REFERENCES TO SALVADOR DALÍ MAKE ME HOT

Written by José Rivera, Directed By Ruben Ortiz

What do you do when the life you have isn't quite the life you want?

In the heat of the California desert, Gabriela waits for her soldier husband to come home—and discovers that desire has a way of finding its own way in. Enter a seductive Moon, a very opinionated Cat, a wild Coyote, and a world where reality and fantasy collide.

Funny, sexy, strange, poetic, and unexpectedly tender, José Rivera's *References to Salvador Dalí Make Me Hot* is a surreal story about love, longing, freedom, and wanting more**.**

Auditions Oct 12,13,14 @ 7pm Kendall Drama Lab
Rehearsals begin October 19th
Performance Dates Nov 19, 20, 21@ 8pm & Nov 21@ 2pm

For the audition please be familiar with the sides for the role of your choice and have fun! *No need to be off book.*
Callbacks will be on the 14th.

**For more info email Ruben Ortiz @ Ortizr9@southernct.edu*

Character Breakdowns

GABRIELA

Female, to play late 20s–early 30s

Gabriela is smart, funny, sensual, imaginative—and restless. She's living in the middle of nowhere, in a life that has become much smaller than the life she imagined for herself. Her husband is away, she longs for connection, and her imagination gives her a way to escape the limits of her everyday world.

She can be grounded and very real one moment, then suddenly playful, romantic, strange, or wildly imaginative the next. She has a strong sense of who she is, but she also carries a deep loneliness and a growing feeling that she wants more from life and from love.

Looking for an actor who can make Gabriela feel completely human and recognizable while also embracing the play's heightened, poetic world. There is humor, sensuality, frustration, longing, and a lot of heart here. Must be comfortable with some sexual situations and physical intimacy. Spanish speaking is a plus.

BENITO

Male, late 20s–early 30s

Benito is a soldier who has come home—but part of him is still somewhere else.

He loves Gabriela, but he doesn't always know how to be with her. He wants things to feel familiar and safe, and he wants Gabriela to stay the person and the place he remembers. He is used to rules, routine, and knowing what comes next. The problem is that life—and Gabriela—don't work that way.

There is a toughness to Benito, but underneath it is someone who is vulnerable, scared, and struggling to reconnect with the person he was before the war. He can be funny, awkward, loving, frustrating, and heartbreaking.

Looking for an actor who can bring a grounded, natural presence to the role while allowing us to see the person underneath the armor. Must be comfortable with some sexual situations and physical intimacy. Spanish speaking is a plus.

THE CAT

Female, Any Age

The Cat belongs to Gabriela, and she knows it.

She is elegant, opinionated, sensual, comfortable, and very attached to the life she has. She has opinions about Gabriela, about the desert, and especially about the wild things that keep showing up at her door.

But underneath all that sophistication is a genuine curiosity about the unknown. She is fascinated by the Coyote and by the freedom of the world outside her comfortable little existence.

Looking for an actor with strong physicality, playfulness, and a great sense of character. The Cat should feel like a real cat who happens to have a lot to say—not a person pretending to be a cat. Physical theatre and movement experience are a plus. Must be comfortable with physical intimacy.

THE COYOTE

Male, Any Age

The Coyote comes out of the desert like something Gabriela has been waiting for without knowing it.

He is wild, hungry, funny, unpredictable, sexual, and completely unconcerned with the rules of Gabriela's world. He doesn't have much, but he has freedom—and that makes him incredibly appealing.

There is danger to him, but there is also vulnerability. He is not simply a "bad boy" or a predator. He is a creature trying to survive, looking for food, connection, and perhaps a place to belong.

Looking for an actor with a strong physical presence and a willingness to be playful, strange, sensual, and animalistic. Movement experience is a plus. The actor should be comfortable letting the character live somewhere between the human and the wild. Must be comfortable with stage intimacy.

MARTÍN

Any Gender, to play 14 year old boy

Martín is Gabriela's teenage neighbor and is at that wonderfully terrible age when everything feels enormous.

He is awkward, curious, impulsive, and completely overwhelmed by his growing attraction to Gabriela. He doesn't really know what to do with his feelings, so they come out in ways that are sometimes funny, sometimes uncomfortable, and sometimes genuinely sad.

Looking for an actor who can capture the awkwardness, humor, vulnerability, and uncertainty of a teenager experiencing desire for the first time. The role requires a strong sense of physical and comedic timing, as well as the ability to let us see the heart underneath Martín's behavior.

THE MOON

Any Gender, Any Age

The Moon is Gabriela's nighttime companion, confidant, and perhaps the perfect fantasy person . He is suave, playful, romantic, flirtatious, and a little ridiculous in the best possible way.

He understands Gabriela's imagination and seems to enjoy encouraging it. He can be seductive without taking himself too seriously

Looking for an actor with great comic timing, charm, musicality, and an ease with poetic language. Someone who can make heightened text feel completely natural. Violin or another musical instrument is a plus, but not required.

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Gabriela

START

COYOTE: *(Sotto voce)*
Bless you, gentle, sexy Cat!

GABRIELA: Ay! I haven't had a lover's eyes
to look into for months.
I've been looking up
at the night sky instead,
watching the watchful moon.
Noticing the stars and galaxies.
Before you're born, I wonder,
as you looked around,
and took inventory of the womb...
did it look like this?
Did you see the moon and stars in there?
Floating bits of fire—maybe the nutrients from your
mother's bloodstream—
looking like constellations
against the deep, deep black
of your mother's night sky?
What do you say, Moon?
What's the good word tonight?

END

MOON: It's a jungle down there.

GABRIELA: I knew it.
That's why I have this!

(GABRIELA *fires a shot in the air.)*

MARTIN: *Una pistola!*

MOON: What a woman!

MARTIN: What a woman!

MOON: *Una pistola!*

GABRIELA: Behind every tree is a dark spirit,
a hungry one, and they watch me
through my bedroom window
and I want these spirits to know
I am armed and considered dangerous.

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Gabriela / Benito

ACT TWO

(Seven A M. GABRIELA*'s kitchen. Refrigerator, sink, stove, kitchen table and chairs.)*

*(*BENITO, GABRIELA*'s husband, a Latino sergeant of 29, in full desert camouflage uniform and web gear, stands surrounded by duffel bags.)*

START

*(*GABRIELA *wears very tight cut-offs, tank top; she's shoeless.)*

(She and BENITO *haven't seen each other in two months.)*

BENITO: Where were you?

GABRIELA: Backyard.

*(*BENITO *and* GABRIELA *kiss briefly.)*

BENITO: What's in the backyard?

GABRIELA: Slept there.

BENITO: Bed on fire?

GABRIELA: Just did, that's all.

BENITO: Huh. What's the coffee situation?

GABRIELA: As you wish, master.

BENITO: Call me master a lot, I really like it.

*(*GABRIELA *makes coffee.)*

GABRIELA: You lost a shitload of weight, soldier.

BENITO: God bless them M R Es.

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GABRIELA: And nice circles under the eyes.

BENITO: Ain't slept in forty-eight.

GABRIELA: When are them fuckers gonna stop abusing my pretty, old man, huh?

BENITO: *(Looking at her hair)* Ain't no biggie, Gab.

GABRIELA: *(Re: her haircut)* You're looking at me like I'm...

BENITO: And you didn't mention the thing, the 'do, the nest...

GABRIELA: I was bored. You hate it.

BENITO: Ages you—but just a little—hardly nothing!—five or six years, max!

GABRIELA: *(Can't help but laugh)* Here's your stupid gun.

*(*GABRIELA *hands* BENITO *his .9-millimeter pistol.)*

BENITO: Not "gun", — "weapon". Your gun hangs between your legs.

GABRIELA: Nothing hangs between my legs, sergeant.

*(*BENITO *eyes* GABRIELA *up and down with great male appreciation.)*

BENITO: 'Cept me. Gabby. Oh, squeeze-able, eat-able, good-to-the-last-drop.

GABRIELA: I got a question. It's gonna sound, like stupid, but fucking laugh, I'll kick your ass back to Fort Irwin. Did you see the moon last night?

BENITO: *(Still on* GABRIELA*'s body)* ...better than pogey-bait...

GABRIELA: Did you see the moon last night? I really gotta know this, Benito...

*(*GABRIELA *looks at* BENITO *like his answer will decide everything.)*

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BENITO: The moon? Why on earth is a working man looking at the moon for?

GABRIELA: *(Disappointed)* 'Cause it was fucking huge, 'cause you once...

BENITO: The moon wearing a dress? Jerking itself off?

*(*GABRIELA *ignores him and opens the refrigerator.)*

END

GABRIELA: We're outta milk.

BENITO: *(Thinking about it)* Like maybe that's why they call it the Milky Way. The moon whacks off and comes all over the sky and *that's* how the Milky Way was born.

GABRIELA: Matter-of-fact, wise-ass, that ain't how it happened—

BENITO: No, no, please, not a lecture on...

GABRIELA: Fact is, the Milky Way was born outta, you know, little fluctuation thingies in space-time at the moment of the Big Bang.

BENITO: I like the way you say "Big" "Bang."

*(*GABRIELA *starts to leave.)*

GABRIELA: I'm going out, pick up some milk.

BENITO: Now?

GABRIELA: Cigarettes too, master?

BENITO: Stop calling me master, wench!

GABRIELA: Well, if you don't wanna come into the milk container and pour *that* in your cof—

BENITO: What is your God-given problem?

GABRIELA: *(Trying to leave)* Two minutes won't kill—

BENITO: But I just got back from the field!

GABRIELA:
Take a nap while I'm—

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desert, Germany or the desert, snow or sand, Nazis or knuckleheads, back and forth like that assuming war don't break out and I'm not protecting goat-herders in Somalia! That's the trip you signed on to take. Are there any questions, Private?

GABRIELA: No sir, master, sir. *(She pours all the coffee she just made down the sink.)*

BENITO: You gotta stop acting like you know more than everybody.

GABRIELA: I do know more than everybody.

BENITO: Then keep it to yourself, 'cause, like the Buddha says, it's a turn off.

GABRIELA: *(Laughs)* Oh, *that's* funny!

BENITO: Everything you say and do reflects on me—

GABRIELA: Turn off? I'm the one that's off.

BENITO: You get into a car accident, it's my rates that go up. You break the law, it's my rank that's busted—

GABRIELA: My eyes, my senses—*off*. My ideas—*off*. My—oh fuck it—now we're just going in circles here. Talking in and out of the same three sentences—as if, like, more words means more communicating. Ain't that a joke? Let me get that milk. *(She goes for her car keys.)*

BENITO: You got no clue of my life's insanity out there— 'cause I make this army shit look easy. Look graceful. That's why you don't know jack how fucked it is for me.

GABRIELA: What're you bitching about?

BENITO: The last month in the field, for me, I got my ass stuck in Star Wars, Gabby, okay? That's where I was. *Inside*. Behind a *desk*. In front of a *computer screen*. I went outta my mind. I'm going to the Captain, going, Sir, I wanna be outside. If I'm gonna play G I Joe I

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wanna be in an M1A1 or jumping out of a chopper or blowing expensive stuff up, not in a goddamn *building* with *air* conditioning. But no. Captain rules. So I'm in Star Wars now. END

GABRIELA: Why don't you give me one good clue—?

BENITO: It's like this. The desert floor is covered big time with sensors connected to satellites tracking every piece of moving hardware we got out there—Abrams, Cobras, A P Cs—our side and the bad guys. So the grunts and gun bunnies go through their combat simulations, right?, and on a computer in this building called Star Wars what happens in the field is monitored in real time. So I gotta watch this computer screen and see how the battles go. That's what I did for weeks of my life I'll never get back.

GABRIELA: That's cause for bitching? You're sitting in air conditioning! It's the Mojave!

BENITO: Gabriela, I don't wanna sit. Sitting is for *officers*. For *points*. A man does not sit when he *works*.

GABRIELA: Yeah, but, think—you could—maybe there's training here you can pick up, you know, learn a, you know—

BENITO: Skill? That I can use in the "real world"?

GABRIELA: It saves on your body, you don't gotta wreck yourself...

BENITO: Just waste away like some puke college professor—

GABRIELA: I just don't think you should be like some common foot soldier—

BENITO: I am no common anything, okay?

GABRIELA: I just think this shows the Captain—

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(As the MOON *gets closer to the ground, the* COYOTE *howls in pain.)*

COYOTE: OH GOD IT HURTS!
IT HURTS MY BODY SO MUCH!

CAT: Stop that hideous noise!

COYOTE: THE MOONLIGHT!
IT HURTS SO BAD!

*(*MARTIN *covers his ears.)*

MARTIN: That noise freakin' irritates.
Drives me crazy-insane!

(The COYOTE *howls even louder as the* MOON *gets closer to the backyard.)*

COYOTE: *(Struggling, in pain)*
The lunar light—
is sharp like daggers—
cuts into my skin—
ricochets off my nerves—
it's why coyotes howl
at the full moon!

(The MOON *enters the backyard.)*

(The COYOTE *passes out.)*

(The CAT *goes to the* COYOTE.*)*

CAT: Coyote? Coyote?

(The CAT *holds the* COYOTE.*)*

(The MOON *goes to* GABRIELA.*)*

MOON: There, there, Gabby.

GABRIELA: *(To the* MOON*)*
Oh, you didn't have to
come down here to—

MOON: But I wanted to.

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CAT: *(Angry, to the* MOON*)*
Look what you did!

GABRIELA: Just an overly-sentimental
gun-toting Army housewife.

MOON: *(To* GABRIELA*)*
They say from the tears of women
are civilizations made.

GABRIELA: They really say that?

MOON: No, not really.

GABRIELA: Then why did you get my hopes up?

MOON: Shakespeare called me inconstant.

GABRIELA: I see why.

MOON: I never recovered from that.
The bastard!

CAT: Coyote? Speak to me!

(No response from the COYOTE*)*

(The CAT *cries.)*

GABRIELA: *(Laughs)*
Hey, Moon—
have you ever danced
with a woman holding a gun?

*(*GABRIELA *and the* MOON *dance.)*

MOON: From the tears of women
come mathematics sonatas
table manners the zipper
the *merengue* editorial pages
county fairs guitar strings
lipstick and the fables
of Jorge Luis Borges...

GABRIELA: You're trying to get into
my shorts, aren't you?

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MOON: *(Faster, more excited)*
...brain surgery pickles
Macondo Mecca
the double play Bukowski tostones
and "Two Pieces of Bread
Expressing the Sentiment of Love."

GABRIELA: *(Gasps)*
Ay! References to Salvador Dali
make me hot!

END

*(*GABRIELA *kisses the* MOON *passionately.)*

(The CAT *kisses the* COYOTE *passionately.)*

CAT: *(To* COYOTE*)*
Those are very soft lips
you have for a wild animal.

GABRIELA: *(To* MOON*)*
Those are very soft lips
you have for a celestial object.

MARTIN: A strange transformation
is taking place in me
as I watch Gabriela
dance with the lucky moon.
I come here every night
to spy on a naked woman,
and hopefully see her thing.
But I'm bathed in the light of the moon
and as I listen to the words
of that gorgeous, spied-upon creature,
I'm changed completely.
The little boy who wanted
a cheap thrill is dead.
In his place, out of his cold remains,
rises a young man full of mature,
virile desire: a young man
in love with love!

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CAT / COYOTE

COYOTE: Unloved? I'm free! I am myself!

CAT: Deluded.

COYOTE: And how do I keep my freedom?
I don't worry about their love—
their clinging, petting, hurtful...

CAT: Ay, jealous too!

COYOTE: Love with chains and flea collars attached.
Love with no purpose to it,
no reproduction, no passion.
Love predicated on obedience.
Love with violence implied.

CAT: You have no idea how good it is.

COYOTE: You think everything they do is good.
Have you seen what they've done to my desert?
The way the mountains
are so nicely carved up—
oh, such beautiful scars!—
oh, the pretty bomb craters!—
those sexy switchblade cuts
in the flesh of the land!
What kind of drugs
do they put in your food?

CAT: How cold does it get at night, Coyote?
How hard is that desert mattress?
What's in that darkness?
What's it like to live
in a world full of enemies?

START

COYOTE: Fun. Easy.

CAT: And the reason for the terror
in your eyes...?

COYOTE: That's lethal energy you see in my eyes, Cat.

CAT: Scavenger energy.

COYOTE: A hunter's gaze.

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CAT: Bone-picker energy.
You let the real hunters
do the killing:
let cars do the killing.
Then you come along,
tail between your legs,
sniffing around for the leftovers,
all weasely and cautious,
licking up the cold blood
and competing with the flies
for the juicy bits.

COYOTE: Disinformation!

CAT: Oh, such honor.
Nature at its best.
Majestic, awesome nature!

COYOTE: You wouldn't survive a day—

CAT: You're not even smart enough
to be a dog.
What exactly are you?
Half-rat? Half-mole?

COYOTE: Not a single cold night!

CAT: Poor me, with a home,
protection from the sun,
good eats, lots of toys:
Gabriela gives me everything.

COYOTE: Toys and regular meals
have made you fat.
Blunted your instincts.
Why don't you come out with me?
Right now: do what I do for one night.
No home, no petting,
no flea collar, no place to hide.
You couldn't do it, could you?

CAT: I don't have to prove a—

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COYOTE: Prove it to yourself.
Twenty-four hours in the wild.
I'll take you to the desert.
I'll take you hunting—
lots of prey, natural enemies to dodge—
you'll learn to look
at your precious Gabriela
from a real animal's point of view.

CAT: I take one step out of this yard,
you and your little posse gang-attacks me.

COYOTE: You have my word.

CAT: *(Sizing him up)*
Bet you'd love that...eating me.
Tasting my round, warm meat.
Domesticity has made my fatty parts
soft, easy, and wet with juice.
I can see the saliva forming in your mouth
right now.

COYOTE: That all you see?

CAT: After you've swallowed my
moist outer layers—
you can chew my heart muscles
and give your jaws a real workout.
Take you all night to eat my thighs.

COYOTE: Saliva's dripping down
and something else is coming up.

CAT: Not really.

COYOTE: Oh yeah.

CAT: What a pig!

COYOTE: You ain't never been laid
by a wild animal, have you?

CAT: Is that what all this has been about?

COYOTE: Like you didn't know!

END

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START

MARTIN

MARTIN: I'll let you in,
mi vida, mi luz, mi alma!

*(*MARTIN *pushes the* MOON *away from* GABRIELA.*)*

GABRIELA: Who the hell are you?

MARTIN: Name's Martin.
Martin del Cuerpo Grande y Peludo.
And the moon can't love you like I can,
mi cielo, mi corazon, mi sangre,
mi extra-big sized box of Cocoa Puffs!

GABRIELA: What are you? Twelve?

MARTIN: Fourteen, *mi amor*.
And growing.
I have new hair
about to happen all over my body.

GABRIELA: I have a husband.
Seven-foot-six?
Two-eighty-five?

Owner of this and other firearms?
Coming home at seven A M?

MOON: *(To* MARTIN*)*
What do you mean I can't love her
like you can?

MARTIN: *(To the* MOON*)*
You're incontinent.
Shakespeare said.

MOON: "Inconstant" not "incontinent,"
you little fart!

END

(The MOON *and* MARTIN *fight.)*

(The MOON *takes the gun from* GABRIELA *and pistol-whips* MARTIN. MARTIN *falls hard.)*