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Special  
report  
Edinburgh  
2004

Edinburgh: comedy

**The Axis of Evil Tour**

★★★★★ C Central, Edinburgh

**Brian Logan**  
**Monday August 23, 2004**  
[The Guardian](#)

4 Sep  
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3 Sep  
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World of  
Dissocia, Royal  
Lyceum,  
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Euridice, Festival  
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Chase that  
dream - but don't  
lie to yourself](#)

31 Aug  
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The inaugural Richard Pryor award has announced its nominees, and among them is Egyptian-American stand-up Ahmed Ahmed. Here's Ahmed on being an Arab in the States today: "Security's gotten so tight, I just show up at the airport in a g-string." He isn't saying anything particularly challenging here - he's still discovering how receptive UK audiences are to material that's less welcome Stateside. But Ahmed is a likeable stand-up with a pop-eyed stare. However, he could dig deeper into the post-9/11 Arab-American experience, which can't always be as easy to laugh at as he makes out.

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Sharing this triple bill with Ahmed and compere Josh Nasser, Aron Kader is half-Mormon, half-Palestinian and all Washington DC. Kader's delivery is too cool; he's at his best when most animated. Again, his take on the Arab-American situation is mellow. But he makes a neat effort to shift the Middle Eastern self-image, away from talk of "the chosen people" and towards pride in the invention of the Arab numeral. Cue a riff on a modern world in which Roman numerals still hold sway.

Enjoyable stuff - but the Axis of Evil tour could do with more comic belligerence.

- Until August 30. Box office: 0870 701 5105.

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