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GET a foot rub while you watch ballet. No kidding.

To solidify its reputation as one of the country's most popular arts events, Ballet Under the Stars (Buts) – the annual dance performance organised by the Singapore Dance Theatre (SDT) at Fort Canning Green – has introduced a spa tent for the audience to pop in for a spot of aromatherapy or massage.

Indeed, Buts has gone all out to widen its appeal. The dance programme is divided into 15 to 20 minute chunks, with 15-minute breaks in between. This means you don't need a long attention span to enjoy the show.

The event starts at 5pm with a carnival that features face-painting, balloon-sculpturing and glass-decorating. Forgot to bring candles to illuminate your picnic spread as you watch the show? Get them here.

At the heart of Buts, of

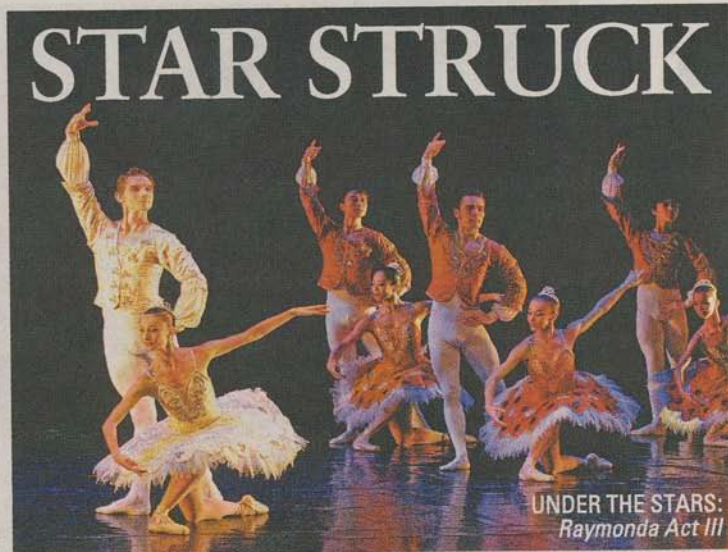


PHOTO COURTESY OF ROBIN CHEE

course, are the performances by the SDT dancers, who were in fine form generally on Saturday. Natalie Clarke, Zhou Lin and Sakura Shimizu enchanted as three swans. Performed to Saint-Saens' classic *Dying Swan*, each had a distinct interpretation of the bird's final flight, from the ruffling of its feathers to its fluttering death throes. Gangly awkwardness was con-

trasted with graceful dynamism in a performance that was thrilling in its ability to surprise.

*Mozart*, choreographed by SDT dancer Tan Yaling, was also a visual treat. The composer's well-known *Piano Concerto No 21 in C Major* accompanied this glimpse into Master Amadeus' psyche. While the impish Mozart fooled around, playing with his piano stool and leaping in and

out of curtains, the beauty that is his musical genius took form in two pairs of dancers, who exhilarated with their intricate *pas de deux*.

Slightly disappointing was the last performance of the evening, *Paradise Falling*. The dancers were simply not synchronised enough to portray the theme of structure and its eventual disintegration.

It's a small gripe for what was a wonderful evening. Because as you sit on the grass – which has been sprayed for mosquitoes, of course – with good friends and family by your side, a bottle of wine and your favourite munchies, the kids attempting pirouettes to mimic the dancers, you can't help but think: *Ahh...* that foot rub was good.

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WHAT: BALLET UNDER THE STARS  
WHEN: NEXT FRIDAY, SATURDAY  
AND SUNDAY  
WHERE: FORT CANNING GREEN.  
TICKETS AT \$19 FROM SISTIC