

NEW YORK

January 17, 2012

Theater

Theater Review: Young Jean Lee's *Untitled Feminist Show* By Scott Brown



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*

NEW YORK

January 17, 2012

— 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, male 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 morphic 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?

<http://nymag.com/daily/entertainment/2012/01/theater-review-young-jean-lees-untitled-feminist-show.html>