



â??Juan Jose and the Deathly Vatosâ??: Chicano Magic, Spanglish Mayhem, and a Wand Made of Resistance

Description

Salt Lake City, UTâ??Written, directed, and performed by Pedro Flores
Presented by Plan-B Theatre at the 2025 Great Salt Lake Fringe Festival

â??The Vato Who Shall Not Be Namedâ?• has met his matchâ??armed with chisme, chanclas, and Chicano magic.

â??Rhetorical Review

In *Juan Jose and the Deathly Vatos*, **Pedro Flores** conjures a hilarious, high-octane remix of Hogwarts lore through the lens of East L.A. grit, Spanglish swagger, and Fringe Festival irreverence. What begins as cheeky parody quickly shapeshifts into something sharper: a bold reclamation of storytelling power, a love letter to barrio culture, and a blistering critique of white supremacyâ??both in the real world and the wizarding one.



Photo Credit: Sarah Meservy

The show opens with a wink—a nod to the *Harry Potter* theme music—but Flores doesn't waste time casting more serious spells. He draws clear parallels between Hogwarts mythology and the rhetoric of racial purity: capes, pointed hats, "bloodline" hierarchies. It's no accident—Flores is using the magic we grew up with to expose how deeply embedded these narratives are in our culture. The laughs come fast, but so do the chills.

And yet, the show never feels heavy-handed. One of its most electric qualities is how seamlessly it integrates **Spanglish**, particularly in Jose's "hot and heavy" encounters with a mysterious transfer student. She chose East L.A. High, she says, because it was "the last place anyone would look for her." One of the biggest laugh lines of the night? When Jose accidentally triggers a Selena song with the spell: "Abracadabra? Bidibidibumbum!"



Photo credit Sarah Meservy

The audience was on fire. When Jose confesses that his girlfriend (who happens to be Hermione) cheats on him with a ginger, a row behind me erupted in unison: *“Fâ?? gingers!”*• Later, when Flores blanked on a line, a chorus rang out: *“Come on, Vatos! Youâ??ve got this!”*• Rarely do you see a Fringe show generate that much collective joy and solidarity in real time.

Floresâ??s performance is kinetic and commanding. He shifts effortlessly between stories, tones, and punchlines, grounding even the wildest moments with emotional weight. The script is rich with cultural referencesâ??Catholic lore, *bruja* warnings from mama, and sharp jabs at the absurdities of wizarding canon (hello, Platform 69). Lines like *“Iâ??m Mexicanâ??if thereâ??s a border, Iâ??ll find a way”*• and *“loca lover”*• sparkle with both wit and resonance.

ð?? production Highlights





As writer, director, and sole performer, Flores is a revelation. His ability to keep the tone playful while simultaneously weaving in social commentary is particularly clever. The way he playfully shifts accents and moods on a dime while maintaining both comedic timing and emotional sincerity makes *Juan Jose and the Deathly Vatos* feel far bigger than a solo show. He doesn't just carry the piece—he electrifies it. His performance isn't just theatrical; it's personal, political, and pulse-pounding.

Supported by **Cheryl Ann Cluff's** immersive sound design, **Izzy Arrieta's** sharp photography, and **Aaron Asano Swenson's** bold graphic work, the production is unapologetically DIY in the best way. It's part fandom, part rebellion, and all corazón.

At its core, *Juan Jose and the Deathly Vatos* isn't just a parody—it's a poetic act of resistance. Flores asks: Who gets expelled and who gets forgiven? Who's allowed to be magical—and who gets erased? This show doesn't just break the fourth wall—it blasts through it with a wand forged from lived experience, humor, and righteous indignation.



SHOW INFO

Juan Jose and the Deathly Vatos

A World Premiere at the 2025 Great Salt Lake Fringe Festival
Written, Directed, and Performed by Pedro Flores

Venue: Alliance Theater â?? Black Box

Runtime: 60 minutes

Genre: Theatre Â· Comedy Â· Magical Realism Â· Solo Performance Â· Original Script

Rating: FFF â?? Full-Fledged Fringe (Recommended for mature audiences)

About the Show

Juan Jose and the Deathly Vatos is a hilarious, high-octane solo performance that crashes East L.A. into the wizarding world with chisme, chanclas, and Chicano magic. When high school junior Juan Jose gets expelled, heâ??s suddenly thrust into Hermioneâ??s chaotic senior yearâ??and into battle against the Vato Who Shall Not Be Named.

Blending parody, cultural commentary, and pure Fringe energy, Pedro Flores reclaims the fantasy genre in this fast-paced ride through identity, resistance, and radical imagination. Part spoof, part spell, and all corazÃ³n.

ð?? Showtimes

- **Friday, July 25** â?? 7:30 PM
- **Saturday, July 26** â?? 1:30 PM
- **Sunday, July 27** â?? 6:00 PM
- **Friday, August 1** â?? 9:00 PM
- **Saturday, August 2** â?? 1:30 PM
- **Sunday, August 3** â?? 6:00 PMâ?? *This performance will include ASL interpretation.*

ð?? Tickets

Tickets: \$15 single, \$35 (3-pack), \$85 (10-pack)

Available at: planbtheatre.org/juanjose

or tickets.greatsaltlakefringe.org

about the Playwright: Pedro Flores

Pedro Flores is a Salt Lake City-based actor, director, and puppeteer, and a proud graduate of Weber State University's Acting and Directing program. He has been steadily making a name for himself in the Utah theatre scene with performances that span musical theatre, new work, and Fringe experimentation. Favorite credits include *In the Heights* (Usnavi, WVC Arts; Sonny, Good Company Theatre), #SLACabaret (Salt Lake Acting Company), *Full Color*, *Push Back: Rose Exposed*, *Alli and #3*, and *Aftershock* with Plan-B Theatre Company, as well as *Catharsis II: Inside Voices* and *American Idiot* at Good Company Theatre. Pedro was also featured in *With You* at the 2022 Great Salt Lake Fringe Festival, which earned awards for Outstanding Ensemble and *Mx. Congeniality*.

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