

Introduction

THERE IS CONSIDERABLE distance between C.M. Mayo's kind of whale-watching and Ishmael and Ahab's, especially if Fred Bernard is right in suggesting that Melville's characters are not who we think they are. And then, as Jeremy Greenfield's introduction promises, "There are three stories in *Longitude at Sea*." The ocean is one enormous and perpetual displacement, but there are other kinds, too. Xiao Xiaoda, deported prisoner of the Cultural Revolution, finds an instant of food, wine and love at a dislocated Spring Festival. Disembodied opera fills Paula Speck's heating ducts. And our own year of profound displacement is marked in Ann Lauterbach's remembrance of September 11, 2001.

David Lenson, for the Editors