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'Cowgirls' — At Last

A soundtrack rarely precedes a film by as many months as did the now-familiar one by k.d. lang for Gus Van Sant's *Even Cowgirls Get the Blues*. An earlier version of *Cowgirls* played the festival circuit last year, then was pulled days before its scheduled commercial run — theatres were already running trailers — so that Van Sant could recut the picture. Not a good sign.

The new edition still lacks energy in spots as does the acting (and not just the intentional "nonacting"), but although it doesn't soar, *Cowgirls* is by no means a disaster. Among the plusses: a subtext about accommodating difference, the focus on women's spirits and aspirations, a sweet lesbian relationship and occasional brilliantly kooky flashes.

Cowgirls is one of three opening-night films. It was to have had its theatrical release April 29, but that has been delayed yet again. The word now is mid-May(be). *Kabuki*, April 28, 7:30.