

weekend

Spring Flurries

Looking back on the
highs and lows of the
winter that was



THEATER Thunder River, for all ages B7 • **WHAT'S HAPPENING** B2



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ANNA STONEHOUSE/THE ASPEN TIMES

Aspen Santa Fe Ballet company member Pete Leo Walker in "Eudaemonia."

FLURRIES

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* Choreographer Cherice Barton's debut ballet for Aspen Santa Fe, "Eudaemonia" marked the birth of a new crowd-pleaser in the company's repertoire, a star turn for company dancer Pete Leo Walker and the emergence of a new voice in contemporary dance in Barton. This funny, melancholy and surprising meditation on happiness looks like it'll have a long life in Aspen and beyond (if you missed the premiere, it's coming back to the District Theatre for an encore this summer).

* It's hard to imagine Theatre Aspen without Paige Price, the dynamo artistic director who is leaving Aspen for the Philadelphia Theater Company and who, over the past decade, built the local company into a nationally recognized regional theater and summertime magnet for Broadway performers.

* After seven years, the Aspen Laff Fest fixed the typo and became the Aspen Laugh Fest, while also reconfiguring its lineup to include just one headliner and opener per night over an expanded five-night run. The new configuration was a genuine hit at the Wheeler, with full houses and stand-out sets from Whitney Cummings and Margaret Cho.

MARCH

* The charmed week of the World Cup

championship races couldn't have gotten a greater crescendo than Michael Franti singing "Imagine" to an international and local crowd of ski fanatics in Wagner Park as fireworks exploded over Aspen Mountain on a warm, clear winter night. We're spoiled and maybe jaded when it comes to fireworks around here, but that had anybody with a heart choking up.

* About those World Cup concerts: they exceeded expectations. When the Ski-Co announced headliners Franti, Gogol Bordello and Vintage Trouble, some of us shrugged that the acts were too familiar, they'd played here too often to excite. But the performances, all three by consummate showmen who sort of get Aspen, were sort of perfect for that week — they were festive and inclusive and they got everybody dancing in the slush at Wagner Park.

* If the jerks at the FIS aren't going to bring back World Cup races to Aspen, can we at least do an annual screening of Paul Ryan's classic ski movies? The former Aspenites mind-blowing ski flicks from the '60s and '70s — unearthed for a World Cup week show — need to find a regular home on the big screen here.

* A lot of musicians struggle to get a crowd up and dancing in the cozy and intimate setting of the JAS Cafe shows

FLURRIES, B13

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