plays has always been something Matthew loved, but he didn't consider the prospect of making a living out of it until recent years.

"I wanted to be an actor. I went to school to study acting and I went to New York to be an actor. I remember at age 7 writing little plays for my friends to do in the school yard. But it wasn't really until after I'd finished school and lived in New York for a couple years that my writing became really important to me—I discovered that I had stories to tell. And then it became all I wanted. I'd identified myself for so long as an actor—even to this day. I was telling someone, 'I have a production at The Old Globe and I feel like in some ways I'm getting away with this great con.' Someday someone's going to realize, 'Oh he's not really a writer, he's just an actor!'"

In an alternate sequence of history, if Matthew hadn't developed his exceptional ability as a storyteller, he admits that he probably would have gone into politics—not as a politician, but as an advisor or strategist.

"I think I would've been a good behind-the-scenes guy. *The West Wing* was like pornography for me (laughter). I seriously contemplated it for a while. I really thought it was something I could do because so much of it IS writing and stagecraft and...make-believe. There's very little difference between theatre and politics."

Coming to San Diego, one can imagine how alone this buoyant Brooklynite might feel, but he's in much better company than he first thought he would be.

"One advantage of being a former actor is that I know how actors work. I'm able in my writing to think like an actor. As a writer, you work alone. It can be a very lonely craft—you're sitting alone in a room and you're imagining these worlds that you hope will someday become real. You rely on a director and actors to make that happen. [Director] Giovanna Sardelli and I met about two years ago. We hit it off instantly and we knew we wanted to work together. What I love about her is that she's able to understand things both emotionally and intellectually." If anyone's earned the privilege to toast I'chaim and bask in relaxation, it's Matthew. So how does he usually take care of that?

"Oh, me relaxing? It's been so long! I wish I could say I kayak or climb mountains...nope, I'm a New Yorker! I go to the movies and I drink! (laughter) For me, an idea of fun is making dinner for friends and having them come over—which usually means having my boyfriend make dinner for them. (laughter) I moved to Brooklyn a couple years ago and I've fallen in love with Prospect Park. I've never really lived near a major park before—like sitting here in Balboa Park which is a little nicer than Prospect Park I must say....a little being A LOT."

To read the full version of this interview, visit ragemonthly.com.

The Whipping Man runs at The Old Globe Theatre from May 8 to June 13.

For tickets and play synopsis, visit theoldglobe.org.

'The Whipping Man' explores war

BY DIANA SAENGER
Contributor

Playwright Matthew Lopez brings a heartfelt and unique story set in Virginia only a few days after the Civil War to the stage of The Globe's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre.

The West Coast premiere of "The Whipping Man" takes a peek into a significant time in American history, but the play is a character-based story about a Jewish Confederate soldier and former slave owner who comes home to find his slaves about to have a Passover Seder.

"I was interested in telling an American story about how life returns to normal after a calamity," Lopez said. "The biggest calamity we've had that seemed dramatically ripe was the Civil War and Emancipation. We sort of had a dual calamity there — war and slavery.

"I wanted to explore how you go from being a slave to being free ... the psychological change within you," he said. "And while the play has historical imperatives that I had to keep in mind while writing, rather than define my characters, I like to let them speak for themselves, but I also keep some sort of boundaries so they feel like real people."

Lopez ("Tio Pepe," "Zoey's Perfect Wedding," "Reverberation") was in town for a few rehearsals. He said he is very pleased with the cast, which includes Charlie Robinson ("Fences," "My Wandering Boy" TV's "Night Court," "Roots"); Mark J. Sullivan ("The Sisters Rosensweig," "To Be or Not to Be," "A Midsummer Night's Dream"); and Avery Glymph ("Overwhelming," "Stick Fly," "The Tempest" and TV's "Ugly Betty").

Lopez also said he enjoyed his collaboration with director Giovanna Sardelli ("Wildflower," "Animals Out of Paper," "All This Intimacy," "Taking Flight").

"I've been very fortunate in my career to work with great directors, and Giovanna was a dream," Lopez said. "The relationship between writer and director can be many different things, but I was 100 percent confident in what she would do with the play.

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Charlie Robinson, Avery Glymph and Mark J. Sullivan star in the West Coast premiere of 'The Whipping Man' by Matthew Lopez, at The Old Globe. COURTESY OF THE OLD GLOBE

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LA JOLLA LIGHT

Enlightening La Jolla Since 1913

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9:46 AM

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Photo courtesy of The Old Globe

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SAN DIEGO JEWISH JOURNAL

May 2010

theater | by pat launer • photos by chris hanewinkel

SLAVERY AND FREEDOM

Jewish Confederates and a post-Civil War
Seder show up at the Old Globe in "The Whipping Man"



Clockwise from left: Charlie Robinson (Simon), Avery Glymph (John) and Mark J. Sullivan (Caleb, on floor) star in "The Whipping Man," by Matthew Lopez, at the Old Globe, May 8-June 13.

1865. RICHMOND, VA. Several days after Gen. Robert E. Lee's surrender at nearby Appomattox. A wounded Confederate captain limps up to the entrance of what was once a grand home. It used to be his family's stately residence; now it's in ruins. Caleb DeLeon is badly injured and distraught to find the place deserted. But he soon realizes it's still inhabited — by two of his family's former slaves: middle-aged Simon, who raised him, and John, Caleb's young peer, who was raised side by side with him. Like many slaves, they adopted their master's religion. Both continue to embrace and practice Judaism, and they're about to hold a Seder.

So begins the fascinating and provocative play, "The Whipping Man," by New York-based actor-turned-writer Matthew Lopez, a garrulous and gregarious young writer who's deeply passionate about his subject matter.

But before we get to the specifics of the playwright and the play, a little history is in order, since this isn't widely known information — about the South or the Jews.

At the time of the Civil War, there were about 625,000 families in the South. The Jewish population was less than 25,000, mostly clustered in the larger cities. Two thousand Jewish men served in the Confederate Army, with ranks ranging from private to colonel. (There were 10,000 Jews in the Union Army). According to population studies conducted by Lee Soltow and focused on the early 19th century, nearly 40 percent of Jewish families in the U.S. were slaveholders. In Charleston, Richmond and Savannah, more than 80 percent of Jewish households contained one or more slaves.

In "The Jewish Confederates," published in 2000, lawyer/historian Robert N. Rosen, a Charleston native, suggests that Southern society and the Confederate army and navy may have been more tolerant of Jews than Northerners. According to Rosen, Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis strongly and openly supported the Jewish community, while Grant and Sherman were demonstrably anti-Semitic.

These are little-known facts about Jewish history, and not always comfortable ones. Stories focused on the parallels between the slavery of Africans and Jews have also been left largely unexplored.

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Glymph, Robinson and Sullivan take advice from playwright Matthew Lopez (seated), who developed the idea to explore the Jewish side of the American Civil War.



In Charleston, Richmond and Savannah, more than 80 percent of Jewish households contained one or more slaves.

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Monday, May 03, 2010

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Slavery and Freedom

by Pat Launer | [May 2010](#) | [Post your comment »](#)

1865. Richmond, Virginia. Several days after General Robert E. Lee's surrender at nearby Appomattox. A wounded Confederate captain limps up to the entrance of what was once a grand home. It used to be his family's stately residence; now it's in ruins. Caleb DeLeon is badly injured and distraught to find the place deserted. But he soon realizes that it's still inhabited — by two of his family's former slaves: middle-aged Simon, who raised him, and John, Caleb's young peer, who was raised side by side with him. Like many slaves, they adopted their master's religion. Both continue to embrace and practice Judaism, and they're about to hold a Seder.

So begins the fascinating and provocative play, "The Whipping Man," by New York-based actor-turned-writer Matthew Lopez, a garrulous and gregarious young writer who's deeply passionate about his subject matter.

But before we get to the specifics of the playwright and the play, a little history is in order, since this isn't widely known information — about the South or the Jews.

At the time of the Civil War, there were about 625,000 families in the South. The Jewish population was less than 25,000, mostly clustered in the larger cities. Two thousand Jewish men served in the Confederate Army, with ranks ranging from private to colonel. (There were 10,000 Jews in the Union Army). According to population studies conducted by Lee Soltow and focused on the early 19th century, nearly 40 percent of Jewish families in the U.S. were slaveholders. In Charleston, Richmond and Savannah, more than 80 percent of Jewish households contained one or more slaves.

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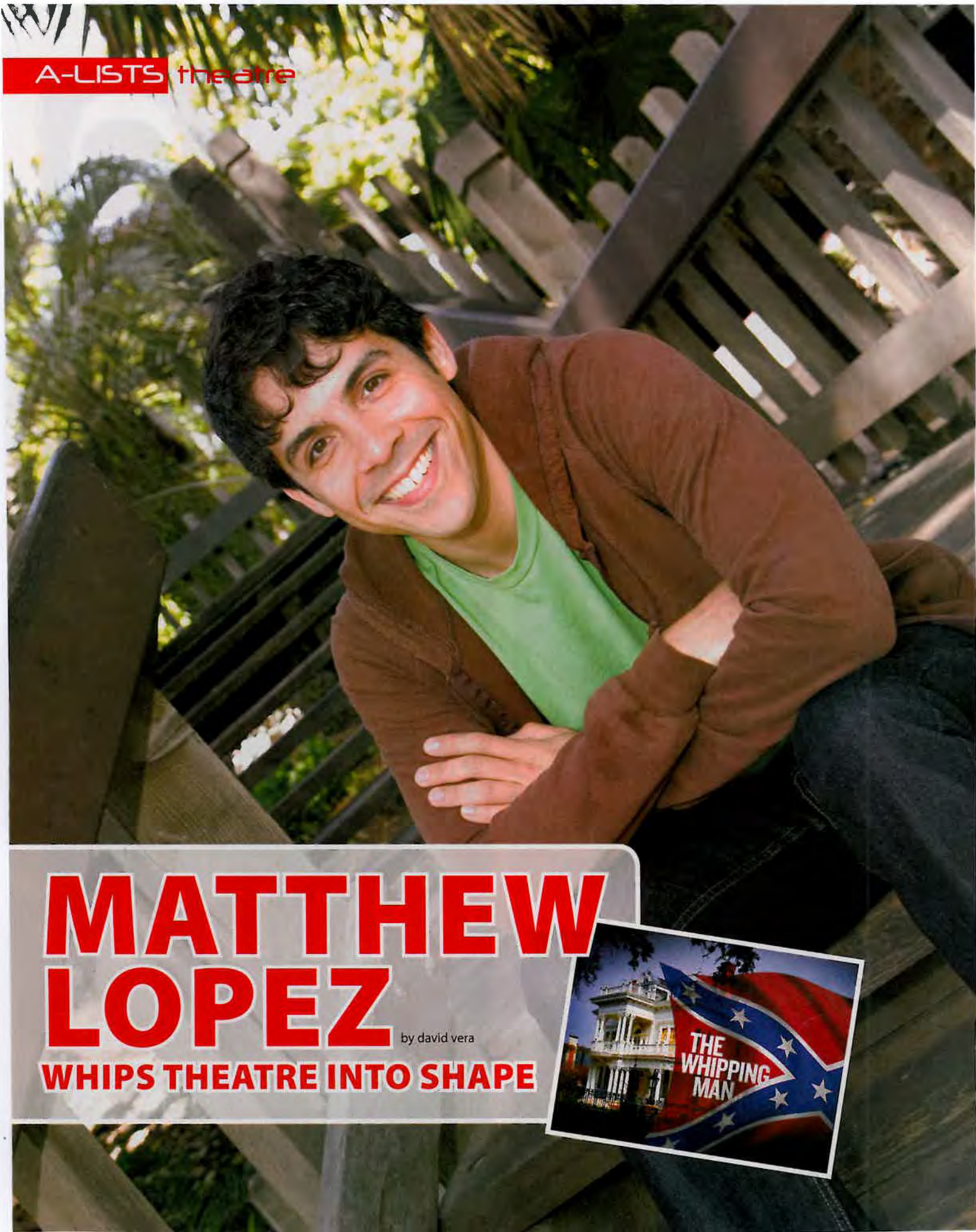
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A-LISTS theatre

MATTHEW
LOPEZ

by david vera

WHIPS THEATRE INTO SHAPE



Baby-faced New Yorker Matthew Lopez has discovered the perfect formula for success. Part writer, part actor, all visionary—this relatively fresh face on the scene blends hard work and endless energy with a great sense of humor and charming modesty as he details his surprise to the widespread praise of his onstage creation, *The Whipping Man*. "...as long as they know *The Whipping Man* isn't a play about S&M," playfully jokes Lopez. No, it's certainly not...but it's every bit as fascinating. Picture it: Post-Civil War America. A bloodied Confederate soldier returns to his home where two of his family's former slaves are adjusting to the reality of becoming free men. Not bad so far! Oh, by the way, this former slave-owner is Jewish. Yup, the same kind of Jewish whose followers were enslaved forever-ago in ancient Egypt. This will certainly make for an interesting Passover!

"This play is from a Confederate point of view," cleared Lopez. "These people honestly believed that what they were doing was right—to no less degree than the people in the North did. Today I see these tea-partiers...these 'tea-baggers'...they scare the hell out of me because I see the same vitriol that was exhibited in the build-up to the Civil War."

A writer's responsibilities with cultural sensitivity are often held under a fiercely exacting lens. Under these circumstances, our young Mr. Lopez has two such groups keeping his story straight.

"The first production was done at Luna Stage in Montclair, NJ—which has a healthy population of both African Americans and Jews. I had all these African American women coming to me in tears and then right after I talked with them, a Jewish woman would come up to me in tears. Having belonged to neither group, I feel I've been able to touch and speak to members of both groups. All I ever wanted to do was tell a story that was very poignant in our understanding of ourselves as Americans."

As wonderfully dynamic as this story is, slavery and the Civil War are not topics one would immediately expect a young writer to tackle. Matthew explains why this particular notch in history called to him.

"I'd always been really fascinated by history being this succession of great events. What the history books always overlook are the average people like you and me who are living their lives and are swept up in these grand events. History is always about kings and presidents, soldiers and generals. It's never about 'us'! I've always been fascinated about 'us' in history! There was no greater calamity in U.S. history than the Civil War—as well as the idea of, 'How do you start a life as a free man after being a slave your whole life?' And the idea of Jewish slave owners. If Jews were not immune from it in the South, it must've been this all-powerful thing. I saw it as proof that we as Americans were destroyed by slavery. It was a poison pill at the center of our national identity. It warped everything and it made good men do bad things. It started our nation on very precarious footing that we are to this day still trying to get over. I don't think the election of Barack Obama, as wonderful and joyous an occasion as that was for our country, has ended the story. This isn't the end of a journey, it's merely a placeholder among many."

But who is this kid and how does he know so much? Well...a kid he's not. Matthew is actually 33 and he used to wonder whether he should lie about his age to better fit his youthful appearance and lively, upbeat demeanor. Ultimately too virtuous to do so, he relied on his work ethic to bring him success, as his immersion approach to Judaism research demonstrates.

"Having been raised Episcopalian, it was research I needed to do. I've consulted with rabbis, I've consulted with Judaic scholars, I've done my own private version of gentile Hebrew school (laughter). I know that when you are not of a group, and you're writing about that group to which you do not belong, you have a responsibility to get it right."

Writing plays has always been something Matthew loved, but he didn't consider the prospect of making a living out of it until recent years.

"I wanted to be an actor. I went to school to study acting and I went to New York to be an actor. I remember at age 7 writing little plays for my friends to do in the school yard. But it wasn't really until after I'd finished school and lived in New York for a couple years that my writing became really important to me—I discovered that I had stories to tell. And then it became all I wanted. I'd identified myself for so long as an actor—even to this day. I was telling someone, 'I have a production at The Old Globe and I feel like in some ways I'm getting away with this great con.' Someday someone's going to realize, 'Oh he's not really a writer, he's just an actor!'"

In an alternate sequence of history, if Matthew hadn't developed his exceptional ability as a storyteller, he admits that he probably would have gone into politics—not as a politician, but as an advisor or strategist.

"I think I would've been a good behind-the-scenes guy. *The West Wing* was like pornography for me (laughter). I seriously contemplated it for a while. I really thought it was something I could do because so much of it is writing and stagecraft and...make-believe. There's very little difference between theatre and politics."

Coming to San Diego, one can imagine how alone this buoyant Brooklynite might feel, but he's in much better company than he first thought he would be.

"One advantage of being a former actor is that I know how actors work. I'm able in my writing to think like an actor. As a writer, you work alone. It can be a very lonely craft—you're sitting alone in a room and you're imagining these worlds that you hope will someday become real. You rely on a director and actors to make that happen. [Director] Giovanna Sardelli and I met about two years ago. We hit it off instantly and we knew we wanted to work together. What I love about her is that she's able to understand things both emotionally and intellectually." If anyone's earned the privilege to toast l'chaim and bask in relaxation, it's Matthew. So how does he usually take care of that?

"Oh, me relaxing? It's been so long! I wish I could say I kayak or climb mountains...nope, I'm a New Yorker! I go to the movies and I drink! (laughter) For me, an idea of fun is making dinner for friends and having them come over—which usually means having my boyfriend make dinner for them. (laughter) I moved to Brooklyn a couple years ago and I've fallen in love with Prospect Park. I've never really lived near a major park before—like sitting here in Balboa Park which is a little nicer than Prospect Park I must say. ...a little being A LOT."

To read the full version of this interview, visit ragemonthly.com.

The Whipping Man runs at The Old Globe Theatre from May 8 to June 13.

For tickets and play synopsis, visit theoldglobe.org.

'The Whipping Man' explores war, slavery

BY DIANA SAENGER
Contributor

Playwright Matthew Lopez brings a heartfelt and unique story set in Virginia only a few days after the Civil War to the stage of The Globe's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre.

The West Coast premiere of "The Whipping Man" takes a peek into a significant time in American history, but the play is a character-based story about a Jewish Confederate soldier and former slave owner who comes home to find his slaves about to have a Passover Seder.

"I was interested in telling an American story about how life returns to normal after a calamity," Lopez said. "The biggest calamity we've had that seemed dramatically ripe was the Civil War and Emancipation. We sort of had a dual calamity there — war and slavery.

"I wanted to explore how you go from being a slave to being free ... the psychological change within you," he said. "And while the play has



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Lopez ("Tio Pepe," "Zoey's Perfect Wedding," "Reverberation") was in town for a few rehearsals. He said he is very pleased with the cast, which includes Charlie Robinson ("Fences," "My Wandering Boy" TV's "Night Court," "Roots"); Mark J. Sullivan ("The Sisters Rosensweig," "To Be or Not to Be," "A Midsummer Night's Dream"); and Avery Glymph ("Overwhelming," "Stick Fly," "The Tempest" and TV's "Ugly Betty").

Lopez also said he enjoyed his collaboration with director Giovanna Sardelli ("Wildflower," "Animals Out of Paper," "All This Intimacy," "Taking Flight").

"I've been very fortunate in my career to work with great directors, and Giovanna was a dream," Lopez said. "The relationship between writer and director can be many different things, but I was 100 percent confident in what she would



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Whipping Man" as a reminder that history "is not always as we were told, and is not always dry."

"My play's about three people in crisis, stuck in a space ... and how to survive," Lopez said. "American history is filled with intersections of different races, religions and experiences, and what makes our country so unique is we are a result of those intersections of the past."

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Gay in the Berkshires

Monday, May 10, 2010

[Getting familiar with Matthew Lopez and "The Whipping Man"](#)



[Playwright Matthew Lopez started out as an actor, but found that writing used his talents best.](#)

Playwrights like Matthew Lopez have a keen eye and ear for what turns audiences on, and, it turns out that Matthew has a finely tuned sense of irony and humor as well. Here's a video he recently shared. This takeoff on *Dreamgirls* by Israel Cortez (who could be his stunt double) is a hoot, a real knee slapper. Creative souls need lots of clever nourishment to keep the good stuff coming, and the video proves that good performances are a lot more than just lip synching.

While the Matthew Lopez drama *The Whipping Man* is serious rather than funny, it is a fascinating look into a subject you have probably never thought about.

Lopez likes to write about underdogs ... people who don't make it into the history books but are somehow caught up in the wheels of historic events. One of his plays is about a young man dealing with the after-effects of a gay-bashing. Another is about a New York family of Puerto Rican performers who are evicted from their home in 1959 to make way for Lincoln Center. The Whipping Man tackles an even more arcane subject.

It's about a post-Civil War Jewish Confederate soldier and his former slaves, who share his faith. He returns home to find the place ruined, but with his now freed slaves still there. Filled with twists and turns, Lopez's play examines Caleb's moral ambiguity, Simon's guileless loyalty to his former owner, John's ideas as a newly radical freeman, and the approaching Exodus in the post-Emancipation South. The production will feature Clarke Peters (HBO's *Treme* and *The Wire*), LeRoy McClain and Nick Westrate. Christopher Innvar directs the Barrington Stage production at Stage 2 (36 Linden Street , Pittsfield).

Matthew Lopez will be the subject of a future article I am working on for [Berkshire On Stage](#).



[In San Diego: Matthew Lopez \(front\) with actors Charlie Robinson, Avery Glymph and Mark J. Sullivan. The West Coast Premiere of *The Whipping Man* runs at The Old Globe May 8 - June 13, 2010. Photo courtesy of The Old Globe.](#)

The Whipping Man has just begun rehearsals at Barrington Stage Company. There will be several low cost previews beginning on May 26 with the official opening May 29. It will have a second, and almost simultaneous opening at the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego. Lopez was just named playwright in residence for that company.

For more information and tickets, visit and be sure to check out for the latest theatre and casting news.

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Avery Glymph, Charlie Robinson, Mark J. Sullivan Set for Old Globe's *Whipping Man*

 By: **Dan Bacalzo** · Apr 16, 2010 · San Diego

Avery Glymph, Charlie Robinson, and Mark J. Sullivan will star in the Old Globe Theatre's production of Matthew Lopez's *The Whipping Man*, to run May 8-June 13, with an opening set for May 13. Giovanna Sardelli will direct.

Set in Virginia following the final days of the Civil War, a Jewish Confederate soldier returns to his childhood home, only to find it in ruins and occupied by his former slaves who are preparing for a Passover Seder.

The creative team will include Robert Mark Morgan (scenic design), Denitsa D. Bliznakova (costume design), Lap Chi Chu (lighting design), and Jill BC DuBoff (sound design).

For more information, visit www.TheOldGlobe.org.



Charlie Robinson, Avery Glymph
 and Mark J. Sullivan
 in *The Whipping Man*
 (courtesy of The Old Globe)



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Glymph, Robinson, Sullivan Are Trio of West Coast Whipping Man Premiere

By [Kenneth Jones](#)

16 Apr 2010

The Old Globe Theatre's West Coast premiere of Matthew Lopez's *The Whipping Man*, the post-Civil War-set play about a Jewish Confederate soldier and his former slaves, who share his faith, will feature Avery Glymph, Charlie Robinson and Mark J. Sullivan.

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Giovanna Sardelli will direct the San Diego production at the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre. Performances play May 8-June 13. Opening night is May 13.

The small-cast play is becoming a popular title in regional theatres.

According to Old Globe notes, "Set in Virginia following the final days of the Civil War, a Jewish Confederate soldier (Sullivan) returns to his childhood home, only to find it in ruins and occupied by his former slaves (Glymph and Robinson) who are preparing for a Passover Seder. Though a new chapter of history is unfolding, dangerous secrets of the past threaten to destroy their family, their connected history and their shared faith."

Lopez's play *Tio Pepe* was presented at The Public Theater as part of Summer Play Festival 2008. His other plays include *Zoey's Perfect Wedding* and *Reverberation*. *The Whipping Man* premiered at Luna Stage in Montclair, NJ, and has received productions at Penumbra Theatre Company in St. Paul, Caldwell Theatre in Boca Raton, FL, and will open at Barrington Stage Company in Massachusetts in May.

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Broadway's *The Tempest* and Off-Broadway's *McRee*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *Maid* and *Hope Is the Thing With Feathers*.

Robinson recently appeared as Troy in South Coast Repertory's production of August Wilson's *Fences*, a role for which he previously won the 2006 Ovation Award for Best Actor in a Play, and portrayed for six months at Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Sullivan was last seen at The Old Globe in *The Sisters Rosensweig*. His New York credits include Broadway's *To Be or Not to Be* and Off-Broadway's *The Dining Room*.

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For tickets and information, visit www.TheOldGlobe.org.

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Photo Flash: Glymph, Robinson Lead Cast of Old Globe's THE WHIPPING MAN



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Friday, April 16, 2010; Posted: 01:04 PM - by [BWW News Desk](#)



ADD THIS

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The cast features [Avery Glymph](#) (John), [Charlie Robinson](#) (Simon) and [Mark J. Sullivan](#) (Caleb).

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Louisville), Lost Creek Township (Crossroads Theatre, Regional Tony Award Season) and Fences (Cape Fear Regional Theatre). His film and television credits include "Ugly Betty," "Oz," "Law and Order," "Law and Order: Criminal Intent," "One Life to Live," "The Electric Company," "X-Files," "Becker," "Cosby," "Spin City," "Titus," "The Beat," Last Ball, He Got Game, 13 Conversations About One Thing, Shift and I'm with Lucy.

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[Mark J. Sullivan](#) was last seen at [The Old Globe](#) in The Sisters Rosensweig. His Broadway credits include To Be or Not to Be ([Manhattan Theatre Club](#)). Sullivan's Off Broadway credits include The Dining Room ([Keen Company](#), Drama Desk Award) and Surface to Air ([Symphony Space](#)). Sullivan's regional credits include A Midsummer Night's Dream (Actors Theatre of Louisville), The Dining Room (The Dorset Theatre Festival), After Ashley ([Helen Hayes](#) Award nomination) and Big Death, Little Death (Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company), Measure for Measure ([Helen Hayes](#) Award) and Melissa Arctic (Folger Shakespeare Theatre), A Midsummer Night's Dream ([Shakespeare Theatre Company](#)), Shear Madness (Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts) and The Cripple of Inishmaan (The [Studio Theatre](#)). His television credits include "Kings," "As the World Turns" and "One Life to Live."

TICKETS to The Whipping Man are currently on sale and can be purchased online at [www.TheOldGlobe.org](#), by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the box office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park. Performances begin on May 8 and continue through June 13. Ticket prices range from \$29-\$62. Performance times: Previews: Saturday, May 8 at 8:00 p.m., Sunday May 9 at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, May 12, at 7:00 p.m., Wednesday, May 13 at 7:00 p.m. Regular Performances: Tuesday and Wednesday evenings at 7:00 p.m., Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings at 8:00 p.m., Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2:00 p.m., and Sunday evenings at 7:00 p.m. Discounts are available for full-time students, patrons 29 years of age and under, seniors and groups of 10 or more.

The Globe's year-long 75th Anniversary celebration begins with the 2010 Summer Season. Acclaimed director [Adrian Noble](#) is the Artistic Director of the 2010 Shakespeare Festival and will direct Shakespeare's King Lear (June 12 - Sept. 23) and [Alan Bennett](#)'s The Madness of George III (June 19 - Sept. 24). Presented in repertory, the Shakespeare Festival will also include The Taming of the Shrew (June 16 - Sept. 26). The season also features the World Premiere of the Broadway-bound musical, Robin and the 7 Hoods (July 14 - Aug. 22) directed by [Casey Nicholaw](#) with lyrics by [Sammy Cahn](#) and music by [Jimmy Van Heusen](#), and the West Coast Premiere of The Last Romance directed by Rick Seer (July 30 - Sept. 5), a romantic comedy by [Joe DiPietro](#) starring television icon, [Marion Ross](#). Tickets to the Globe's 2010 Summer Season are currently available by subscription only.

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LOCATION: [The Old Globe](#) is located in San Diego's Balboa Park at 1363 Old Globe Way. There are numerous free parking lots available throughout the park. Valet parking is also available (\$10). For additional parking information visit [www.BalboaPark.org](#).

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Photos courtesy of [The Old Globe](#).

[Avery Glymph](#), [Mark J. Sullivan](#), [Charlie Robinson](#), [Matthew Lopez](#), [Lou Spisto](#) and [Giovanna Sardelli](#)



The Whipping Man Art



[Charlie Robinson](#), [Avery Glymph](#), Matthew Lopez and [Mark J. Sullivan](#)



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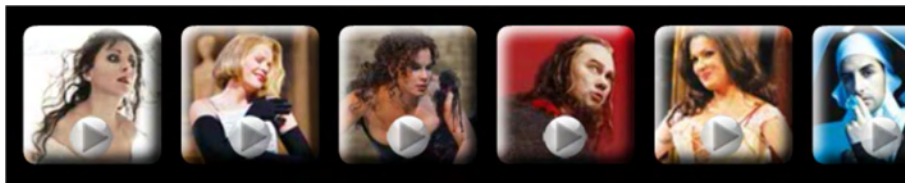


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The Whipping Man Begins May 8; Lopez Named Old Globe Playwright-in-Residence

By [Kenneth Jones](#)

08 May 2010



Charlie Robinson, Avery Glymph and Mark J. Sullivan
photo by courtesy of The Old Globe

The Old Globe Theatre's West Coast premiere of Matthew Lopez's *The Whipping Man*, the post-Civil War-set play about a Jewish Confederate soldier and his former slaves — who share his faith — begins May 8, two days after Lopez was named Old Globe's playwright-in-residence.

The production features Avery Glymph, Charlie Robinson and Mark J. Sullivan. Giovanna Sardelli directs the San Diego production at the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre. Performances play to June 13. Opening night is May 13.

The small-cast play is becoming a popular title in regional theatres. A separate staging will play Barrington Stage in Massachusetts starting May 26. That will

be the New England premiere.

According to Old Globe notes, "Set in Virginia following the final days of the Civil War, a Jewish Confederate soldier (Sullivan) returns to his childhood home, only to find it in ruins and occupied by his former slaves (Glymph and Robinson) who are preparing for a Passover Seder. Though a new chapter of history is unfolding, dangerous secrets of the past threaten to destroy their family, their connected history and their shared faith."

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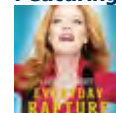


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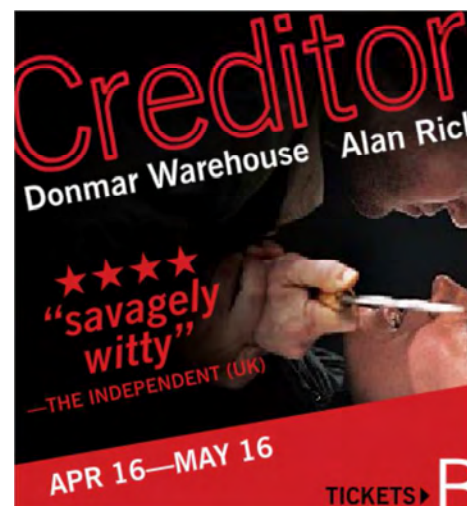
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Tuesday, May 11, 2010; Posted: 01:05 PM - by [BWW News Desk](#)

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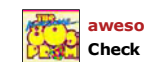
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Improvement" and now to recur in "The Secret Life of the American Teenager." Robinson has performed countless guest roles in shows such as "House," "Big Love" and "Cold Case." He also is a Cammie Award Winner for the made-for-television movies Miss Lettie and Me and Secret Santa. His television credits also include Roots: The Next Generation, "King" and "Buffalo Soldiers." His film credits include Apocalypse Now, The River, Gray Lady Down, Beowulf, Set It off, Antwone Fisher, Even Money, Jackson, Steam, Natural Disasters, Sweet Kandy and House Bunny.

Mark J. Sullivan was last seen at [The Old Globe](#) in The Sisters Rosensweig. His Broadway credits include To Be or Not to Be ([Manhattan Theatre Club](#)). Sullivan's Off Broadway credits include The Dining Room ([Keen Company](#), Drama Desk Award) and Surface to Air ([Symphony Space](#)). Sullivan's regional credits include A Midsummer Night's Dream (Actors [Theatre Of Louisville](#)), The Dining Room (The Dorset Theatre Festival), After Ashley ([Helen Hayes](#) Award nomination) and Big Death, Little Death (Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company), Measure for Measure ([Helen Hayes](#) Award) and Melissa Arctic (Folger Shakespeare Theatre), A Midsummer Night's Dream ([Shakespeare Theatre Company](#)), Shear Madness (Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts) and The Cripple of Inishmaan (The [Studio Theatre](#)). His television credits include "Kings," "As the World Turns" and "One Life to Live."

TICKETS to The Whipping Man are currently on sale and can be purchased online at [www.TheOldGlobe.org](#), by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the box office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park. Performances begin on May 8 and continue through June 13. Ticket prices range from \$29-\$62. Performance times: Previews: Saturday, May 8 at 8:00 p.m., Sunday May 9 at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, May 12, at 7:00 p.m., Wednesday, May 13 at 7:00 p.m. Regular Performances: Tuesday and Wednesday evenings at 7:00 p.m., Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings at 8:00 p.m., Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2:00 p.m., and Sunday evenings at 7:00 p.m. Discounts are available for full-time students, patrons 29 years of age and under, seniors and groups of 10 or more.

The Globe's year-long 75th Anniversary celebration begins with the 2010 Summer Season. Acclaimed director [Adrian Noble](#) is the Artistic Director of the 2010 Shakespeare Festival and will direct Shakespeare's King Lear (June 12 - Sept. 23) and [Alan Bennett](#)'s The Madness of George III (June 19 - Sept. 24). Presented in repertory, the Shakespeare Festival will also include The Taming of the Shrew (June 16 - Sept. 26). The season also features the World Premiere of the Broadway-bound musical, Robin and the 7 Hoods (July 14 - Aug. 22) directed by [Casey Nicholaw](#) with lyrics by [Sammy Cahn](#) and music by [Jimmy Van Heusen](#), and the West Coast Premiere of The Last Romance directed by Rick Seer (July 30 - Sept. 5), a romantic comedy by [Joe DiPietro](#) starring television icon, [Marion Ross](#). Tickets to the Globe's 2010 Summer Season are currently available by subscription only.

SEASON SUBSCRIPTIONS offer substantial savings with special subscriber benefits. Subscriptions can be purchased online at [www.TheOldGlobe.org](#), by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE [234-5623] or by visiting the box office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park. Subscriptions to the Globe's Summer Season range from \$75 to \$365. Five-play packages range from \$146 to \$372. Four-play packages (Festival plus musical) range from \$117 to \$316. Shakespeare Festival packages (3 plays) range from \$75 to \$228. Discounts are available for full-time students, patrons 29 years of age and younger, seniors and groups of 10 or more.

LOCATION: [The Old Globe](#) is located in San Diego's Balboa Park at 1363 Old Globe Way. There are numerous free parking lots available throughout the park. Valet parking is also available (\$10). For additional parking information visit [www.BalboaPark.org](#).

Photo credit: [Craig Schwartz](#)

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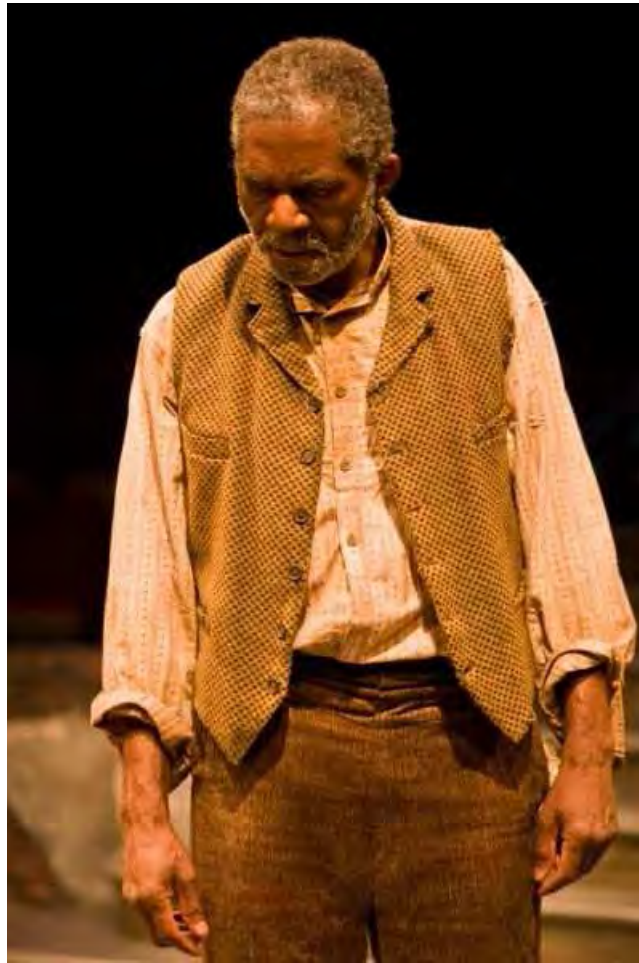
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[Charlie Robinson](#) as Simon, [Avery Glymph](#) and [Mark J. Sullivan](#)



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DIANNE
WIESTPHOTO CALL: *The Whipping Man* at The Old Globe

By Krissie Fullerton

12 May 2010

Charlie Robinson stars in The Old Globe Theatre presentation of Matthew Lopez's post-Civil War-set *The Whipping Man* about a Jewish Confederate soldier and his former slaves who share his faith.

Advertisement



Set in Virginia following the final days of the Civil War, a Jewish Confederate soldier returns to his childhood home, only to find it in ruins and occupied by his former slaves who are preparing for a Passover Seder. Though a new chapter of history is unfolding, dangerous secrets of the past threaten to destroy their family, their connected history and their shared faith. *The Whipping Man* is a moving and provocative look at a pivotal time in American history.

The production features Avery Glymph, Charlie Robinson and Mark J. Sullivan. Giovanna Sardelli directs the San Diego production at the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre.

Here's a look at the production:

View the Entire Photo Gallery



Charlie Robinson
Photo by Craig Schwartz

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The Whipping Man



The Whipping Man

The Old Globe

Set in Virginia following the final days of the Civil War, a Jewish Confederate soldier returns to his childhood home, only to find it in ruins and occupied by his former slaves who are preparing for a Passover Seder. Though a new chapter of history is unfolding, dangerous secrets of the past threaten to destroy their family, their connected history and their shared faith. *The Whipping Man* is a moving and provocative look at a pivotal time in American history. The Civil War drama is directed by Giovanna Sardelli and will run in the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre May 8 – June 13. Previews run from May 8 – May 12. Opening night is May 13 at 8:00 p.m.

The cast features Avery Glymph (John), Charlie Robinson (Simon) and Mark J. Sullivan (Caleb). Avery Glymph most recently appeared in *Overwhelming and Stick Fly* at the Contemporary American Theater Festival. Glymph's Broadway credits include *The Tempest* and his Off Broadway credits include *McRee* (Roundabout Theatre Company), *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Troilus and Cressida* (NY Shakespeare Festival), *Maid* (Lincoln Center Theater) and *'Hope' Is the Thing With Feathers* (Drama Department).

Charlie Robinson recently appeared as Troy in South Coast Repertory's production of *August Wilson's Fences*, a role for which he previously won the 2006 Ovation Award for Best Actor in a Play, and portrayed for six months at Oregon Shakespeare Festival. He was also seen at South Coast Repertory in *The Piano Lesson* and the world premiere of *My Wandering Boy*. He is best known for his television credits, especially as Mac in "Night Court," as well as regulars in "Buffalo Bill," "Love & War," "Ink," and "Buddy Faro," recurring roles in "Home Improvement" and now to recur in "The Secret Life of the American Teenager."

Mark J. Sullivan was last seen at The Old Globe in *The Sisters Rosensweig*. His Broadway credits include *To Be or Not to Be* (Manhattan Theatre Club). Sullivan's Off Broadway credits include *The Dining Room* (Keen Company, Drama Desk Award) and *Surface to Air* (Symphony

Space). Sullivan's regional credits include *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Actors Theatre of Louisville), *The Dining Room* (The Dorset Theatre Festival), *After Ashley* (Helen Hayes Award nomination) and *Big Death, Little Death* (Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company), *Measure for Measure* (Helen Hayes Award) and *Melissa Arctic* (Folger Shakespeare Theatre), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Shakespeare Theatre Company), *Shear Madness* (Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts) and *The Cripple of Inishmaan* (The Studio Theatre).

INSIGHT SEMINAR

Monday, May 10 at 6:00pm

Seminar series features a panel of artists from the current show. FREE

OUT AT THE GLOBE

Thursday, May 13, 6:30pm–8:00pm \$21

An evening for GLBT theater lovers with a hosted wine and martini bar, appetizers and door prizes.

(Show sold separately.)

THANK GLOBE IT'S FRIDAY

Friday, May 14, 6:30pm–8:00pm \$21

Friday pre-show bash includes wine, martinis, appetizers, dessert and live music. (Show sold separately.)

POST-SHOW FORUMS

Tuesday, May 25 & June 1 and Wednesday, June 9

Discuss the play with members of the cast following the performance. FREE

Tickets to *The Whipping Man* are currently on sale and can be purchased online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the box office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park.

Performances begin on May 8 and continue through June 13. Ticket prices range from \$29-\$62. Performance times: Previews: Saturday, May 8 at 8:00 p.m., Sunday May 9 at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, May 12, at 7:00 p.m., Wednesday, May 13 at 7:00 p.m. Regular Performances: Tuesday and Wednesday evenings at 7:00 p.m., Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings at 8:00 p.m., Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2:00 p.m., and Sunday evenings at 7:00 p.m.

Discounts are available for full-time students, patrons 29 years of age and under, seniors and groups of 10 or more.

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The Old Globe presents "The Whipping Man" through June 13

SDGLN Staff | Thu, 05/13/2010 - 10:30am | Login to bookmark or comment

SAN DIEGO -- "The Whipping Man" is a moving and provocative look at a pivotal time in American history.

Set in Virginia following the final days of the Civil War, a Jewish Confederate soldier returns to his childhood home, only to find it in ruins and occupied by his former slaves who are preparing for a Passover seder. Though a new chapter of history is unfolding, dangerous secrets of the past threaten to destroy their family, their connected history and their shared faith.

The cast features Avery Glymph (John), Charlie Robinson (Simon) and Mark J. Sullivan (Caleb).

The creative team includes Robert Mark Morgan (scenic design), Denitsa D. Bliznakova (costume design), Lap Chi Chu (lighting design), Jill BC DuBoff (sound design) and Diana Moser (stage manager).

View "The Whipping Man" program [online](#).

Opening night is at 8 tonight, May 13. To see the performance schedule and for ticket information visit SDGLN's [Events Calendar](#).

Additional production events:

Out At The Globe

Thursday, May 13, 6:30 to 8 p.m. \$21

An evening for GLBT theater lovers with a hosted wine and martini bar, appetizers and door prizes.
(Show sold separately.)

Thank Glove It's Friday

Friday, May 14, 6:30 to 8 p.m. \$21

Friday pre-show bash includes wine, martinis, appetizers, dessert and live music. (Show sold separately.)

Post-show forums

Tuesday, May 25 and June 1, and Wednesday, June 9

Discuss the play with members of the cast following the performance. FREE.

Location

The Old Globe is located in San Diego's Balboa Park at 1363 Old Globe Way. Free parking is available throughout the park. Valet parking is also available for \$10. For parking information, visit www.BalboaPark.org.

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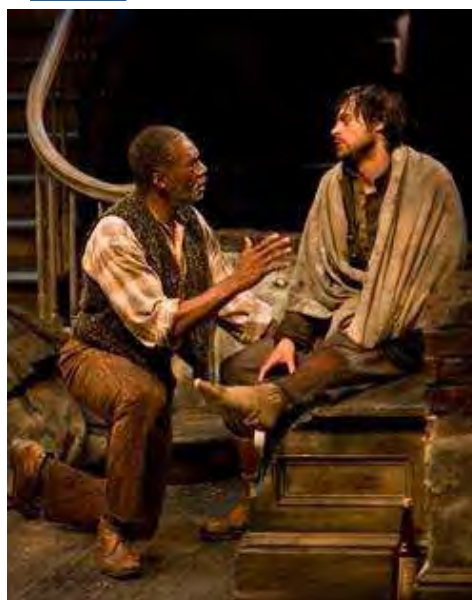


Photo credit: Craig Schwartz

Charlie Robinson as Simon and Mark J. Sullivan as Caleb

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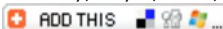
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Thursday, May 6, 2010; Posted: 01:05 PM - by [BWW News Desk](#)

Old Globe Executive Producer [Lou Spisto](#) today announced that [Matthew Lopez](#) has been named Playwright-in-Residence. The two-year residency includes a commission for a new play. Lopez will also take part in the Globe's education outreach and audience development activities. His plays include Zoey's Perfect Wedding, Reverberation and Tio Pepe, which was presented at [The Public Theater](#) as part of the 2008 Summer Play Festival. His work has also been seen and developed at [Manhattan Theatre Club](#), [The New Group](#), [McCarter Theatre Center](#), [Ars Nova](#) and the Lark Play Development Center. Lopez's Civil War drama, *The Whipping Man*, is currently receiving its West Coast Premiere in the Globe's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre through June 13.

"[Matthew Lopez](#) is an emerging voice in the American theater," said Spisto. "A fresh perspective and a narrative drive are the hallmarks of his developing talent. This residency will give him some time and opportunity to grow as a writer and learn more about his work as audiences respond to it."

The Whipping Man is set in Virginia following the final days of the Civil War. When a Jewish Confederate soldier returns to his childhood home, only to find it in ruins and occupied by his former slaves who are preparing for a Passover Seder, dangerous secrets of the past threaten to destroy their family, their connected history and their shared faith. [Avery Glymph](#), [Charlie Robinson](#) and [Mark J. Sullivan](#) star in the West Coast Premiere. Directed by [Giovanna Sardelli](#). *The Whipping Man* will run in the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre May 8 - June 13. Tickets can be purchased online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the Box Office.

LOCATION: [The Old Globe](#) is located in San Diego's Balboa Park at 1363 Old Globe Way. There are numerous free parking lots available throughout the park. Valet parking is also available (\$10). For additional parking information visit www.BalboaPark.org.

The Tony Award-winning Old Globe is one of the country's leading professional regional theaters and has stood as San Diego's flagship arts institution for 75 years. Under the direction of Executive Producer [Louis G. Spisto](#), [The Old Globe](#) produces a year-round season of 15 productions of classic, contemporary and new works on its three Balboa Park stages: the 580-seat [Old Globe Theatre](#), the 250-seat Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre and the 612-seat outdoor Lowell Davies [Festival Theatre](#), home of its internationally renowned Shakespeare Festival. More than 300,000 people attend Globe productions annually and participate in the theater's education and community programs. Numerous world premieres such as *The Full Monty*, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, *A Catered Affair*, and the annual holiday musical, [Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas!](#), have been developed at [The Old Globe](#) and have gone on to enjoy highly successful runs on Broadway and at regional theaters across the country.

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THEATER NEWS

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Adrian Noble to Give Free Lecture at Old Globe; Matthew Lopez Named Playwright-in-Residence

By: [Dan Bacalzo](#) · May 6, 2010 · San Diego

Old Globe Theatre's artistic director Adrian Noble will give a free lecture and host an open forum, entitled *An Evening with Adrian Noble*, on Wednesday, June 2 at 7pm.

Noble will discuss his approach to the perennial issues of performing Shakespeare sprinkled with anecdotes drawn from his several decades of directing experience and answer questions from the audience. The event will be followed by a book signing of Noble's *How to Do Shakespeare* in the theater's lobby.

In related news, the Old Globe has named Matthew Lopez as Playwright-in-Residence. The two-year residency includes a commission for a new play, and Lopez will also take part in the Globe's education outreach and audience development activities. The theater is presenting the West Coast premiere of Lopez's *The Whipping Man*, May 8-June 13, while the playwright's other works include *Zoey's Perfect Wedding*, *Reverberation* and *Tio Pepe*.

For more information, visit www.TheOldGlobe.org.



Adrian Noble
(© Ken Howard)



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Old Globe's education outreach and audience development



activities. His plays include *Zoey's Perfect Wedding*, *Reverberation* and *Tio Pepe*, which was presented at The Public Theater as part of the 2008 Summer Play Festival. His work

has also been seen and developed at Manhattan Theatre Club, The New Group, McCarter Theatre Center, Ars Nova and the Lark Play Development Center. **Matthew's** Civil War drama, *The Whipping Man*, is currently receiving its West Coast Premiere in the Globe's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre through June 13.

SAN DIEGO INTERNATIONAL TIMES

April 16, 2010

YU YU

"The Whipping Man" 『ザ ウィッピング マン』

南北戦争後の主人と元奴隷の微妙な関係／西海岸プレミアの戯曲

③ 1865 年春。アメリカ南北戦争が終了した日に、ユダヤ人の南部連合軍兵士カレブ・デレオンは家族が所有するバージニア州リッチモンドの邸宅へ戻ってくる。ところが、家は崩壊し、デレオン家が所有していた元奴隷たちに占領されていた。負傷しているカレブは元奴隷のサイモンとジョンに傷の手当てをしてくれるよう頼む。かつて、奴隷たちは主人の信仰に倣うことが義務づけられており、彼らはユダヤ教の儀式の準備を行っていた。「過ぎ越し祭」は祖先が神の指示に従い、圧制が続くエジプトから脱出できたことを祝うユダヤ教最大の祭で、それは奇しくも奴隷解放と重なるのだった。3人は儀式を共に祝うことになり…。

④ ニュージャージー州で初演を迎え、西海岸でプレミアとなるマシュー・ロベスによる戯曲。バージニア州を中心にユダヤ人もユダヤ人奴隷を所有していたという、歴史的にあまり知られていない事実を背景に、南北戦争が終息したばかりの混乱する世の中で、主人と奴隷2人の微妙な関係を描く。

① THE GLOBE THEATRES (Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre), 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park / 619-239-2255(T)。期間—5/8(土)～6/13(日)。上演—火・水曜: 7pm、木・金曜: 8pm、土曜: 2pm & 8pm、日曜: 2pm & 7pm。チケット—\$29～\$62。http://www.oldglobe.org



The Whipping Man / The Globe Theatres

NORTH COUNTY TIMES

May 9, 2010

❖ ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

SUNDAY, MAY 9



"THE WHIPPING MAN" — The Old Globe presents Matthew Lopez's drama about a Jewish Confederate soldier returning to his childhood home, only to find it in ruins and occupied by his former slaves, who are preparing for a Seder; previews: 7 p.m. (also Tuesday and Wednesday); regular run begins 8 p.m. Thursday (also 8 p.m. Friday, 2 and 8 p.m. Saturday and 2 and 7 p.m. May 16); runs through June 13; Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, Old Globe complex, Balboa Park, San Diego; \$29-\$62; 619-234-5623 or www.theoldglobe.org.

Friday, May. 14 2010 - Updated:

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PERFORMING ARTS

Tense interplay takes stage at Ion, Diversionary

The misfits who populate two just-opened local plays — "Frankie & Johnny in the ...

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[Why is this play different from other ...](#)
[Pucker up: It's time to kiss and tell \(us\)](#)
[Backstage Pass: Fol-de-rol and Fiddle Dee Dee](#)
[Salute to Chopin a burst of energy](#)

MORE ARTS

This is your brain on art: discussing neuroscience and creativity

Catch a forum with San Diego sculptor Roman de Salvo and Dr. V.S. Ramachandran, ...



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['All That Glitters' mines the science, history of gems](#)
[Q&A: Diane Bell talks to Martha Longenecker](#)

THEATER BLOG: HOUSE SEATS

Get knighted by Richie's mom! Globe to host open house

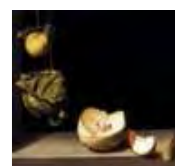
News on another Old Globe-related event -- this one a kickoff to the theater's ...

[Craig Noel tribute moves across the park](#)
[Diversionary puts a new season in play](#)
["Surf Report," Johnny Legs and more total drama](#)
[Charlie in the 'house: La Jolla announces "Limelight"](#)
[Tonys wrap, and detectives on Broadway](#)

BOOKS/ARTS BLOG: VOLUMES & VISIONS

A major new catalog in the works for the San Diego Museum of Art

Which painting at the San Diego Museum of Art can be found in many ...



[The new venue for author Gary Zukav is Warwick's](#)
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The Whipping Man

Updated 3:00 PM PDT, Sun, May 16, 2010

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The Old Globe

Set in [Virginia](#) following the final days of the Civil War, a Jewish Confederate soldier returns to his childhood home, only to find it in ruins and occupied by his former slaves, who are preparing for a Seder.

Though a new chapter of history is unfolding, dangerous secrets of the past threaten to destroy their family, their connected history, and their shared faith.

Single tickets are currently on sale and can be purchased online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the Box Office.

Runs May 8 through June 13
Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre
[The Old Globe Theatre](#)
[Balboa Park](#)

First Published: May 13, 2010 2:24 PM PDT

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Siegel | May 9 at 4:01 PM



Sea lions on Zuniga Jetty rocks, Point Loma Light House in background.

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5/17: Baseball, Brews and a BBQ
And to top it all off, an old school rock n' roll jam session.

32 minutes ago



OLD GLOBE THEATRE: THE WHIPPING MAN



Whipping Man takes us back to a crucial era in American history. Set in Virginia following the final days of the Civil War, a Jewish Confederate soldier returns to his childhood home to find it in disrepair and dwelt inside finds his former slaves, who are preparing for Passover's ritual, The Seder. Though a new chapter of history is unfolding, dangerous secrets of the past threaten to destroy their family, their connected history, and their shared faith. Provocative and engaging Whipping Man makes its West Coast premiere at the Old Globe. May 8th - June 13th