

ARTS

Edited by Stephen Bevis



ROOMS WITH A VIEW

WILLIAM YEOMAN

UNLOCKING THE WORLD

Scientists and artists from around the world collaborate in **Art in the Age of Nanotechnology**, a series of projects designed to challenge, explore and critique our understanding of the material world. From Friday until April 30 at the John Curtin Gallery, Curtin University of Technology, Kent Street, Bentley.

FOCUS ON PINJARRA

The massacre of indigenous people by a group led by Governor James Stirling was a significant event in WA's history. Fremantle Prison Gallery will be the first venue to host **Pinjarra Massacre Memorial**, a touring exhibition initiated as a memorial to the massacre of Bindjareb Nyoongars in October 1834 in Pinjarra. Put together by Karrie-Anne Kearing, an indigenous curator from Pinjarra, the free exhibition features WA artists including Barry Belotti, Julie Dowling, Sharon Egan, Rob Ewing, Athol Farmer, Ron Gomboc, Sally Morgan, Laurel Nannup and Shane Pickett. At Fremantle Prison, The Terrace, Fremantle, from Friday until March 14.

MUNDARING ART GAINS

The Mundaring Arts Centre reopens for 2010 with the announcement of the Shire of Mundaring's latest art acquisition through the centre's **Acquisition** exhibition. On display are works by local artists including Denise Brown, Jenny Janes Armati and Lyne Graham. From Friday until March 7 at the Mundaring Arts Centre, 7190 Great Eastern Highway, Mundaring.



From John Lacey's exhibition.

NEW LACEY WORKS

John Lacey's impressionistic landscapes attract the viewer because of the honest representation of the beautiful formations and hues of the north of WA. His latest work can be viewed in a new exhibition opening on February 11 at Stafford Studios, 102 Forrest Street, Cottesloe.

CAPTURE THE RIVERS

The Rite to be dramatic

Igor Stravinsky's once riotously controversial *The Rite of Spring* arrives in Perth. **Varnya Bromilow** reports.

FESTIVAL 10

When Igor Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* premiered before Paris audiences in 1913, fistfights broke out in the aisles. Performed by the

Ballets Russes to Vaslav Nijinsky's choreography, the work was quite foreign to ballet audiences of the time.

Historians argue whether it was the discordant music or the radical choreography that resulted in the riotous response in Paris but, however controversial its beginnings, *The Rite of Spring* now has a secure place in the balletic canon.

And while the influence of Stravinsky's music upon contemporary classical, jazz and even rock is well known, Nijinsky's choreography was equally revolutionary in the dance world, informing the styles of Martha Graham and Japanese dance luminaries Tatsumi Hijikata and Kazuo Ohno.

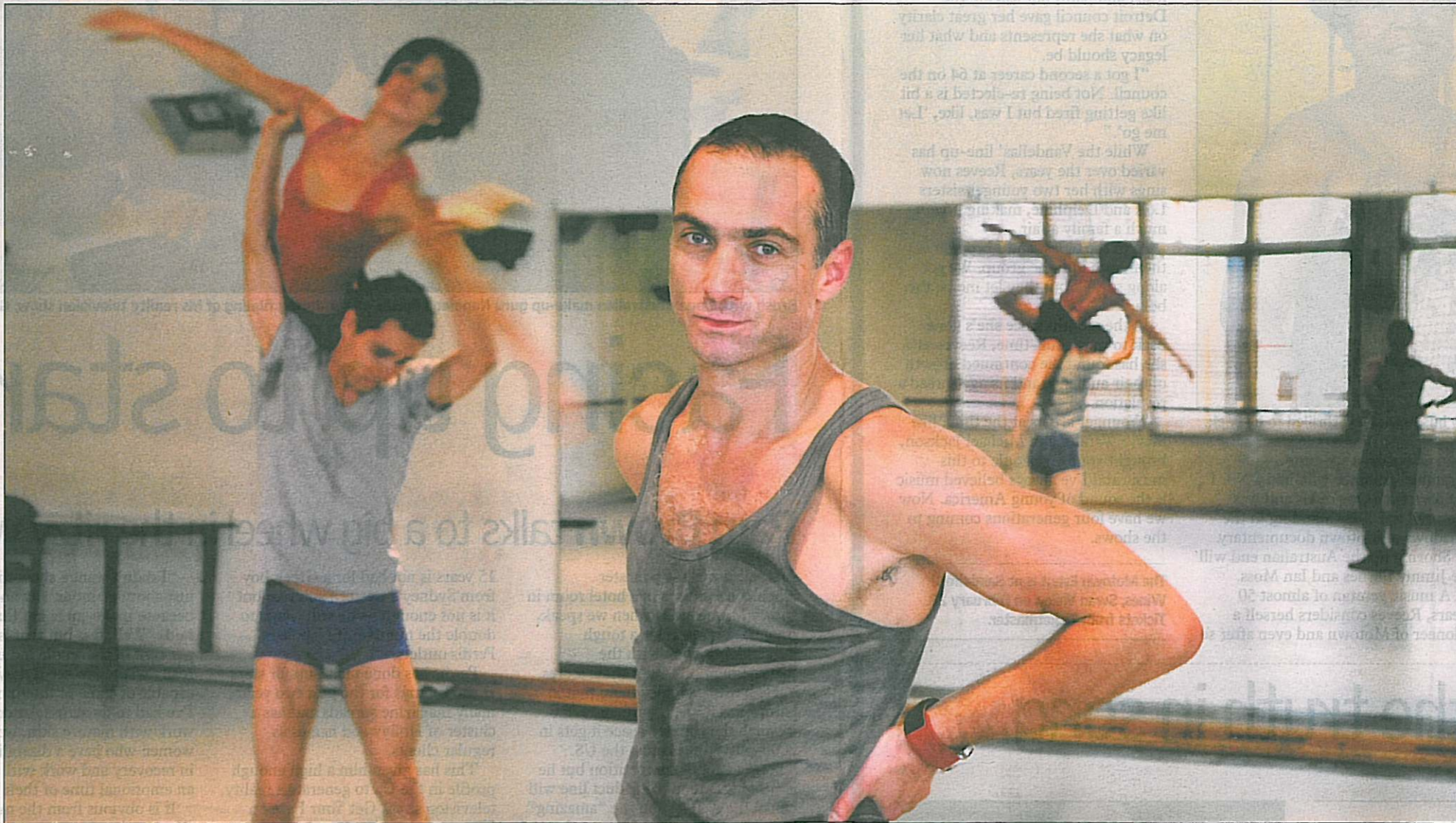
The WA Ballet will give Perth audiences a chance to see what all the fuss was about when its new production of *The Rite of Spring* premieres as part of the Perth International Arts Festival.

The production kicks off a big year for WA Ballet, which will celebrate its 40th year as the State's flagship ballet company.

Czech choreographer Petr Zuska takes the choreographic reins for *The Rite of Spring*. It's Zuska's third visit to Perth — he wowed local audiences in 2008 with his *Bolero* and *Maria's Dream*. As the artistic director of the National Ballet of Prague, the softly spoken Czech has an enviable reputation as a creator of striking new dance. When I spoke to him shortly after his arrival in Perth he sounded excited about getting his teeth into his first Stravinsky.

"To do *Rite of Spring* was not my choice actually," Zuska says. "When I was here two years ago Ivan Cavallari, the artistic director, asked if I would come back to do a new work sometime in the future. *The Rite of Spring* was his idea. I was quite surprised because I never touched Stravinsky's music before, but I said yes because I thought it would be challenging for me. Now I am really enjoying it. It's very strong music, very beautiful."

Zuska says that despite its "difficult"



Ready for the Quarry: Czech choreographer Petr Zuska and dancers Robert Mills and Claire Hill prepare for Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*.

Picture: Robert Duncan

reputation, Stravinsky's music is not challenging to create movement to.

"When you're first listening to it, the music seems very, very difficult. And it is challenging music, it's not easy — the rhythm is changing every minute, the bars are not equal — so it's complicated music, that's for sure. But once you go into it, you realise that it's very natural so you don't have to count anymore, you just feel it — and because I don't even have to count it's actually quite easy to choreograph to."

The *Rite of Spring* is the re-telling of a Russian folk tale in which a young peasant girl

dances herself to death as a sacrifice to the season. Zuska's take is a little more impressionistic.

"It's dramatic music and a very dramatic piece. I'm using the music more as a metaphor than a literal telling of the old Russian tale. I'm just touching a few aspects — philosophical ideas connected to the roots of life, the planet and, I'm not afraid to say, the universe. Ideas of death and birth. It's an abstract piece but there's a message in it for sure. It's quite open so each person can take away their own meaning."

The work will be performed in the Quarry

Amphitheatre, which has benefited from some recent upgrades from the Town of Cambridge. Zuska's 2008 productions with the ballet were also performed at the picturesque venue.

So how does performing in such a place influence his vision? "I am influenced by certain feelings from the Quarry," he says. "It's a magical space with the rocks and the stars and so on. But I want to create a piece that can be performed anywhere so I try not to let it influence me too much."

Zuska says he's happy to be working in the outdoors again, especially as the work has such strong thematic links with nature. But, as

always, there are risks. "I hear that last year the dancers had a really hard time because of the heat. I have my fingers crossed for them. But in Prague we never know if an outdoor show will go ahead because of the threat of rain so at least that's not likely," he says.

The *Rite of Spring* will be performed together with *Suite No.2* by Uwe Scholz, Ivan Cavallari's *Dolly* and Timothy O'Donnell's *The Games We Play*.

Ballet at the Quarry runs from February 12 to March 6. Book at BOCS.

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