

THE LIST

Sticks, Stones, Broken Bones ●●●●●

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This article is from 2010.



Your plastic friends

There's something delightfully primal about a shadow-and-light show; it makes us all into children again. This piece, a light comic novelty of the kind only seen in fringe festivals, is an exemplar of its kind, with the delicate touch required for a family show, and a sense of cartoon hanging over both the children's toys and bits of cheap plastic that assume monstrous life projected on a white screen.

Montreal performer Jeff Achtem assumes an endearing clown character to bring us into a world where a balloon, a wig and some masking tape become an old woman watching a horror film, while a pen and a shoe acquired from the audience morphs into the creature stalking her. With a

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teddy bear becoming a man undergoing icky, yet never offensive brain surgery, and another volunteer from the audience propelled into martial arts combat with a kung-fu master made of bits of glove and plastic, the show makes us part of Achem's imagined world to an impressive degree. You could stack all the props used in this piece up, and I doubt they'd cost you a tenner, yet this little fragment will provide you with more entertainment than the average multi-million quid McMusical.

Underbelly, 0844 545 8252, until 29 Aug, 2pm, £9–£10.50 (£8–£9.50).

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