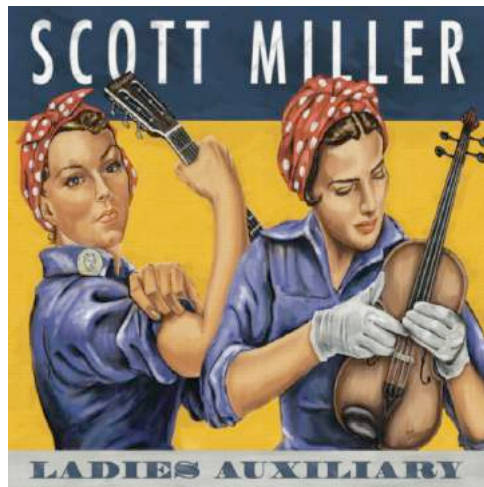


Music Review: Endearing set of love songs from Scott Miller

By Steven Wine

November 1



On “Ladies Auxiliary,” Virginia songwriter Scott Miller surrounds himself with all-female accompaniment to sing about the company of females, or more specifically, love — carnal love, poison love, the weight of love and the wait for love.

It’s an endearing set. The songs are strong, as is a supporting cast that includes fiddler Rayna Gellert and multi-instrumentalist Anne McCue, who produced on the album.

Miller’s sly humor is evident beginning with the opener “Epic Love,” which includes several punchlines and one cleverly disguised naughty word. Love of place is the inspiration for “Lo Siento, Spanishburg, WVa,” which covers a lot of ground in four minutes by touching on high school football, the opioid epidemic, the Iraq war and gentrification.

The cover “Mother-In-Law” doesn’t live up to its promise, in part because it includes a kazoo, rarely a good idea. Better is Bill Monroe’s Appalachian blues “With Body and Soul,” which Miller nails.

Miller would be better known if he played music full time, but he also has a gig as a cattle rancher, which explains the title of the hilarious closer, “Get Along, Everybody.” McCue breaks out the electric guitar to amplify the finale, but it still fits with the rest of the album as Miller sings about the love of labels.