

COMIC STRIPPED

City busting a gut

Comedy alive and well in Toronto

Post CityMagazines' humour columnist, Mark Breslin, is the founder and owner of the Canada-wide Yuk Yuk's chain of comedy clubs. The former comedian and TV producer is also the author of several books, including *Control Freaked*.



Sad to say, much of the comedy out there is bad or boring, but every once in a while, you see something so good it makes the search all worthwhile.

Two weeks later, I'm sitting in a luxury seat at the Winter Garden theatre, waiting for *Women Fully Clothed* to start. I already know I'm in for a good night of comedy — I've been watching them evolve since they started doing shows two years ago.

But this three-night run is their first full-length show in Toronto, so the stakes are high, and they do not disappoint. The five women involved are a supergroup of comedic firepower: Robyn Duke, of *Saturday Night Live* fame; Jayne Eastwood, one of the founding members of Second City; Debra McGrath (CBC's *Getting Along Famously*); Kathryn Greenwood (ABC's *Whose Line Is It Anyway?*); and Teresa Pavlinek, *History Bites*.

Every sketch is a masterpiece of performance and writing. Each piece arcs perfectly, with crafted endings that are sorely missed in most of what passes for sketch comedy. Above all, the women can act, so the poignant moments really work.

The audience was mostly mature women, but the men were having a great time, too. How could they not? Robyn Duke's portrayal of a snooty



▲ **Women Fully Clothed comedy troupe**

European salesclerk, Deb McGrath's hoser widow, Jayne Eastwood's gravel-voiced characters, the elegance and charm of Greenwood's prepsters, Pavlinek's boho waitress all click and score big, big laughs. *Women Fully Clothed* deserves to be a major success on comedy stages for a long time.