



## Goings On About Town The Theatre

[CHAUTAUQUA!](#)

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### THE NEW YORKER

The utterly original downtown outfit National Theatre of the United States of America is known for its reconstructions of oft-forgotten performance genres, and they've set their latest sights on the historical Chautauqua assemblies, the travelling lecture series and precursor to vaudeville that Theodore Roosevelt once called "the most American thing in America." With a keen eye for design and a penchant for the surprising, the young ensemble miraculously keeps this fusty-sounding project from devolving into a simple museum piece. With a standout performance by James P. Stanley and a guest speaker every night, they turn this bizarre footnote in American history into a timely, beautiful meditation on the relationship between the arts, urbanity, community, and economics. (P.S. 122, First Ave. at 9th St. 212-352-3101. Through March 15.)