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BROADMINDED: NOW IN 3D!

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Girls-only sketch comedy @ The Alchemist

by Jenna Raymond



You might not think Hillary Clinton and Alanis Morissette have much in common, but somehow, Broadminded's rendition of Hillary's concession speech as the spoken lyrics of "You Oughta Know" sheds new light on the current presidential campaign season as well as the media coverage consuming it: exactly what the four women of Broadminded are aiming for in their newest multi-media sketch show, *Broadminded: Now in 3-D*. Each sketch targets an aspect of modern media and exposes the skewed, the superficial and the downright ridiculous.

The four women of Broadminded – Stacy Babl, Anne Graff LaDisa, Melissa Kingston and Megan McGee – got together two years ago after taking classes and performing at ComedySportz. All four collaborate in the writing, direction and production of each sketch. They are ego-less in their synergy, producing light comedy with a serious underlying point, like the ultra-conservative news pundit who insists the answer to controlling illegal drugs is right there in the second amendment, or the sober BBC anchor interviewing girls she believes to be Chinese exchange students, but are really just Americans who want a few bucks on a promised prepaid Master Card.

The show incorporates video sketches with the live performance, spoofing a Dateline exploration of "Prodigious Progeny." The most notable chronicles the nurturing that goes into raising a daughter believed to be the anti-Christ. After all, the number six can look an awful lot like the letter "G" if not practiced over and over with strict parental guidance. LaDisa is eerily charming as the hoped-for anti-Christ.

Broadminded: Now in 3-D is the group's first attempt at a completely thematic show. Each sketch spins satirical on aspects of the media and entertainment, including television, radio, news and advertising. It's smugly satisfying to see a version of those yogurt commercials in which live-culture lovers admit they're still hungry. And who knew there's now a prescription drug called Urbanadrene, a cure to the disease Suburbanitis? Side effects include but are not limited to eating organic produce and using public transportation.

The four women don't just throw together a few funny ideas and hope for the best: research is an integral part of their creative process. Most will recognize syndicated radio host Delilah as an effortlessly bland surgeon of the heart, patching up relationships with generic pop songs of the past two decades. But Kingston's phenomenal interpretation of an alcohol abuser lining up shot glasses on the sound board while producers try to break into her studio is based in truth, which makes it even better.

Performers in comedy sketches have just a few seconds to establish personas for the audience. Broadminded uses body language, voice and very few props to convey character immediately. All four women completely invade their roles, and each sketch is crisp and distinctive. The video sketches provide time for make-up, hair and costume changes. Some of the physical comedy occasionally slides into stereotypes that Broadminded could have avoided, but despite this, the women never rely on an article of clothing or a glued-on beard to define a character.

The pastiche of *Broadminded: Now in 3-D* demonstrates that the media and entertainment world habitually takes itself too seriously and verges on preposterous. Their intelligence, wit and mirth blaze throughout each piece, providing an opportunity for raising consciousness without pretense that you don't generally anticipate in a comedy revue. **VS**

Broadminded: Now in 3-D runs through June 29 at Alchemist Theatre, 2569 S. Kinnickinnic in Bayview. For more information, visit [Broadminded online](#). *Broadminded's* next performance is at Milwaukee's Sketch and Improv Festival, August 7-9.

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