



The Guide to Musical Theatre

COWGIRLS

Conceived by Mary Murfitt, book by Betsy Howie, music and lyrics by Mary Murfitt.

Minetta Lane Theatre, Off Broadway April 1, 1996

SYNOPSIS

If "practice" is the way to get to Carnegie Hall, how could one possibly end up at Hiram Hall, a country music palace, in Rexford, Kansas?

Jo is in a pickle: she has 24 hours to save Hiram Hall, her father's country/western saloon in Rexford, Kansas, from foreclosure.

Although the Hall has seen better days, she's determined to keep it open, but how? What will pack in the crowds? Mickey, Jo's hard-livin' wise-crackin' waitress has just been dyin' to get up on that stage and prove that she's got what it takes to make it as a singer, and Mo, Jo's cook/cashier, is right behind her. That's all well and good, but Jo has other plans: she wants cowgirls and she's booked the Cowgirl Trio, sure it will save the saloon.

But there is no Cowgirl Trio; a misunderstanding on the phone brings to Rexford the Coghill Trio: Rita, Lee and Mary Lou, classical musicians, currently on a reunion tour. Jo isn't looking for classical music but the Coghill Trio are looking for a legitimate booking (as Mary Lou says, "where are we playing next ... Monty Hall?"). These six women surely mix like oil and water: Jo could have had a brilliant career as a country singer herself, but she gave up her dream to run her daddy's business; Mickey needs one more chance to sing or all her dreams will slip away; Mo can't bear to think that Jo might lose the place and will do anything to help her keep it; Rita planned the current tour because she and her husband are about to have their first child and she's not sure she'll ever perform again; Lee, always searching, has begun to feel like she's never going to find what she's looking for, and feels they should give Hiram Hall a chance; Mary Lou, just about to bust from following rules all her life, can't stand the fact that this isn't a real booking, and feels her career is doomed.

Fate must have brought these six women together and they side out - it's classical versus country. Can they meet in the middle? Sure thing and darn tootin', and when Jo proudly presents to the public the Cowgirl Trio, you bet your bottom dollar that it razes the root!

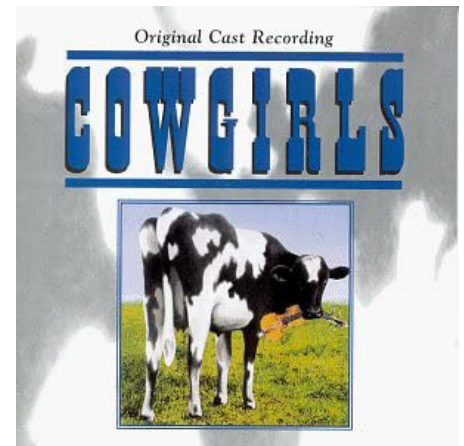
SCENES & SETTINGS

Time - The present:

Place: - Hiram Hall, a country music-hall in Rexford, Kansas

CAST: 6 women

Jo Carlson	Mary Lou
Rita	Mo
Lee	Mickey



MUSICAL NUMBERS:

1. Overture - Beethoven's Sonata Pathétique Opus 13 - The Trio: Rita, Lee and Mary Lou
2. Three Little Maids (Gilbert & Sullivan) - The Trio
3. Jesse's Lullaby (Music by Brahms) - The Trio
4. Ode To Connie Carlson - Mickey and Jo
5. Sigma, Alpha, Iota - The Trio
6. Ode To Jo - Mickey and Jo
7. From Chopin To Country (music by Chopin) - The Trio
8. Songs My Mama Sang (traditional hymn. additional music by M. Murfitt) - Jo and Mary Lou
9. Heads Or Tails - Lee and Rita
10. Love's Sorrow (music by Fritz Kreisler) Jo Rita and Lee
11. Looking For a Miracle (additional music by W.A. Mozart) - Mary Lou, Jo and Company
12. Don't Call Me Trailer Trash - Mickey and Jo
13. Honky Tonk Girl - Rita
14. Every Saturday Night - Jo and Trio
15. Don't Look Down - Lee with Rita
16. They're All Cowgirls To Me - Jo and Trio
17. Saddle Tramp Blues - Mary Lou with Rita and Lee
18. It's Time To Come Home - Jo
19. We're A Travelin' Trio - The Trio
20. Sunflower - The Trio
21. Concert Medley - Company
22. House Rules - Jo and Company
23. Cowgirls - The Trio

INSTRUMENTATION

Piano; Violin; Cello; Guitar; Mandolin; Banjo; Tambourine; Harmonica; Buckets

What the Critics said

"A joyous slapstick hoe-down! COWGIRLS wrings every drop of moonshine humour from its crossbreeding of classical and country." N.Y. Times.

"An unplugged gem of a musical, COWGIRLS is a fun, honky-conk romp." - Newsday. "Fun! Sassy! Knee-slapping spirit as warm as a heated mobile home." - N.Y. Daily News.

"Simply sensational, brilliantly performed. It should run until the cows come home." - N.Y. Post.

DISCOGRAPHY:

OBC Cast Recording VSD 5740