

scenes

By JON KAPLAN and GLENN SUMI

Women fully funny

Eugene Levy calls the **Women Fully Clothed** performers the "five funniest women in Canada."

After seeing Friday night's WFC show at the Winter Garden, we had to agree. It's the strongest sketch show we've seen in years.

The quintet – **Robin Duke, Jayne Eastwood, Kathryn Greenwood, Debra McGrath** and **Teresa Pavlinek** – deal mostly with domestic, middle-class foibles.

Their vividly drawn women are trying to balance careers and families; they're braving their yearly mammo-gram with dignity; they're doing their best to keep up with the latest books and movies, dutifully watching a dull Canadian film without strangling their annoying, candy wrapper-scrunching fellow moviegoers.

This is sharply observed social satire, delivered by performers – all **Second City** vets, no surprise – at the top of their game.

It's impossible to discuss the elements of the sketches, because they're so well-structured and so uniformly well acted. The humour always arises from character and situation.

Sometimes there aren't even big laughs. A sketch about two former university friends who meet years later – one waits tables, the other's a busy mom – is full of painful truths so carefully observed we end up laughing at ourselves.

We've all seen women like Duke's annoying sales clerk who shadows customers around a store. But we've also been the deluded customer (Greenwood) who wants to buy a pair of pants that's way too young for her.

John Hemphill directs these gems with precision; the set consists of five chairs, but so much is suggested. **Greg Morrison's** music adds ambience but never condescends.

These women could easily sell out theatres across the country. Please come back.



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