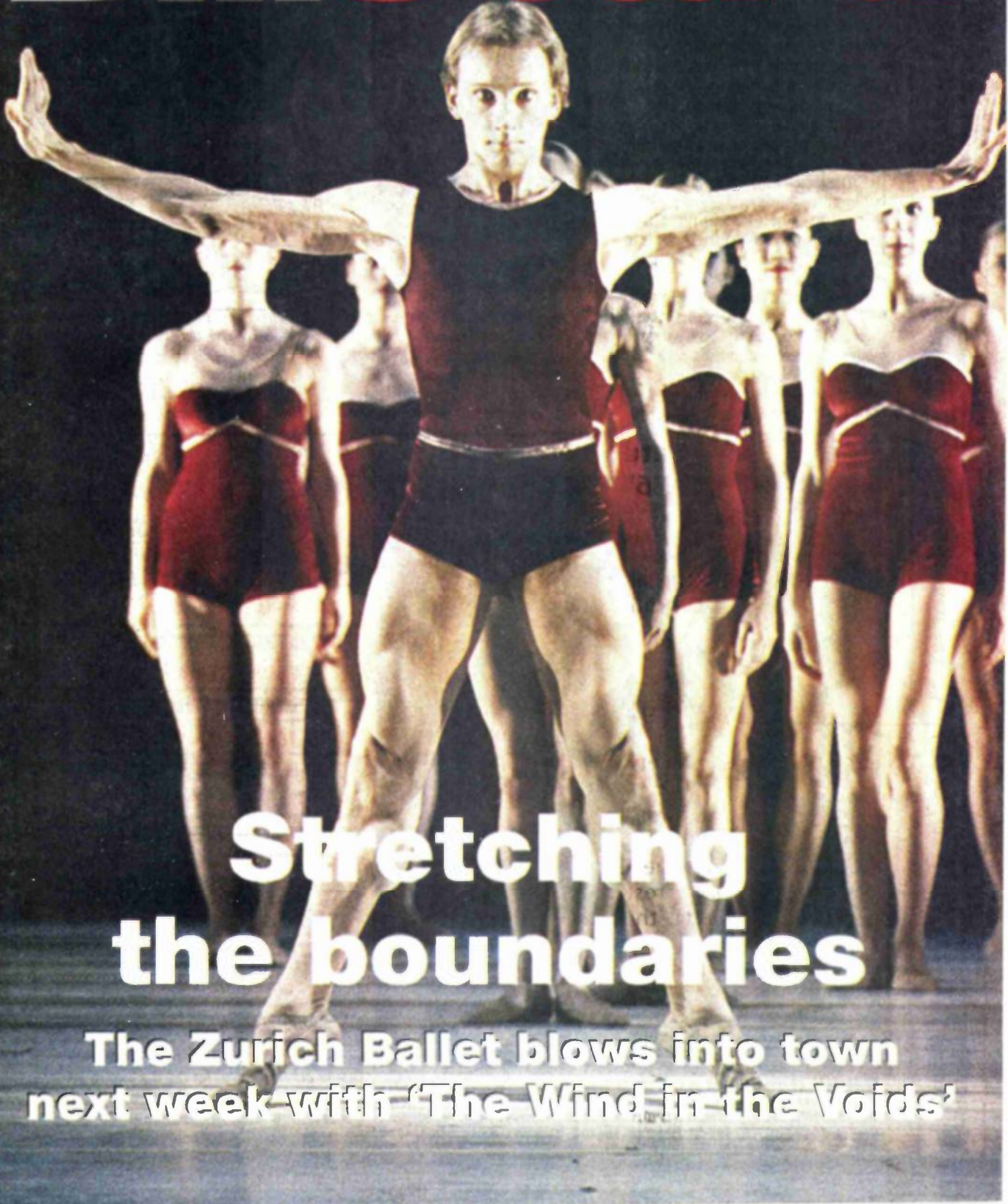


18.65x26.29	31	1 עמוד	THE JERUSALEM POST - BILLBOARD	11/11/2011	29559128-1
נופי תרבות העונה השוויצרית בישראל - 16710					

THE JERUSALEM POST

Entertainment guide for November 11 - 17

# Billboard



## Stretching the boundaries

The Zurich Ballet blows into town next week with 'The Wind in the Voids'

16.01x11.6	32	1 עמוד	THE JERUSALEM POST - BILLBOARD	11/11/2011	29559121-4
נופי תרבות העונה השווייצרית בישראל - 16710					

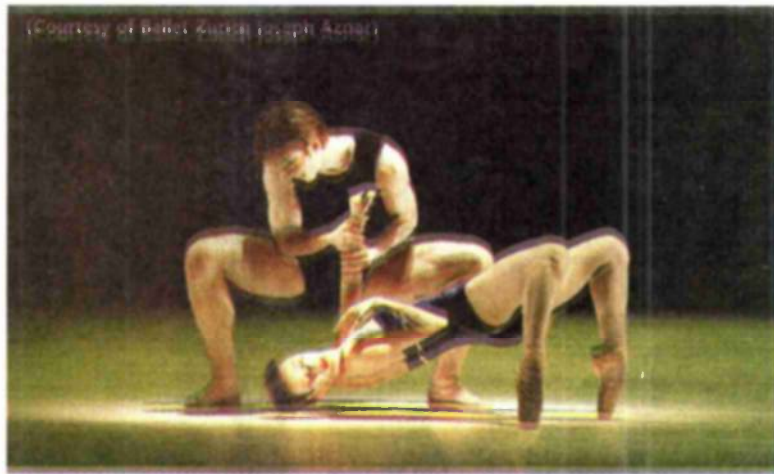
# Choreographic nirvana

*Under the unerring hand of Heinz Spoerli, the Zurich Ballet focuses on the synchronicity of arms, legs and beautiful music*

• By ORI J. LENKINSKI

If you take a moment to read the history of the Zurich Ballet on the website of the Opernhaus Zurich where they are based, you'll find a strange surprise. Unlike most dance companies, their history doesn't tell of galas filled with champagne toasts and rave reviews but of more than two decades of failures and the struggle to survive. Now one of the most well-known and respected ballet companies in the world, it seems the Zurich Ballet isn't afraid to show that winning their place at the tippity top of the dance world took a little elbow grease.

The company will visit Israel this week for four performances as part of their 2011-12 season. Led by their fearless director and artistic savior Heinz Spoerli, the company will perform an evening-length ballet entitled *The Wind in the Voids* at the



Tel Aviv Performing Arts Center.

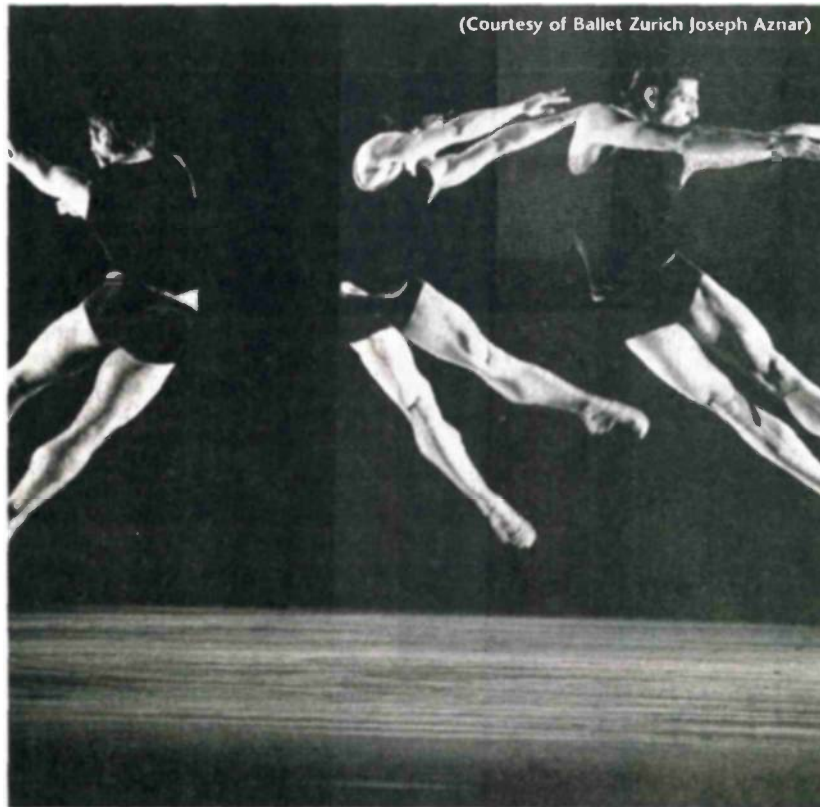
*The Wind in the Voids* is part of a trilogy of ballets choreographed by Spoerli to Bach's cello suites. The first two segments of this series were dedicated to earth, fire and

water. *The Wind in the Voids*, which features the second, third and sixth cello suites, is an homage to air.

Twenty five years ago, the Zurich Ballet had just ended a long run of disappointing spats with a changing



11.39x24.38	33	עמוד 1	THE JERUSALEM POST - BILLBOARD	11/11/2011	29559137-1
נופי תרבות העונה השוויצרית בישראל - 16710					



(Courtesy of Ballet Zurich Joseph Aznar)

cast of choreographers and artistic directors. The company was in the pits, with an unclear repertoire in their program and little critical acclaim. And then Spoerli was called in to get things in shape. He had just succeeded in sharpening up a somewhat dull Deutsche Oper am Rhein in Dusseldorf as their ballet director and was ready to set things straight for the Zurich Ballet. In the years that followed, Spoerli went about changing the operational protocol for the company, ultimately saving them from a bland and unimpressive existence.

### cover story

The Zurich Ballet is home to 40 dancers that have been hand selected by Spoerli. In fact, one of the main assets of the company is its phenomenal cast of technically precise movers. Upon taking the reins of the company in 1996, Spoerli began scouring Europe for the best ballet dancers available. His passion for assembling the right performers was one of the elements that elevated the Zurich Ballet from a flailing ensemble to a tour de force.

Another of Spoerli's winning initiatives was the introduction of a wide-ranging repertoire into the company's performance life. Prior to Spoerli's inauguration, the Zurich Ballet performed bits and bobs of

choreographies chosen by a long list of unsuccessful artistic directors. The troupe was consistent with their love for Balanchine's ballets, which they still perform today. However, Spoerli brought in the edgy makings of contemporary choreographers such as Twyla Tharp and Mats Ek.

In addition, Spoerli's own choreographers raised eyebrows among the critics that had scathed all attempts by previous house dance-makers in Zurich. From a point of tension and vulnerability, Spoerli brought indigenous Swiss dance into the limelight with his pure, physical pieces. Forgoing story telling in favor of precision and flow, Spoerli's ballets focus on the abilities of his dancers, on the cleanliness of the stage and the synchronicity of arms, legs and beautiful music. His motto, which was taken from Hugo Van Hofmannsthal's *Buch Der Freunde*, is "You have to bury the depth. Where? On the surface."

Although Spoerli's pieces do not tell of the tragedies that many of his contemporaries' ballets do, there is a strong undercurrent of emotion in all of Spoerli's ballets. At 70 years old, the man seems to have achieved choreographic nirvana.

*The Zurich Ballet will perform at TAPAC from November 13-16. For more information, visit [www.israel-opera.co.il](http://www.israel-opera.co.il).*