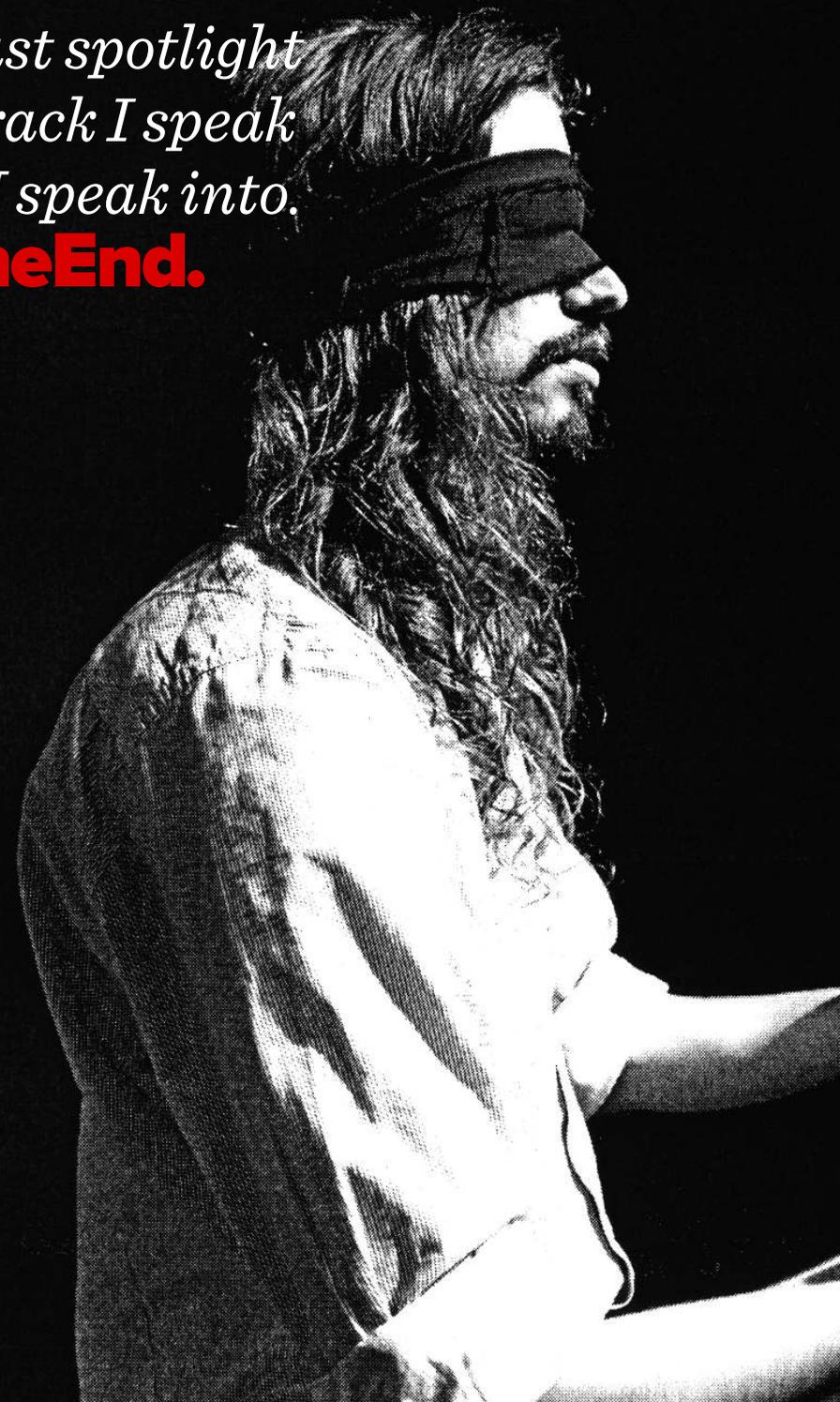
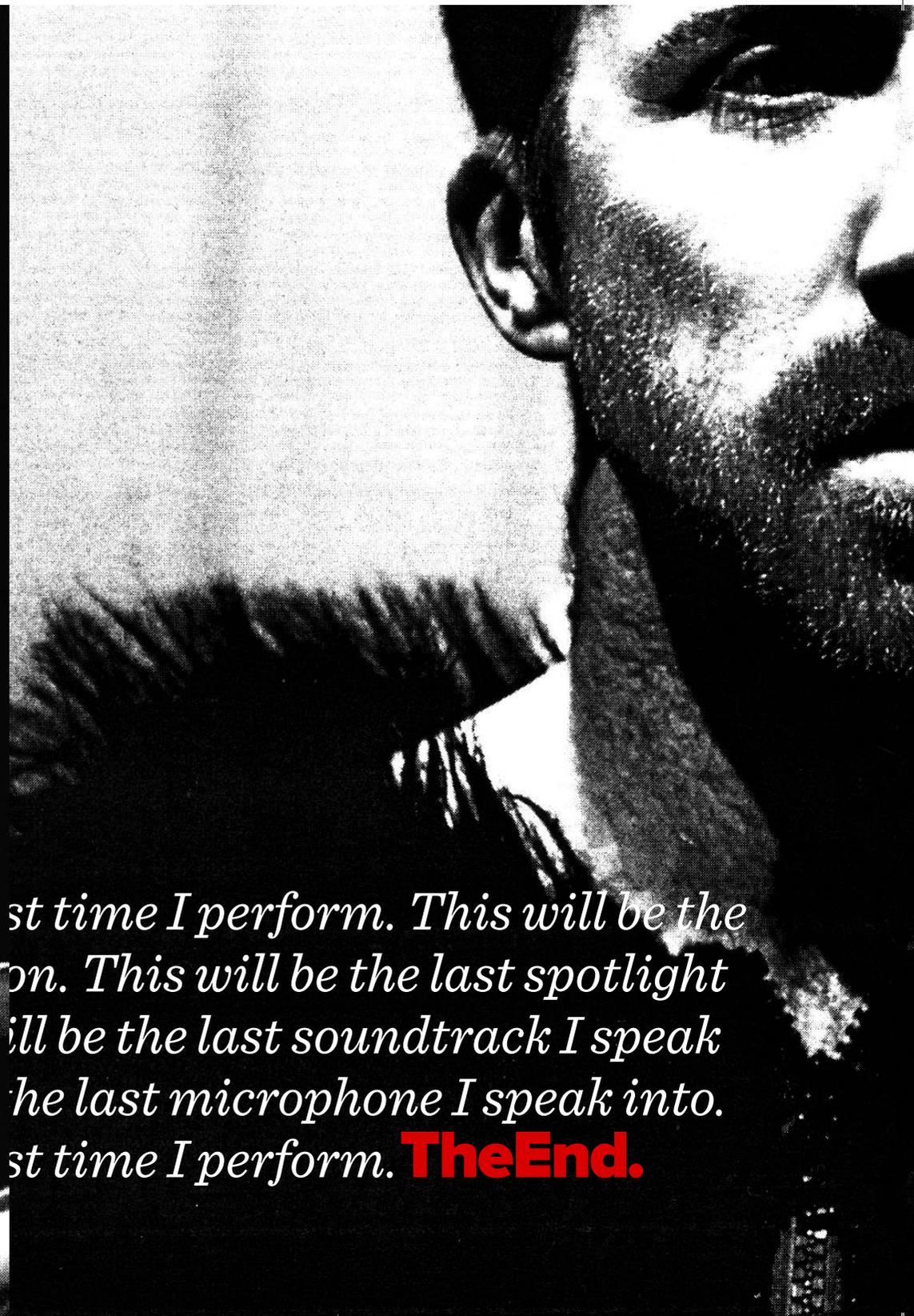


*This will be the last time I perform. This will be the last stage I stand on. This will be the last spotlight I stand in. This will be the last soundtrack I speak over. This will be the last microphone I speak into. This will be the last time I perform. **TheEnd.***



*st time I perform. This will be the  
on. This will be the last spotlight  
ill be the last soundtrack I speak  
he last microphone I speak into.  
st time I perform. **TheEnd.***



#### Performers

Michael Pinchbeck  
Ollie Smith

#### Dramaturgs

Heta Patel  
Mole Wetherell

#### Soundtrack

Chris Cousin

#### Photography

Julian Hughes

#### Design

Cubic

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The Junction



chesterperforms



Loughborough University



‘Pinchbeck is such an interesting theatre maker’, **The Guardian**  
‘A compelling and intellectual piece’, **The Scotsman**

# the end

## The End. By Michael Pinchbeck

### On Endings

(After Michael Pinchbeck’s ‘The End’, Lakeside Arts Centre, Nottingham 2010)

In art, as in life, nothing is truly finished. Something appears to have come to an end – a book, a play, a sculpture, a life – only to linger on in echoes and afterthoughts and corrections. And, of course, in memory. The play finishes, the audience applaud, the house-lights go up, the actors go home. But the next day the actors come back and do it all over again, while the audience carry something of the performance with them into their following days.

But I’m being evasive; works of art do, of course, have designated endings. The reader finds out who done it, the actor removes his face-paint, the projectionist puts away the last reel. And however much the creator of an artwork might want her piece to resonate in the core of the audience’s very being, there still needs to be a moment which is called, simply, The End.

In my own writing, I’ve often had difficulty knowing when I’ve come to the end of the process. The only time I know a story is truly finished is when I’ve crossed everything out. Otherwise, it becomes a case of having the thing wrenched out of my hands and put into the hands of the audience, for them to do with as they will. Which is not the end of the process at all, in fact. It’s more like the beginning.

The End is Michael Pinchbeck’s last performance, and Ollie Smith’s first. And Michael’s exit from the stage serves as the starting point for this show, which explores ideas of entrances and exits, beginnings and ends, ruptures and closures; and,

of course, that most famous of theatrical departures – “exit, pursued by a bear.” As is often the case with Michael’s work, the show is openly concerned with the process of its own creation and performance, and the way in which that process began and can never quite be accepted as ending.

At times, the confusion between what Michael and Ollie wanted to do, and are doing, and will do, is reminiscent of the moebius-strip logic of Billy Bragg singing, “I was 21 years when I wrote this song, I’m 22 now but I won’t be for long.” But of course, as the older Michael keeps reminding the younger Ollie, none of us are 21 or 22 for long. And so as this performance, with its bear costumes, gun-shots, last words, and repeated cries that they “didn’t imagine it to end this way” draws to an elliptical end, we see the older performer drift toward the exit, pursued and usurped by the bear of his young apprentice.

But is this really the end of Michael Pinchbeck’s performance career? I’m not convinced. His work to date – The Long and Winding Road, The Post Show Party Show, Sit With Me For A Moment And Remember – has played brilliantly with audience expectations, not least of what a performance can or should actually be. I suspect Mr Pinchbeck will realise he’s not quite done with us yet.

Jon McGregor  
23 December 2010

[www.makingtheend.wordpress.com](http://www.makingtheend.wordpress.com)

## Biographies

### Michael Pinchbeck

Michael is a writer and live artist based in Nottingham (UK). He has worked with Metro-Boulot-Dodo, Reckless Sleepers and Strange Names Collective. He was commissioned by Nottingham Playhouse to write The White Album (2006) and The Ashes (2011). He is currently researching a new project in Paris and Sarajevo supported by the British Council and Theatre Writing Partnership. In 2008, Michael was selected by Arts Council England to represent the UK at the Biennale for Young Artists in Italy. In 2009 and 2011, his work was selected for the British Council’s Edinburgh Showcase. Michael studied Theatre and Creative Writing at Lancaster University and has an MA in Performance and Live Art from Nottingham Trent University. His PhD at Loughborough University explores the role of the dramaturg in contemporary performance through a trilogy deconstructing Shakespearean stage directions: The End (2011), The Beginning (2012) and The Middle (2013).

[www.michaelpinchbeck.co.uk](http://www.michaelpinchbeck.co.uk)



### Ollie Smith

Ollie is a writer and live artist based in Nottingham (UK). He makes work as a solo artist and as a collaborator and his practice operates in the territories between theatre, performance art and music. He is currently developing two new pieces of work for studio spaces: a solo show, 27, and a two-hander, Cat in Hell. He has received funding, commissions, platforms and development opportunities from Arts Council England, Theatre Writing Partnership (Nottingham), greenroom & hÅb (Manchester), Hatch (Nottingham), circuit (Leicester) and Compass (Leeds) and has toured work across the UK. Past work includes Alone Time (2008), Dressing The Part: A Durational Performance (2008), Help Yourself (2009), Performance in Progress: Do Not Enter (2010) and Goldfish (2012). Ollie is currently a supported artist of Emerge (Leeds). He trained as a performer at Bretton Hall and graduated in 2007 with first-class honours. He has collaborated with Michael on The End (2011) and The Beginning (2012).

[www.ollie-smith.com](http://www.ollie-smith.com)

