



# THE MAN WHO FLEW INTO SPACE FROM HIS APARTMENT

By Michael Pinchbeck

## THE MAN WHO FLEW INTO SPACE FROM HIS APARTMENT

I've always struggled with quantum physics. Particles that can be in two places at once. Events that happen differently depending on who's watching. Wormholes that leap between universes, collapsing vast distances to nothing. And then I saw *The Man Who Flew Into Space From His Apartment* and suddenly all became clear.

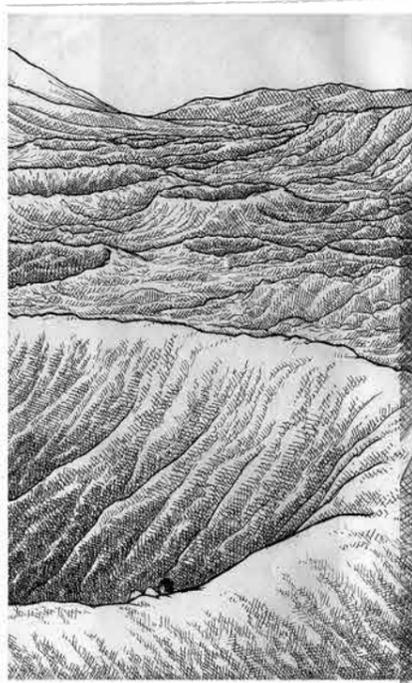
A performer stands before us, wearing headphones. There are ten of us, and one of them, and the words inside the headphones will be new to all of us. We're going on an adventure: an adventure in a room; through space; through time; through our own memories. It's an adventure that was written and recorded several months ago, but that is absolutely simultaneously happening right here, right now; and also somewhere else tomorrow; and somewhere else next week.

And it's an adventure that's the same every time that it's performed, but absolutely different too: you and I have seen the same show, but our memories of it will be different, and when we meet and compare our experience, we'll never know whether the differences are because of the performer; or because of the audience; or because of how you and I choose to remember things; or because you and I are different, despite all that we share, which is not just that you and I have seen the same show.

At the time I'm writing this, which is my present and your past, the most popular film in the world is *The Martian*. Ridley Scott spent \$108m to send Matt Damon into space; and yet, for all its wonders, *The Martian* feels slighter, sparser and smaller than *The Man Who Flew Into Space From His Apartment*. *The Martian*, after all, is Aristotle - unity of action, time and place - to the *The Man Who's Heisenberg*. IMAX 3D can blast us all the way from Cape Canaveral to the bright red dust of Mars, but only theatre can whisk us in a moment from the bleak wastes of Star City to a Soviet-era artwork to an entirely metaphorical - but no less real - front porch, beyond which stretch our dreams.

What do we mean by space travel? A travel through space, or a space that travels? Millions marvel every Saturday at the adventures of a Time Lord whose box is bigger on the inside and that flies through time and space, but what counts as fiction to science is everyday reality to theatre, spinning between universes real, imagined and psychological with dizzying agility and speed. The story of Ilya Kabakov inside the story of Yuri Gagarin inside the story of the space race inside the story of the Cold War inside the story of all of us inside a room with a projector, a performer, ten postcards, some boots and a balloon. A set of Russian dolls. A multiverse. An intimate epic. A show.

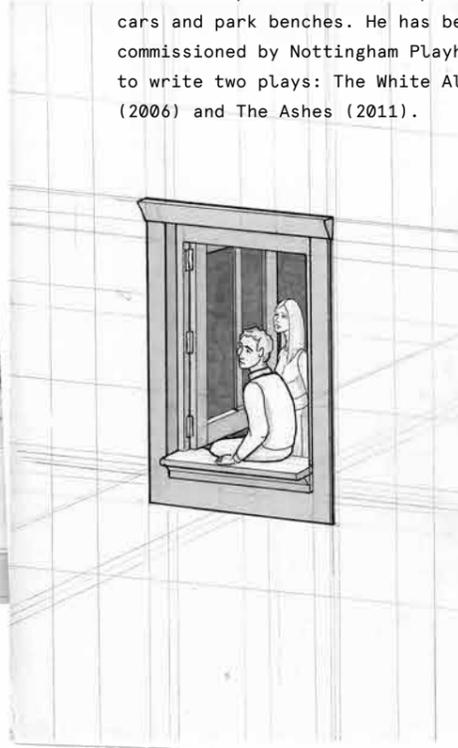
Jonathan Wakeham  
Screenwriter



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*The Man Who Flew Into Space From His Apartment* is commissioned by hAb (Manchester) and Lincoln Performing Arts Centre. Developed at Hatch, First Bite, Forest Fringe, Derby Theatre, Lincoln University, Usher Gallery and Primary. Supported by the National Lottery through Arts Council England. The illustrations for this programme were designed by fine artist, Patrick Milsom. Patrick has exhibited widely in the UK, he was shortlisted for the Salon Art Prize 2011 and is represented by The Contemporary London. Patrick is currently pursuing an MA in Fine Art at Nottingham Trent University.

The photographic documentation for this programme and the slides for the performance were taken and found by Julian Hughes, a fine artist and photographer based in Nottingham. He has collaborated with Michael for 10 years and teaches at Worcester University and Nottingham Trent University.

## CREDITS

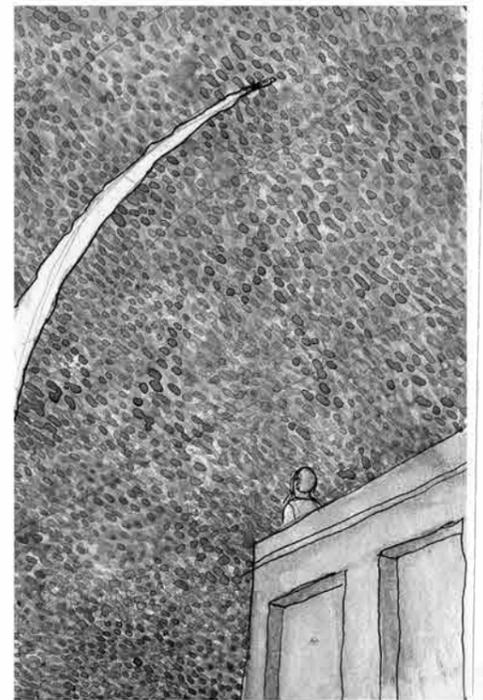
**Director** Michael Pinchbeck  
**Assistant Director** Rhiannon Jones  
**Dramaturg** Nathaniel J. Miller  
**Documentation & Slides** Julian Hughes  
**Illustration** Patrick Milsom  
**Technical Support** Darren Page  
**Filmmaking** Rich Swainson  
**Programme Notes** Jonathan Wakeham  
**Design** Versus / versus.uk.com  
**Guest Performers** Ollie Smith, Nicki Hobday, Anna Fenimore, Daniel Hunt, James Hudson, Rochi Rampal, Nick Walker, Francesca Millican-Slater, Olwen Davies, Iara Solano Arana, Deborah Pearson, Caroline Horton, Chris Thorpe, Christopher Brett Bailey, Claire Marshall, Emma Hall, Ira Brand, Rachel Porter, Richard Lowdon, Oliver Bray, Niki Woods, Adele Wragg, Jimmy Fairhurst, Tom Barnes, Priya Mistry, Jack. A. G. Britton, Lewys Holt, Andrew Westerside, Rachel Baynton and Aylwyn Walsh.

## BIOGRAPHY

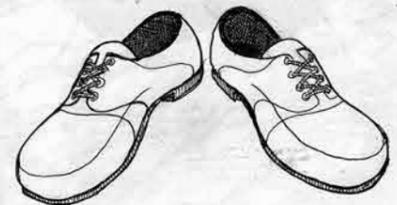
Michael Pinchbeck is committed to telling stories that are both personal and powerful. He aims to find innovative structures to scaffold those stories that are original, surprising and risk-taking. He tells stories that take place across time and space and aims to weave together different threads into a dynamic narrative. Michael co-founded Metro-Boulot-Dodo in 1997 after studying Theatre and Creative Writing at Lancaster University. He left the company in 2004 to embark on a five-year live art project - *The Long and Winding Road*. Since then, he has made durational work for Roman walls and one-to-one performances for parked cars and park benches. He has been commissioned by Nottingham Playhouse to write two plays: *The White Album* (2006) and *The Ashes* (2011).

Michael recently finished touring a trilogy of devised works, *The Beginning*, *The Middle* and *The End*. His work has been selected three times for the British Council Showcase and toured to Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and the USA. His last show, *Bolero*, premiered at Nottingham Playhouse before touring to Bosnia & Herzegovina and Kosovo supported by the British Council. Michael has a Masters from Nottingham Trent University in Performance and Live Art and is completing a PhD at Loughborough University exploring the role of the dramaturg in contemporary performance. He lectures in drama at the University of Lincoln.

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