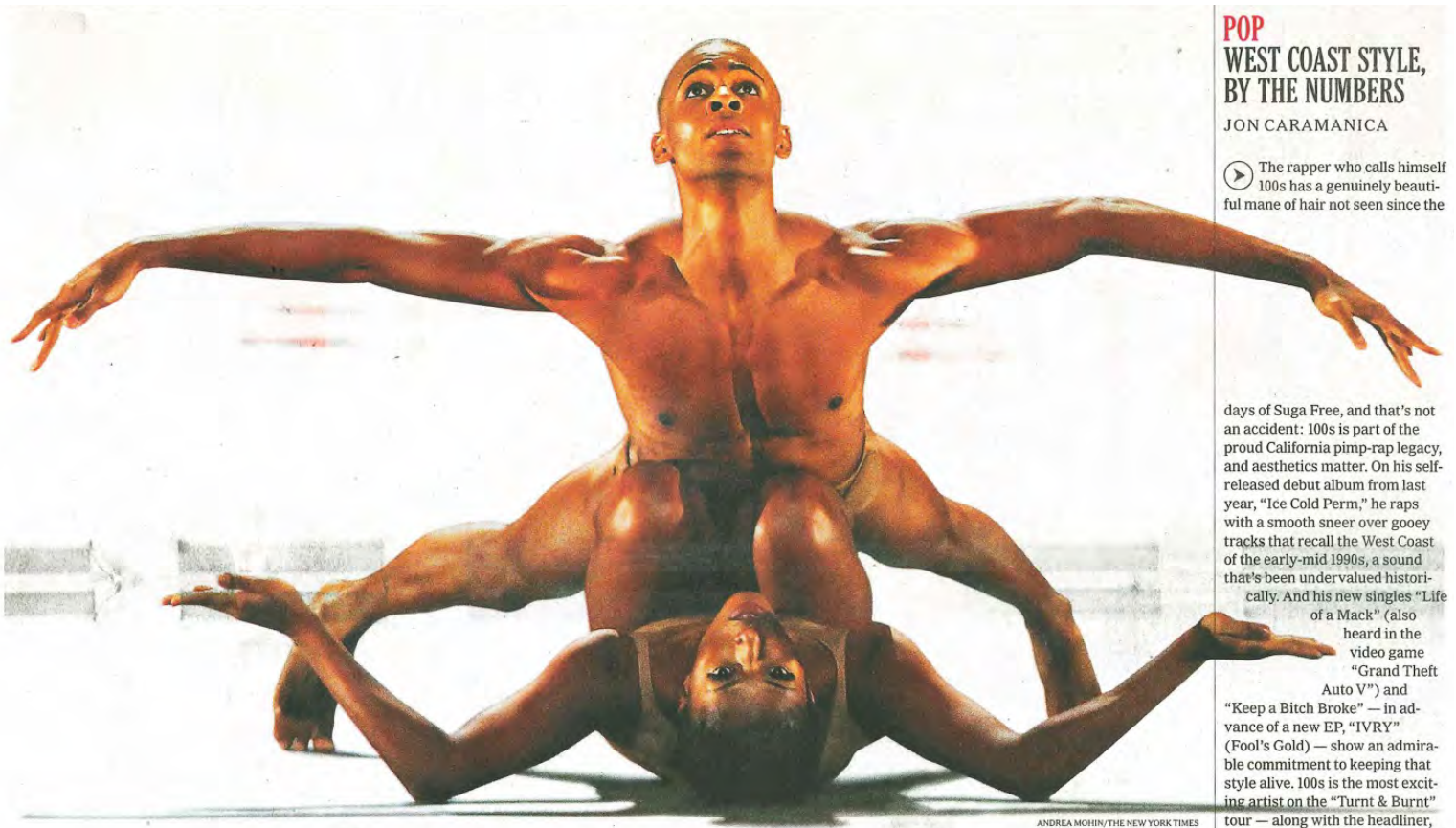


The New York Times

The Week Ahead

A SURVEY OF THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

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ANDREA MOHIN/THE NEW YORK TIMES

DANCE BRAIDED BODIES UP ONSTAGE

GIA KOURLAS

▶ It can't be easy being the artistic director of one of America's most beloved dance companies, but Robert Battle — after a little more than two years on the job — is gradually and imaginatively giving his dancers a reason to have an extra bounce in their steps. Beginning on Wednesday, his troupe, the versa-

tile Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, will unveil Wayne McGregor's "Chroma," originally choreographed for the Royal Ballet in 2006. The work pits John Pawson's stark set against Joby Talbot's original compositions and arrangements of music by the White Stripes. It was also the dance that led to Mr. McGregor's

appointment as resident choreographer at the Royal Ballet.

Within this tranquil space, the dancers braid their bodies in movement both sinuous and raw to reduce dance to its purest form. No, it's not "Revelations," but Mr. Battle is eager to show that at Ailey, there is room for both. Opening night also features that

Yannick Lebrun and Jacqueline Green of the Alvin Ailey company.

1960 Ailey masterpiece, with live music. (Through Jan. 5, City Center, 131 West 55th Street, Manhattan; 212-581-1212, citycenter.org.)

POP WEST COAST STYLE, BY THE NUMBERS

JON CARAMANICA

▶ The rapper who calls himself 100s has a genuinely beautiful mane of hair not seen since the

days of Suga Free, and that's not an accident: 100s is part of the proud California pimp-rap legacy, and aesthetics matter. On his self-released debut album from last year, "Ice Cold Perm," he raps with a smooth sneer over gooey tracks that recall the West Coast of the early-mid 1990s, a sound that's been undervalued historically. And his new singles "Life

of a Mack" (also heard in the video game "Grand Theft Auto V") and "Keep a Bitch Broke" — in advance of a new EP, "IVRY" (Fool's Gold) — show an admirable commitment to keeping that style alive. 100s is the most exciting artist on the "Turnt & Burnt" tour — along with the headliner, ASAP Ferg — which comes to Irving Plaza this week, and also features various other members of the ASAP Mob, as well as Joey Fatts, Aston Matthews and Over-Doz. (Friday at 7 p.m., 17 Irving Place, at 15th Street, Manhattan; irvingplaza.com.)