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Custom Made Theatre Co. presents José Rivera's Obie Award-winning play "References to Salvador Dalí Make Me Hot" at the Phoenix Theatre, San Francisco. July 1 - July 24, 2022

Veteran Custom Made director Katja Rivera ("How I Learned to Drive", "Eurydice ") helms the surreal and *HOT* play written by Puerto Rican master playwright, José Rivera.

**Press Opening: Sunday, July 3 at 2:00pm; Critics, please RSVP to
press@custommade.org**

San Francisco, CA (June 2022) – Custom Made Theatre Co. (Brian Katz, Executive Artistic Director) continues its 23rd season with "References to Salvador Dalí Make Me Hot" by award-winning, Puerto Rican playwright, José Rivera.

The cast features Caleb Cabrera (BENITO/MOON), Robbie Diaz (MARTÍN), Carla Gallardo (GABRIELA), Gabriel Ross (COYOTE), Alejandra Wahl (CAT).

The creative team includes Marisely Cortes, Connie Galvan, Lana Palmer, Sarah Pykitt, Sara Saavedra, Katja Rivera, Elyse Schrock, and Elena Wright.

About “References to Salvador Dalí Make Me Hot”:

A surreal drama set in the desert of Barstow, California where Gabriela – wife of career soldier Benito – dives into a surreal fantasy world during her husband’s prolonged absences and imagines the mating rituals between a coyote and a cat. Rivera’s award-winning play celebrates the confusion that grows out of trying to understand not only the one you love but yourself as well.

Strange things happen in a moonlit backyard on the edge of the California Desert. The cat talks with a dangerously seductive coyote and the moon plays his music for a lonely woman awaiting her husband’s return from war. When he arrives, broken and distant, the reality of their relationship seems as strange as the apparitions in the desert night. Jose Rivera, a contemporary master of magical realism and the painful and gritty realities of human relationships, has created a suddenly relevant play that explores the scars of war both on those who fight it and those who get left behind.

Director Rivera (no relation) says playwright Rivera’s play is suddenly as timely as when it was first produced two decades ago. “We all have just come through a collective trauma (with Covid.) The couple in this play has also come through a trauma that makes them question their life and their relationship. I find so many of us, myself included, are questioning life choices because of the pandemic, and wondering if how we have lived our lives still makes sense. Is this how we want to keep living it? Another theme that feels especially pertinent today is how the Moon (a character in the drama) admonishes Gabriella to pay attention to her dreams and her inner voice. She must pay attention, the Moon says, to incidents that seem like coincidences, and look for the wisdom she can find there. It’s one of my favorite places to find guidance as well.”

COVID-19 policy

Custom Made will comply with all county and city Covid-19 guidelines and recommendations. All performers and staff are double-vaccinated and boosted, and all patrons will show proof of vaccination and booster upon entry. Masks will be required in the theatre at all times, and concessions will not be permitted.

About José Rivera:

José Rivera (Playwright) is a recipient of two Obie Awards for *Marisol* and *References to Salvador Dali Make Me Hot*, both produced by the Public Theater. Plays seen at the Goodman include *Cloud Tectonics*, *Boleros for the Disenchanted*, *Massacre (Sing to Your Children)*, *Another Word for Beauty*, *Sueño* and *The Untranslatable Secrets of Nikki Corona*, which appeared as part of *New Stages*. Other plays include *Sonnets for an Old Century (Nuyorican*

Poets Café, Steppenwolf Theatre); School of the Americas (Public Theater); Brainpeople (ACT/San Francisco); Adoration of the Old Woman (Sundance Theatre Lab, INTAR, La Jolla Playhouse); The Maids (INTAR); The Kiss of the Spiderwoman (Menier Chocolate Factory, London); Each Day Dies with Sleep (Circle Rep, Berkeley Rep, Orange Tree Theatre, London); Lovesong (Imperfect) (14th Street Y, directed by the author); The Street of the Sun (Mark Taper Forum); and The House of Ramon Iglesia (Ensemble Studio Theatre). His screenplay *The Motorcycle Diaries* was nominated for 2005 Best Adapted Screenplay Oscar—making him the first Puerto Rican writer ever nominated for an Academy Award—as well as a BAFTA and Writers Guild Award and received top screenwriting awards in Argentina and Spain. Other films include *On the Road*, *Trade* and *The 33*. Rivera co-created and produced *Eerie, Indiana*, (NBC) and was a consultant and staff writer on *Penny Dreadful: City of Angels* (Showtime). He has written 18 episodes of the Netflix series based on *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. Rivera wrote and directed the short films *The Fall of a Sparrow* and *The Civet*. His latest screenplay is *A Song for the Recycled Orchestra*. He has served on the boards of TCG and the Sundance Institute and was a Creative Advisor at Sundance Screenwriting Labs in Utah, Jordan and India. Rivera recently completed directing a zoom film production of *Sonnets for an Old Century* for Paula Vogel's *Bard at the Gate*.

About Katja Rivera:

Katja Rivera studied theater at LACC Theatre Academy and Drama Studio London at Berkeley. Bay Area acting credits include *Shotgun Players*, *Magic Theatre*, *Theatre Rhinoceros*, and *CenterREP*. Directing credits include *Shotgun Players*, *Douglas Morrison*, *CustomMade Theatre*, *RPE* (Danville), *SF Playground*, and *TheatreFIRST*. She is a proud member of *AEA*, *Shotgun Players*, *SF Playground*, and *Latinx Mafia*.

ShowTimes and Tickets

Previews: July 1st & 2nd at 8:00 pm

Press Opening: Sunday, July 3rd, at 2:00 pm (note: new opening time)

Runs: July 1st – July 24th, 2022. Thurs-Sat 8:00 pm; Sunday 2:00 pm

Tickets: \$30-55

Learn more & buy tickets at <http://www.custommade.org> or (415) 798-CMTC (2682)

For Calendar Editors

References to Salvador Dalí Make Me Hot. “An award-winning surrealist drama set in the desert of CA about love, sex, and the beauty of not only trying to understand the one you love but yourself as well.” Directed by Katja Rivera. Custom Made @ The Phoenix Theatre, 414 Mason Street, San Francisco. Previews July 1 & 2, 8:00 pm; Press Opening July 3 2:00 pm; runs through July 24th. Thursday-Saturday 8:00 pm, Sunday at 2 pm. Tickets: \$30-55. (415) 798-2682, www.custommade.org

About Custom Made Theater Co.

The Custom Made Theatre Co., in its 23rd season of production in San Francisco, is committed to producing plays that awaken our social conscience, focusing on the strength of the ensemble and creating an intimate theatrical experience.

Custom Made is a member of Theatre Communications Group (TCG) and Theatre Bay Area (TBA). Recipient of the SF Bay Area Theatre Critics’ Circle Paine Knickerbocker Award for making a lasting contribution to Bay Area theatre.

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