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THEATRE CRITIC

The solo show is the bread and butter of the Fringe. It's the artists' ideal: easy to transport, cheap to produce, write it yourself and there are no royalties to pay. And when it really cooks, the audience gets to be amazed. Isn't he clever! How does she do that all by herself? Less is sometimes much more at Fringe 2008.

Barry Smith's Baby Book

My favourite show of this Fringe. American Barry Smith fills the blanks in the baby book his mother made up for him when he was born. He simply stands in front of a microphone and talks to us about his childhood in small-town Mississippi while showing a phenomenally edited PowerPoint presentation of home photos, video clips and personal memorabilia. Smith is obsessive about recording his life. He's also very witty and incredibly smart. Both hilarious and poignant, this show will make you think about your own life in entirely new ways—and make you desperately want to take PowerPoint lessons. Not to be missed.

At the Waterfront Theatre (Friday 5:15 p.m., Saturday 8:45 p.m.)

