

Shechter lollops into battle

By Sarah Frater, Evening Standard 02.03.09

[More reviews by Sarah Frater](#)

Protest isn't mentioned in the programme, nor conflict, much less actual wars that pock-mark the planet. On stage, no one carries a gun or grenade, and no one weeps for dead sons. Nothing is explicit, yet as *In Your Rooms* unfolds, the compulsion for combat swarms in on you.

It's the work of Hofesh Shechter, the Israeli-born, London-based choreographer who is three years less than his 33 if you subtract the military service that's compulsory in [Israel](#). *In Your Rooms* confirms him as a talent tackling high ideas with deceptively ordinary means.

In Your Rooms features 17 dancers on a plain stage. The lighting evokes urban shadows and the costumes the international uniform of youth. Music is a rhythmic, Middle Eastern inflected score, written by Shechter himself (a Barbican commission is mooted), and played live by an excellent 19-piece band.



Shadows of conflict: a scene from Hofesh Shechter's *In Your Rooms* at the Roundhouse

Choreographically, Shechter riffs on ideas of protest and prayer via a wonderfully original vocabulary combining the gesture of religion and synchronicities of battle. At first, it's just rag-taggy lolloping, like gangs of lads. Then come the cowering squats of battle, the shudders of gun-shot, and the repetitions of military training. The dancers are decoy and target. They avert their eyes. In fact, you never see full faces in this choreography of the clandestine.

Shechter has created a kind of physical incantation, with the rituals of faith and chevrons of the infantry. He mashes them with the camaraderie of Middle Eastern social dancing to produce a psychodynamic that is terrifying, tender and innately familiar. Explanations wither when the dancers raise their heads and palms, and whirl like shot-upon dervishes.

The companion piece *Uprising for seven men* is lighter —there's boy band with the battlefield. Both entranced the young audience, although nice to spot veteran Python [Terry Gilliam](#) in the crowd.

[Read the latest reviews from Sarah Frater in the Evening Standard](#)

More

[Ballet Black review](#)
[Entertainment Podcast](#)

Details are correct at the time of publication - please check with venue before booking.

Reader reviews (0)

[Add your review](#)

No comments have so far been submitted.

Add your comment

Name:

Email:

Your email address will not be published

Town and country:

Your comment:

[Terms and conditions](#)

[Daily Mail](#) [Mail on Sunday](#) [Travel Mail](#) [This is Money](#) [Metro](#)
[ES Magazine](#) | [Loot](#) | [Jobsite](#) | [Homes & property](#) | [London Jobs](#) | [FindaProperty.com](#) | [Primelocation.com](#) | [Educate London](#) | [Holiday Villas](#)