

September 8th 2016
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT
pr@lunastage.org, (973) 395-5551

KING OF THE MOUNTAINS. The world premiere of a new play about Teddy Roosevelt and John Muir in commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of The National Parks Service.

Luna Stage is proud to open its 2016-2017 season with the world premiere of **KING OF THE MOUNTAINS** by Ben Clawson. Audiences journey back to 1903 Yosemite and have a seat at the campfire as President Teddy Roosevelt and Naturalist John Muir go head to head. This historic camping trip was a milestone in the ongoing battle over what to do with our public land and would contribute to the forming of The National Parks Service.

KING OF THE MOUNTAINS opens to previews on Thursday, October 6th and runs Thursdays through Sundays until October 30th. Opening night is Saturday, October 8th. Performances on October 9th and 13th will be followed by a Talkback. Tickets range from \$27-\$37 dollars. Group sales available. \$10 Student Rush tickets available one half-hour before curtain. Individual tickets can be purchased at lunastage.org, or at the box office Tues.-Fri. 10:30am-3pm (973-395-5551).

KING OF THE MOUNTAINS was commissioned, with support from The Dramatists Guild Fund, in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of The National Parks Service. The arguments between proponents of privatization, conservation and preservation are still being fought today more fiercely than ever. But one could say there was no more important time in the history of our public lands than three days in May of 1903.

President Teddy Roosevelt and the naturalist John Muir camped alone together in the Yosemite. One expected to be paid homage, revered for his accomplishments, and praised for his wilderness prowess. The other desired to have his voice heard, his philosophy followed, and his wisdom sought. The problem was, both men wanted to do all the talking. The play offers a private glimpse into the characters of two great men, both champions of the environment, and a complex look at the ongoing battle over what do do with our public lands...all told through the unique wit and whimsy of Luna favorite Ben Clawson.

KING OF THE MOUNTAINS marks Ben Clawson's 4th production on the Luna mainstage, and the second commissioned play (Tilt the Unlit Candle, Dangers of Electric Lighting, and The High Water Mark). Clawson received his B.F.A. in Theater from Montclair State University. His plays have had professional productions, readings, and workshops throughout New York, New Jersey, Washington D.C. and New Orleans. He was an evenig winner and finalist in the Samuel French Short Play festival, national finalist for the American College Theater Festival's John Cauble One-Act Award, finalist for the Princess Grace Award in playwriting, and recipient of the Kennedy Center's David Mark Cohen award. He is a member of the Dramatist Guild, and a founder of the StrangeDog. Theatre Company.

KING OF THE MOUNTAINS features Ian Gould and Rik Walter. The design team includes Christopher and Justin Swader (set design), Jorge Arroyo (light design), Andy Cohen (sound design) and Deborah Caney (costume design). The Production Stage Manager is Dan Viola. The production is directed by Luna Artistic Director Cheryl Katz.

Ian Gould (Roosevelt) previously appeared at Luna Stage as Werner Heisenberg in Copenhagen. Off-Broadway, he has appeared in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, Hamlet, Macbeth and A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court for The Acting Company, In Bed With Roy Cohn at Theatre Row, and A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Winter's Tale and Measure For Measure with New York Classical Theater, where he is an Associate Artist. Regionally he has appeared at the Guthrie Theater, Center Stage, Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival and multiple seasons at Great Lakes Theater and Idaho Shakespeare Festival.

Rik Walter (Muir) has appeared Off-Broadway, at the Walnut Street Theatre, Orlando Shakespeare, Connecticut Rep, Two River, Ivoryton Playhouse, Premiere Stages, Chester Theatre, and most recently The Bickford, among many others. He is a co-founder of The New York International Fringe Festival, and co-founder and Producing Director of UP Theater Company in Inwood, NY.

Luna Stage is a small but mighty professional theatre company located in Essex County, NJ, just under 15 miles from New York City. Throughout the past 24 years, the company has earned a national reputation for developing and producing outstanding new plays and timely revivals and for taking on challenging and provocative subject matters in their work.

A proud member of Valley Arts, Luna Stage is located at 555 Valley Road, West Orange, NJ 07052. The theatre is handicapped accessible and offers assistive listening devices. Photos available upon request.