

Press Release – For Immediate Release
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Teatro de la Luna presents
The Moon's Embrace

Four weeks, four plays, four countries – and Petru Valenski

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- The ongoing push for same-sex marriage (*matrimonio igualitario*) in Uruguay got a big boost a few months ago from a YouTube video featuring Uruguay's biggest celebrities speaking out in favor of the proposed legislation. Among them was Petru Valenski.

Next month, Valenski – an award-winning actor, singer and comedian – returns to the D.C. area for a one-man show organized by Teatro de la Luna, the Spanish-language performing arts organization that introduces U.S. audiences to some of the best in Latin American and Spanish theater. From March 15-17, Teatro de la Luna hosts the U.S. premiere of *Solo Petru (Petru: All By Himself)* at the Gunston Arts Center, Theatre Two, in Arlington. In this cross between a musical revue and a café concert, Valenski pays homage to the most exalted comedic style of his home country.

Valenski is a veteran of Teatro de la Luna's International Festival of Hispanic Theater, traveling to the United States to appear in *Más Loca que una Cabra (As Crazy as a Loon)* in 2008 and, in 2011, in *ATREVIDOS (The 3 Rascals)*. Valenski is a founder of the Compañía Italia Fausta troupe; his play *Quién le Teme a Italia Fausta (Who's Afraid of Italia Fausta)* has run in Montevideo for a record 16 years.

Petru's performance closes a four-week schedule featuring a new play, from a different country, each week. The program offers an unparalleled opportunity to see well-known shows – and performers – from Costa Rica, Spain, Argentina and Uruguay. All Teatro de la Luna shows are presented in Spanish, with either live English dubbing or surtitles.

In addition to *Solo Petru*, the schedule includes:

Costa Rica February 23-25 ***El Inmigrante (The Immigrant)***

This award-winning play, written by César Meléndez, is based on real events. It culminates two years of research on immigration by theater troupe Teatro La Polea, founded by Cristina Bruno Catania and Meléndez to spark dialogue on social issues. The play was inspired by a 1997 article in Costa Rican newspaper *La Nación* and debuted in 2001 — before becoming a phenomenon. Also performed under the title “El Nica,” it has been seen by hundreds of thousands of people in theaters, schools, colleges, universities, factories, stores, churches, backyard patios and community centers in Costa Rica.

Spain March 1-3 ***Familia en Construcción (Family Under Construction)***

In a crammed theater, a group of actors improvise a family: including the mother and her solitude; the father and his sermons; the gay son; the overwhelmed daughter-in-law; the tireless grandmother who can't be quiet — even after death. Encounters, shouts, hugs, kisses, celebrations, daily routines and secrets inevitably appear along this footpath of love and hate, with leaps between laughter and melodrama. Both the audience and the actors become so immersed in the “family” that they forget this is a play. The show is performed by Factoría Teatro, which has been lauded as “aesthetically fresh” and “visually evocative.”

Argentina March 8-10 *No Puedo Vivir sin Mucama (I Can't Live Without a Maid)*

With humor, actor-playwright-director-scholar Perla Laske takes a sharp look at the issue of domestic help. *No Puedo Vivir sin Mucama* incites laughter and reflection about the relationship between maids and their employers, using caricatures to illustrate the histrionic conditions of that interaction. A palpable force moves through the piece, which is marked by 'round and attractive' writing. Laske is a gifted, multidimensional performer who uses this work to showcase her talents as a solid dramatic actor as well as her energy as a comedic performer. It's no surprise that her resume includes a number of impressive awards, among them Argentina's *Premio Fondo Nacional de las Artes*, the *Premio al Mérito* from the Universidad Nacional de la Plata, the *Premio Educarte* and a Belgian arts prize.

Note to the Press: Complimentary tickets (two per member of the media) are available for Friday night performances. Please call in advance.

WHEN: February 23 – March 17, 2012 with Thursday, Friday and Saturday evening performances and Saturday matinees. Each Friday night show is followed by a discussion led by Professors Antonio Carreño and Rei Berroa from George Mason University, Clinical Psychologist Claudia Campos and Richmond University Professor Claudia Ferman.

WHERE: Gunston Arts Center – Theater Two
2700 S. Lang Street, Arlington, VA 22206

TICKETS: Regular \$35; Students & Seniors Citizens, \$30
(Groups of 10 or more: 15% discount)

Tickets can be purchased online at www.teatrodelaluna.org or reserved in advance for pickup at will call.

TEATRO DE LA LUNA was founded in 1991 in response to the growing needs of the area's Spanish-speaking residents. Our mission is to promote Hispanic culture and foster cross-cultural understanding. We do this through stage productions, theater workshops for adults and children, poetry marathons and our annual International Festival of Hispanic Theater.

INFORMATION and RESERVATIONS: 703-548-3092 / 202-882-6227

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Teatro de la Luna is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. It receives support from Arlington County Cultural Affairs Division, Arlington Commission for the Arts, DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, the Cultural Affairs Office of the Foreign Ministry and the Embassy of Uruguay in the United States, private foundations, corporations and individual donors.