



THE PRINCIPLE OF MOTION



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Fringe First nominees present the life story of an automaton

“★★★★★

” *Metro on The Straight Man* (2002)

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Observer on Latin! (2002)

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Three Weeks on Amy Evans' Strike (2001)

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Evening Standard

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Deep in their underground laboratory somewhere in South London, acclaimed theatre company Activated Image are hard at work creating their sixth Edinburgh Fringe production – a frenetic tale of automata and artificial intelligence, genius inventions and invented genius.

Vienna, 1770. Wolfgang von Kempelen is about to change the course of history. He unveils his latest creation before Empress Maria Theresa. A wooden box. Behind the box, a wooden man in Turkish robes. On top of the box a chessboard. Kempelen winds his contraption and an assembly of cogs, wheels and levers judders to life. The Turk is born.

250 years later, one man's dream becomes another man's obsession. It's 1939, and brilliant young mathematician Alan Turing is recruited to the intelligence centre at Bletchley Park to help break the German Enigma code. While there, he stumbles upon an even greater mystery. Blueprints for a chess-playing automaton that seemed to possess the ability to think for itself. Was the first intelligent machine lost to history? Or were there strings attached?

Inspired by the bestselling book and BBC Radio Four series **The Mechanical Turk** (by *Telegraph* and *Economist* writer Tom Standage), this playful, physically-charged ensemble performance blends the extraordinary life and legacy of a chess-playing automaton with the prescience – and pain – of one of Britain's finest minds.

Activated Image's previous productions include the revival of **Latin!** which played Edinburgh's Gilded Balloon, transferring to the New End Theatre, London, and, earlier this year, the King's Head Theatre, London. The company has produced two acclaimed new dramas at the Fringe, 2002's **The Straight Man** which transfers to the King's Head next year, and the Fringe First-nominated **Amy Evans' Strike** ("One of the gems of 2001" *The List*).

For more information: 07850 217 399 or info@activated.co.uk • Images: www.activated.co.uk/press

Activated Image: *The Principle of Motion*.

Conceived and directed by Adam Barnard. Design: Vicki Fifield. Lights: Ben Pacey. Sound and music: Peter Michaels. Cast: Beatrice Curnew, John Hickey, Simon Masterton, Rachel Rose Reid, John Sheerman, Rachel Sternberg. Devised by the company.

Smirnoff Underbelly 'Iron Belly'. July 31 to August 24 (not 12) @ 4.10pm (ends 5.35pm).

Tickets £7.50 - £9.50 (previews Jul 31, Aug 1: £4). Box Office: 0870 745 3083

World premiere.

Smirnoff is Underbelly's sponsor and not the sponsor of any of the shows