

## CARMEN JONES

by Oscar Hammerstein II based on Meilhac and Halevy's adaptation of Prosper Merimée's "Carmen".

Music by Georges Bizet.

Broadway Theatre - 2 December, 1943 (502 perfs)

Old Vic Theatre, London - 8 April, 1991

Whilst other musical shows adapted from operas have made wholesale changes to the original source material, this reworking of Bizet's *Carmen* made few changes to either score or storyline. The setting, however, has been drastically altered from Spain to America's deep south with a World War II parachute factory taking the place of a Spanish cigarette factory. Dramatically altering the audience response is the fact that all the characters in *Carmen Jones* are black.



### STORY

The torrid story of the voluptuous and fickle Carmen Jones, who is destroyed by her jealous lover, Joe, reaches a new and wider audience in the vivid recreation of an operatic masterpiece. Famous songs include "Dere's A Cafe On De Comer", "Beat Out Dat Rhythm On A Drum", "Dat's Love" and "Dis Flower".

The Storyline:

*Carmen Jones* is a worker in a Southern state parachute factory. It's wartime and Carmen always appears to be at the heart of any fight that's going on. Corporal Joe is detailed to go and arrest her. On seeing Joe Carmen is smitten with him. The feelings are reciprocal and Joe subsequently allows Carmen to escape arrest and he deserts the army.

However, Carmen, whose attraction for men has always been somewhat fickle, has attracted the not unwelcome attentions of prize-fighter Husky Miller. Carmen follows him to Chicago where he is in training for an important boxing match. Carmen ditches Joe without hesitation but Joe is not to be put off that easily and he follows Carmen to Chicago.

Carmen arrives outside the stadium where Husky Miller is to fight. Whilst there she is approached by a down-and-out, a refugee from justice. It is one very desperate Joe. All that matters in life is his love for Carmen and he begs her to pick up where they had left off. Carmen declines - Joe is a reference to her past life - today it is to be with Husky Miller. Maddened with jealousy, Joe stabs and kills her outside the stadium just as the roar of the crowd signals the triumph of Miller winning his fight. Joe waits resignedly for the arrival of the police to arrest him.

**CAST:** 10 men, 6 women, chorus

Principal characters:

- Carmen Jones - a parachute factory worker
- Joe - a soldier
- Husky Miller - a fighter
- Cindy Lou - Joe's sweetheart
- Frankie - Carmen's friend
- Remo the drummer

**MUSICAL NUMBERS:**

1. Overture
2. Cain't Let You Go
3. Honey Gal o' Mine
4. Good Luck Mr Fryin' Man
5. Dat's Love
6. You Talk Jus' Like My Maw
7. Dere's a Cafe on de Corner
8. Beat Out Dat Rhythm on the Drum
9. Stan' Up and Fight
10. Whizzin' Away Along de Track
11. Dis Flower
12. If YOu Would Only Come Away
13. De Cards Don' Lie
14. Dat Ol' Boy
15. Poncho de Panther from Brazil
16. My Joe
17. Git Yer Program for de Big Fight
18. Dat's Our Man
19. Finale

**INSTRUMENTATION:**

2 flutes (2nd db. piccolo), 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, percussion, harp, piano, strings

**DISCOGRAPHY**

Original London Cast Recording - EMI Classics CDC 7 54351 2