THE MAN WHO FLEW INTO SPACE FROM HIS APARTMENT
By Michael Pinchbeck
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 $68m 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, or a space that travels? Millions.

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The Man Who Flew Into Space From History to his Apartment is commissioned by hÅb 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 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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