

SCR has something completely different

By Cheryl Walker
The News

A three-foot high coffee mug and equally oversized hummingbird hover over an isolated two-room desert dwelling in Barstow just large enough for one very restless young Army wife and her plump, slinky housecat to dream in the moonlight of possibilities of love, fear and fantasy.

Will the very contented cat listen to the seductive call of a wild coyote and meet a would-be lover or her fate?

Will wife Gabriela find the romance and life changes she so sorely craves dancing with the violin-playing moon or in the arms of her nightmare-haunted veteran/warrior spouse home from another round of war games?

These questions and more are answered on South Coast Repertory's Second Stage where playwright Jose Rivera's alluring, sexy and thought-provoking play, "References to Salvador Dali Make Me Hot," is having its world premiere through Feb. 27, under the expert stewardship of Director Juliette Carrillo.

As the 20th century Spanish surrealist left his mark on the

art world making the everyday anything but ordinary and forcing viewers to take risks and "see" hidden meanings in what they took for granted, so Rivera takes an exploration of a troubled marriage and puts it in a mystic universe where nothing is quite as it seems and animals talk, a moon waltzes, cacti creep and all things, even resurrection, are possible.

This universe is admirably recreated by Scenic Designer Monica Raya where kitchen-sink realism is juxtaposed with objects shrunk and enlarged like something Alice would find in her "looking glass" adventures.

As for the casting, leads Ana Ortiz and Robert Montano, as the young human lovers whose conflicts have cosmic reverberations, are wonderful in their parts: agile as dancers and fluid in the language of gesture, poetry, passion, loneliness and loss.

And Victor Mack, as the wily Coyote, is the perfect foil for Svetlana Elfremova's purring feline presence as Cat.

Rounding out the ensemble is Wells Rosales as the couple's hormone-mad teenage neighbor and Dali himself as the catalyst for the play in a cameo role



Gabriela (Ana Ortiz) dances with the 'Moon' (Robert Montano) in a scene from Jose Rivera's "References to Salvador Dali."

as (what else?) the play's ever-present muse, "the inconstant moon." Impossible? Don't be so sure

Senior and group tickets are available, for information, call (714) 708-5555.