

## **Audio description - Introduction to Def Motion: Cog in the Wheel.**

'Cog in the wheel' is a street dance performance, choreographed and conceptualised by self-taught dancer and artist Billy Read.

The piece is performed by a mix of deaf and hearing dancers; Billy, Warren Murray, Ben Randall, Kevaughn Laing and Kameel Myrie.

The piece explores themes of living in a capitalist society, technology, focusing on the exploitation of the low paid factor workers who make our everyday electronic devices.

The performers are identically dressed in bright red jumpsuits, pulled in at the waist with green plaited belts, and worn with white socks and black trainers. This uniformity takes away their individuality. Highlighting how we are often viewed as a commodity, just another cog to ensure the operation of the machine.

The performance heavily features tutting, involving forming shapes and angles, with the body, limbs, hands and fingers. Other dance styles include, popping, breaking, robotics and ballet.

The piece begins with the five young man, wandering round, eyes glued to their mobile phones. Unaware of the world around them, they occasionally collide.

Warren stops becoming absorbed in watching a film on his mobile phone. Behind him, Billy films on his mobile. The others pause to watch. They gather around Billy to review the footage.

The dancers head to work, queuing one behind the other, arms pumping mechanically down the line, before individually peeling away, to begin their relentless working day.

They fulfil their roles with sharp, repetitive and meticulous moves. Exhausted, some collapse onto their backs. Their colleagues raise them to their feet.

One dancer, wearing a black jacket, is the boss. He is incredibly strict and orders the other dancers, the factory staff, to work harder and faster, despite their boredom and exhaustion.

They perform with a fluid sense of unity between them. Each movement clean and sharp like a factory conveyor belt.

In another part of the factory four dancers pound their extended arms up and down. The fifth dancer walks down the lines, then reverses back, narrowly missing their pistoning arms.

Lining up, they snake around the space, like a convoy of fork-lift trucks.

Facing us, one behind the other, they move together as if one conjoined body. Their arms hammer out, then retract, fast and slick, all in perfect unison.

They group at the rear. One by one, they break forwards to perform their own individual work routines, each using a different style of dance.

Grouping around Billy he repetitively mimes, tugging on overalls, tying the laces of his workboots, and putting on his safety goggles.

The group return to their rhythmic movements, arms often linked, like mechanical components, pumping and spinning, each action sharp and jarring.

Finally at the end of their exhausting day, they each pull out their mobile phones from their overall pockets, checking their screens, or snapping a quick selfie, before heading steadily away, as the performance ends.

