

**Review: Hofesh Shechter Company: Contemporary Dance 2.0**

**By Su Carroll**

***Hofesh Shechter Company: Contemporary Dance 2.0, Theatre Royal Plymouth***

What you see is what you get with acclaimed choreographer Hofesh Shechter. The show starts suddenly, plunging you into darkness followed by sharp white light as the music hits your ears. Bang! You are grabbed and dragged into the centre of the action. And it never stops.

This is Shechter II – a hand-picked company of dancers aged between 18 and 25 with a scary amount of energy and skill already. Hofesh Shechter has been creating contemporary dance pieces for nearly 20 years – including *Uprising* and *In Your Rooms* – but he never fails to surprise.

In *Contemporary Dance 2.0*, he drives his dancers to the rhythm of his own beat, writing music that entrances performer and audience alike. People often ask: what is contemporary dance about? What does it mean? With this seamless, non-stop work, the answer is in the sound and the movement. It doesn't have to be about anything. It just is. It is fast, clever, hypnotic, exciting, dangerous, sexy... all of those things. But it is also softer and funnier than I remember from previous work by this choreographer.

The piece is divided into five parts from *Pop* to *The End*. In the *Contemporary Dance* section, Shechter gives us everything we have come to expect. But he starts by making his own ground-breaking choreography style appear like a cliché. What happens when a *Bright Young Thing* grows up? It is very clever and very funny. He shows us his own dance journey and in doing so reminds us what an extraordinary creative person he is. He has taken everything he has learned and with this young company this truly is *Contemporary Dance 2.0*.

And, as if to prove the point, he closes by reviving dance routines we have already seen in the show to the unlikeliest soundtrack of a Frank Sinatra classic.

One hour of pure creative energy. Absolutely mesmerising.