

THE ARTS

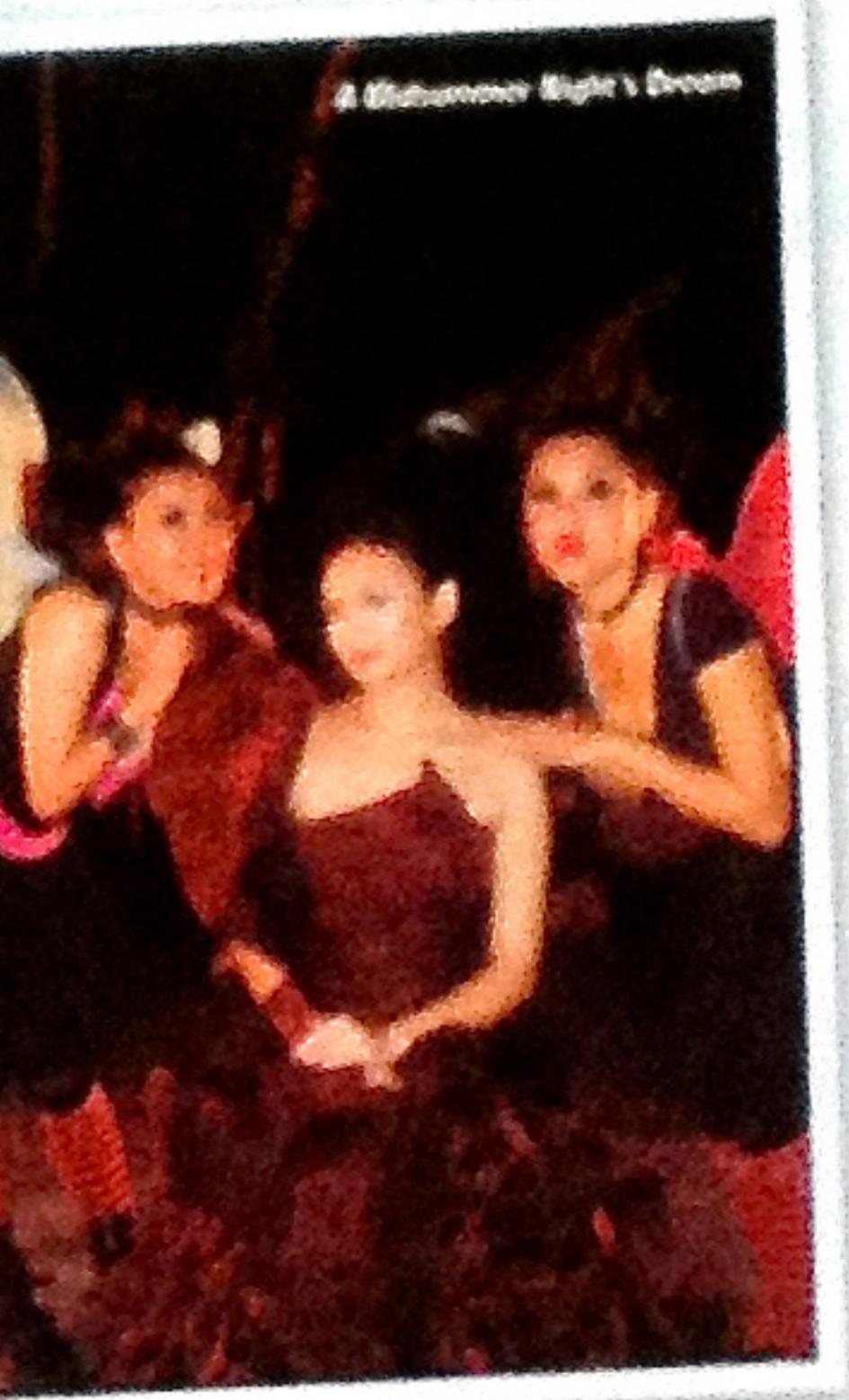
THREE'S A CROWD

Alan Ayckbourn's comedy, *Relatively Speaking*, originally premiering in 1967 in London's West End, was the turning point for his career and his first major success. The play is a critically acclaimed hit and now one of Ayckbourn's best-loved works.

The story centres on confusion and hilarity. Greg and Ginny live together in a small London flat. Greg has proposed but Ginny is reluctant. Greg rightly becomes suspicious that he's not the only man in Ginny's life, owing to dropped telephone calls, a drawer full of boxes of chocolates and a pair of unidentified men's slippers. He fol-

lows Ginny when she goes to "visit her parents" with the intention of asking for their daughter's hand in marriage. Although Ginny plans to break off her relationship with her married lover, Greg arrives at "the parents' house" before Ginny. Just imagine the ensuing misunderstandings.

Produced by the British Theatre Playhouse, the play stars some of the best-loved stars from the West End and British television. Staged at The Jubilee Hall Theatre, Raffles Hotel from May 2 to 6. Tickets from Sistic.



ONE MIDSUMMER'S NIGHT ...

We can think of no better way to spend a May evening than picnicking in Fort Canning Park, taking in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* staged by the Singapore Repertory Theatre.

The company presents its contemporary version of this comic masterpiece as it celebrates the 10th anniversary of the staging of Shakespeare in the Park. Directed by award-winning UK director Barry Kyle (who first presented *Hamlet* at Fort Canning in 1997), and starring Emma Yong as Titania, Queen of Fairies, the performance promises to delight and keep audiences transfixed from the moment they arrive in Fort Canning Park, which is transformed into a fairytale for the night.

The setting is one midsummer's eve before the grand wedding of Theseus, Duke of Athens, and his bride, Hippolyta. The comedy portrays the adventures of four Athenian lovers, a group of amateur actors in a moonlit forest and their interactions with the faeries who inhabit it.

Written in the mid-1590s, Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* draws on sources such as Greek mythology and British country folklore and is one of the playwright's most imaginative creations. Staged at Fort Canning Park from May 3 to 13 from 7.30 pm. Ticket holders are invited to picnic after 6.30 pm. Obtain tickets from Sistic.



FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE

Billed by critics as the best drama of the 20th century, *Three Sisters* was first presented in 1901 by Russian physician and playwright, Anton Chekhov, who once said, "Medicine is my lawful wife, and literature is my mistress."

Originally set in a provincial garrison town in Russia, the story depicts the dull existence of three sisters and their brother whose dreams of someday moving to Moscow are never fulfilled. Illustrating a broad slice of life passing by, the play ends as it begins with the characters clinging to hopes of a better life brimming with hope at the outset, but sink-

ing through desperation into resignation.

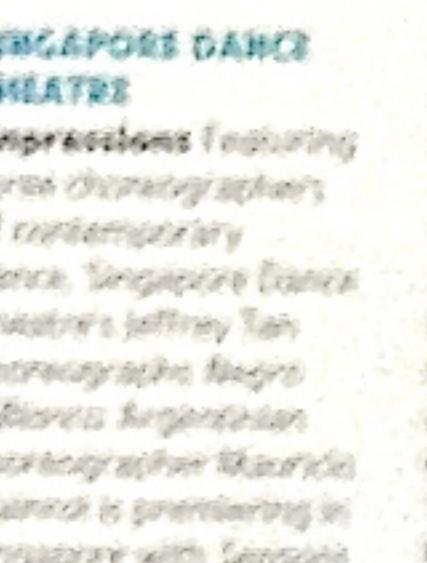
Under the artistic direction of Hiroki Kikuchi, the Papa Tarashumara contemporary dance company's adaptation of Chekhov's literary classic is set in the Japanese countryside of the 1960s. The portrayal of three bored sisters grappling with womanhood spirals into sexual and charged thoughts on female identity, coming of age and the Japanese obsession with youth culture.

Founded in 1982 with Kikuchi's direction, the company offers unique performances, while performers, stage objects, music, lighting, and costume play equally important roles in productions. Papa Tarashumara's eccentric comic tragedy *Three Sisters* is narrated through a medium of dynamic and powerful choreography. Staged at the Esplanade Theatre Studio on May 4 and 5. Tickets from Sistic.

WHAT'S ON WHERE



Painting by Justice Lee



Impressions, Singapore Dance Theatre

SINGAPORE DANCE THEATRE

Impressions featuring three choreographers of contemporary dance, Singapore Dance Theatre's Jeffrey Tan, choreographer Diego Flores Argote, and choreographer Mauricio Wunsch is premiering in Singapore with *Scenarios* of Burlesque Arts, and there will be a restaging of *30 Years of Stomping Ground*. *Impressions* features each piece as an impression waiting to be explored and enjoyed by the audience.

At the University Cultural Centre on May 10 and 11. *Scenarios* from Sistic.

THE WEST COAST CONTEMPORARY ART GALLERY

Fresh, solo exhibition by Michael Raastadgaard Jackson. Pollution and Wilson. Delicately arranged art of Raastadgaard's strongest influences. He works with acrylics creating layers by subtracting and toning them, forming a textured multi-layered richness. Raastadgaard is from Los Angeles and his work is an ambassador for California, forming permanent collections at the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, Portland Art Museum, and Los Angeles County Museum of Art, at the West Coast Contemporary Art Gallery from May 10 until June 25. Free admission.

UTTERLY ART

The Look of Love, solo exhibition by Justice Lee. Lee's tongue-in-cheek pop paintings merge a heady mix of East and West synchronicity with Singapore. He is fascinated by the competition and materialism of the consumerist society and creates images, not only in canvas, but also digital concepts for shopping centres and product promotional art.

At Utterly Art from May 30 until June 10. Free admission.

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