

July 14, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to voice my enthusiastic support for Maria Striar and Clubbed Thumb.

I first worked with Clubbed Thumb in 2009, when the company produced *punkplay*. This production marked my New York debut as a writer, and was, by all measures – process, product and reception - a success.

This past summer I was fortunate enough to work Clubbed Thumb a second time, on the premiere of my play *La Brea*, a comedy the company commissioned a year prior, in the spring of 2012.

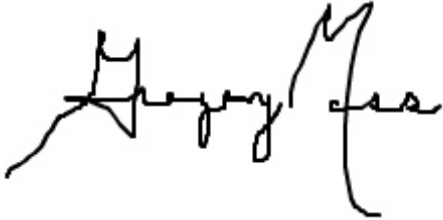
The support I received from Clubbed Thumb showed, from the outset, a deep investment in the artistic success of the play they had commissioned. From Maria's insightful reflections on my very raw first draft, to the play's continued development in Clubbed Thumb's excellent biweekly writing group, to a wonderfully productive week-long workshop, I felt at every step Clubbed Thumb was playing an active and responsive role in the deepening and strengthening of the play.

Maria's dramaturgical style is refreshingly direct, which compelled me to be very clear about the story I was attempting to tell with this play. We did not always agree, but the freedom to argue is an integral part of the integrity Maria brings to her work. She respects the artists in her orbit enough to push for the strongest or most interesting choices, and expects (demands) an equally-invested and passionate engagement in return. She is not a hands-off producer – she does she simply assemble teams or write checks. She makes herself a full partner in the creation of the play, as generative and essential as the director and actors. Her care and attention - which is evidenced by the sheer number of hours of conversation and problem-solving she devotes to every production she works on - is inspirational. Her leadership, by example, makes everyone work harder and better, and compels the company to hold themselves to higher standards.

I have had a number of experiences with producers, artistic directors, and play development institutions who pay lip service to "serving the play" and "serving the playwright". But the best way to serve a play, or a playwright, is a) to produce their work; and b) to push them to make the best and most rigorous piece of theatre they can. Maria's mission is not solely to sustain Clubbed Thumb as an institution. She aims to make interesting, novel, and provocative theater at a high level, engaging the eighteen plus years of history and experience that her company has afforded her. She rolls the dice every summer and commits to artistic risk with more courage and more frequency than any other American theater company I know of.

I have immense respect for Maria and I'm very proud of the work we've made together. She deserves all the support that can be given her. For myself and for the wide-range of artists she employs – at every level of their development and career – I hope she will continue making plays for many years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gregory S Moss". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "M" at the end.

Gregory S Moss