Young Jean Lee’s *Untitled Feminist Show* is an embarrassment. Not to its six fiercely funny, fully nude performers — Becca Blackwell, Amelia Zirin-Brown (a.k.a. “caburlesque” comedienne Lady Rizo), Hilary Clark, Regina Rocke, Katy Pyle, and burlesque fixture World Famous *BOB*
— all of whom are nothing short of majestic. And not to its
director and chief conceiver, Lee (Lear, The Shipment), an
avant-garde playwright and witty provocateur who’s become
a trusted name brand below 14th Street. No, UFS is an
embarrassment to anyone in its audience who wrongly
believes himself or herself to have a working familiarity with
the female body (and, by extension, with any human body,
males or female). What this brief, joyous, mute extravaganza
of dance, mime, and movement reveals is just how badly a
sex-festooned and fashion-fussy culture has occluded our
view of the actual, functional potential of an unadorned form.
Or, I should say, forms, plural: The nudes of UFS cover much of the
morphological spectrum, a jiggling, tumbling, gloriously goofy rebuke to the
monobody beauty myth. Over the show’s 75 minutes, we don’t exactly
forget these women are naked — if anything, appreciation of their
bodies deepens — but our understanding of their nudity becomes more
plastic, more adaptable from scene to scene. We realized that all of us
(even, I suspect, those of us who actually own and maintain female
bodies) have been invited to view the nude in only a few culturally
preapproved forms. These bodies simply don’t obey those rules. They
bend into a comic fable one minute, a bawdy tale the next: Zirin-
Brown’s epic pantomimed “monologue” on porny blow jobs is a
Chaucer-meets-Daffy Duck marvel. At the drop of a hat, the stage
explodes into ecstatic dance. (The choreography, by turns muscular and
flubbery, insouciant and sincere, and created by Lee, Morgan Gould,
Faye Driscoll, and the cast, floats in a warm bath of Mozart and
technoid mash-ups.) Nothing is spared, and — in a long overdue reply to
The Puppetry of the Penis — we, more than once, stare into the
unblinking eye of Yoni. It stares right back. And then we both burst out
laughing: What was all the fuss about, anyway?

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