

AMERICAN DRAMA GROUP EUROPE and TNT THEATRE BRITAIN

present

by special arrangement with Lions Gate Films and Jeannette Walls

HALF BROKE HORSES

based on the novel by Jeannette Walls

adapted for the stage by Paul Stebbings & Phil Smith

directed by Christian Flint - music composed by Paul Flush

This is the story of a cowgirl, teacher and tough survivor on the fringes of the American Dream. Author Walls chronicles the life of her grandmother Lily Casey Smith, who died when Walls was eight. Because she uses a first-person narrative voice to capture Lily's scrappy voice and imaginatively fills in some of the missing details of Lily's life, Walls calls the work "A True-Life Novel". TNT and the American Drama Group Europe turn this work into a "True life play".

Lily's father is an eccentric who once spent three years in prison for murder, idolizes Billy the Kid and believes child's play is a waste of time. Lily's childhood on ranches in west Texas and New Mexico is part idyll and part struggle against poverty and cruel nature. She learns to break horses and acquires "true grit". She struggles for education and attends a Catholic boarding school until her father spends her tuition money to buy some dogs. A fighter, Lily overcomes every setback. But success is matched with tragedy as her sister is lured to destruction in Hollywood. When the Depression hits, Lily moves to Chicago, where she marries a salesman who turns out to be a thieving bigamist. At 27, she returns to teaching and meets and marries Jim Smith, whose nonsense practicality matches Lily's. When money gets scarce, Lily supplements the family income by selling bootleg liquor, gambling and horse racing. Lily's relationship with her equally headstrong but dreamy daughter Rosemary—who grows up to be Wall's mother— seems heading for disaster. This is one horse that Lily cannot break. In an epic showdown over a poker game the novel and play reach a grand climax. Can nothing stop this woman Lily as she carves her path through the "American Century"?

The play is written by Paul Stebbings and Phil Smith who have a long and successful history of adapting prose for the stage, which includes: ONE LANGUAGE MANY VOICES, MOON PALACE, THE GRAPES OF WRATH and FRANKENSTEIN.

The production will include a newly composed musical score and dynamic physical theatre and startling visual imagery – a style that has made TNT and ADGE probably "The most popular touring theatre company in the world" China National TV.