

THEATER BEAT

‘Having It All’ has it all

Feminists of a certain age will likely recall either rolling in the aisles or frothing at the mouth over Helen Gurley Brown’s bestseller, “Having It All: Love, Success, Sex, Money.” That telling subtitle refers to Brown’s hyperbolic hypothesis that there were absolutely no limits to what women could accomplish in life.

Of course, about 30 years later, many women realize that having it all really means doing it all — as primary caregivers, primary chore-doers and more and more frequently, primary breadwinners. Fortunately, the world premiere musical, “Having It All,” at the Noho Arts Center, uses Brown’s campy book only as a jumping-off point to examine the plight of the modern-day everywoman. In that, it succeeds brilliantly.

The show was conceived by Wendy Perelman and features a book by Perelman and David Goldsmith, who also wrote the exceptionally clever lyrics. John Kavanaugh composed the terrific music. Richard Israel directs this near-faultless production.

The action is set in an airport (designer Stephen Gifford’s handsome set), where five stranded women banter, bicker and bond with a vengeance. The characters are somewhat obvious archetypes — frazzled businesswoman, frustrated mom, carefree yoga instructor, infertile small-town wife



MICHAEL LAMONT

WOMEN BONDING: Lindsey Alley, left, Kim Huber, Alet Taylor, Jennifer Leigh Warren and Shannon Warne costar in the musical “Having It All.”

and neurotic Jewish writer — yet they balance one another perfectly, spanning the spectrum of female-kind to make a strong feminist point.

The cast — Lindsey Alley, Kim Huber, Alet Taylor, Shannon Warne and Jennifer Leigh Warren — is also perfectly balanced — one of the finest ensembles in memory. If overworked women can find time to see this show, they will be in on the ground floor of something special indeed. (Men fond of musical numbers that will blow them into next week should tag along too.)

— F. KATHLEEN FOLEY

“Having it All,” NoHo Arts Center, 11136 Magnolia Blvd., North Hollywood. 8 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays, 3 p.m. Sundays. Saturday at 3 p.m. Dark Sunday. \$40. (323) 960-7776. www.plays411.com/havingitall. Running time: 1

hour, 35 minutes.

Gay-friendly fable is lacking

“Enchanted” meets friends of Dorothy in “The Next Fairy Tale,” Brian Pugach’s sweetly eager musical now at Celebration Theatre in Hollywood.

The first world premiere developed fully in-house at Celebration, “Fairy Tale” arrives with a sly gloss on the Brothers Grimm. Fairy Godmistress Minerva (Gina Torrecilla) chooses accident-prone Hazel (Rachel Genevieve), a godmother on probation, to stage-manage the next great story of Happily Ever After.

Hazel’s mission? To aid the dashing Prince Copernicus (Christopher Maikish) in the rescue of his true love

from an evil dragon. Catch is, Copernicus pines for another prince — the cookie-baking Helio (Patrick Gomez); when Minerva finds out, she’s not about to let two guys in tights share true love’s kiss.

Michael A. Shepperd directs with characteristic wit and energy, and the cast is game. Stephanie Fredricks’ tart Dorothy Parker homage delights, sultry godmother Nell Teare vamps in a silver mini, and Maikish is pitch-perfect as a Pepsodent-smile royal who prefers a hug to a hunt.

Yet it’s not entirely clear for whom this “Fairy Tale” trolls. The show is too wide-eyed in tone (“Holy Toadstools!”) for Sondheim-savvy adult audiences and too intricate to work as a school show promoting tolerance. A handful of good numbers suggest Pugach [See Theater, D19]

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OS	LONG BEACH	SANTA CLARITA	SAN FERNANDO VALLEY	REGAL L.A. LIVE STADIUM 14
BRITOS 10	EDWARDS LONG BEACH	EDWARDS VALENCIA	EDWARDS CALABASAS STADIUM 6	DOWNTOWN L.A. — OLYMPIC & 110 FWY