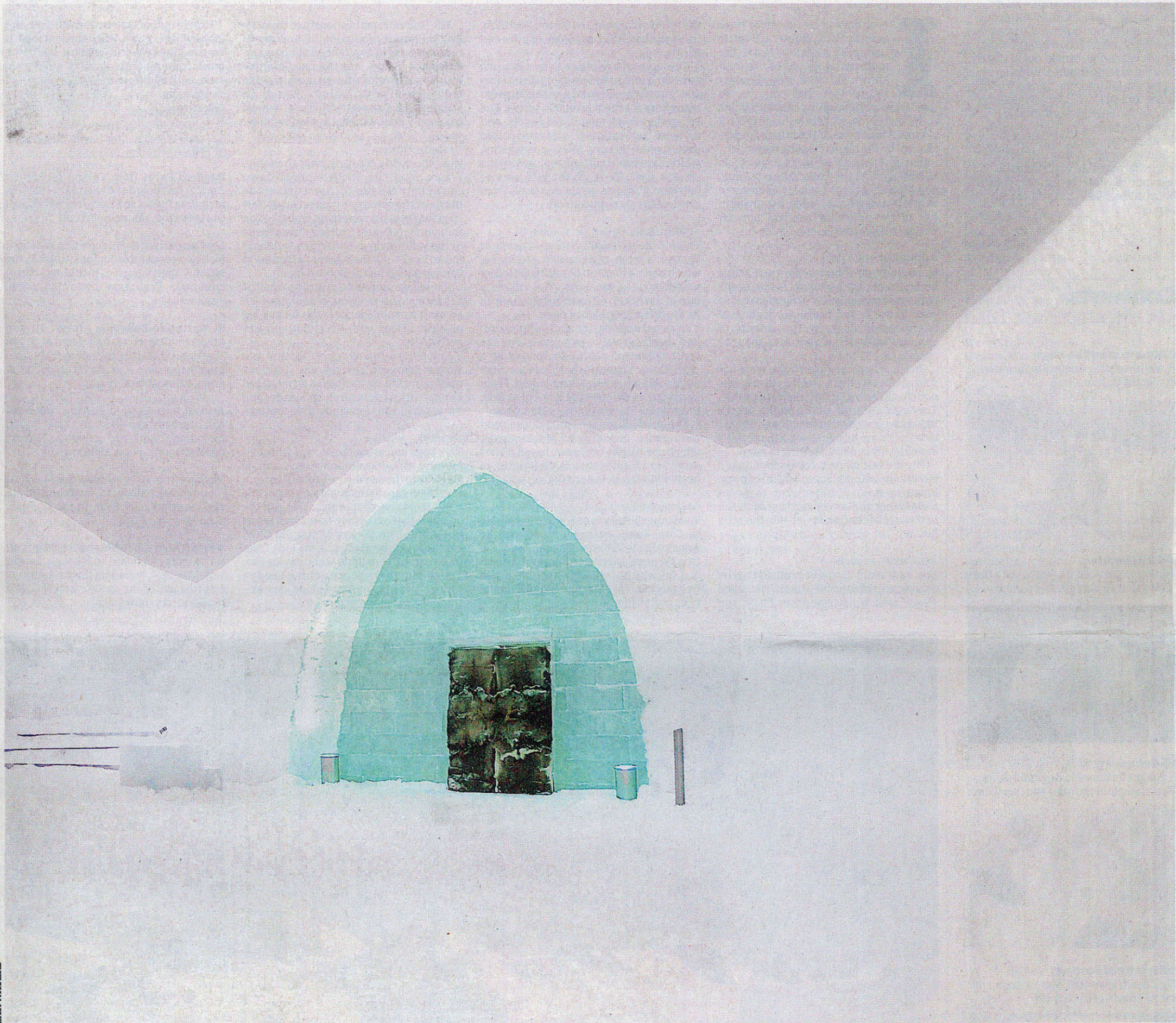


Chilled out weekends

Novel ideas for winter breaks



ZAK WATERS

Crowd-free skiing

Husky mushing

Cultural Olympics

Spa retreats

the guardian

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**IT'S LIKE BEING CAUGHT
NAKED IN A HAILSTORM
OF MINT IMPERIALS**



Going for gold

Boarders and bobsleighters won't be the only people out to impress in Turin this winter. Alongside the sports people competing in this year's Winter Olympics, Italy has invited a host of visual artists, dancers, actors and musicians to take part in a special Cultural Olympics

Music fills the auditorium. A woman, her talent honed to its peak over years of rigorous instruction and training, performs a routine of exquisite grace and athleticism. The audience claps rapturously, tossing her bucketfuls of flowers.

Afterwards, as she sits panting on a bench, a slightly overweight chap from Moscow rubs his dodgy knee while he considers her performance, punching 4.7 into his computer – enough for a bronze medal at the Turin Winter Olympics.

Before the scorecard entered the picture, we could have been looking at a snapshot of contemporary dance or opera. I left out spandex, glitter and a soundtrack from the latest Bruckheimer blockbuster – details that would have tipped you in the direction of figure skating. But the essential difference here is scorekeeping: winners and losers give sport a format and hierarchy foreign to the world of composers, photographers and dancers.

The key here is entertainment – a term that allowed Labour to bring sport and culture together into one department. Both are about watching talented people perform. Yet audiences cling to the idea that there are important differences between watching, say, ice hockey and theatre. Sports fans drink beer, people at cultural events sparkling mineral water. And in sport, or in the Olympics at least, a silver-haired man drapes the victors with heavy medals.

But for the weary of speed, skis and ceremonies, Turin is also hosting the 'Cultural Olympiads' – a range of performances and exhibitions that aims to

offer some exhilaration off-piste. The language of the Cultural Olympiads should be comprehensible to all spectators, whatever their mother tongue: it is that of visual arts and music. Theatre, cinema and dance will make an appearance, but my hunch would be to head to the galleries (or mountains, in one case) and concert halls.

The Snow Show promises to be the highlight of the visual arts programme. This will be the third chapter of an exhibition organised by industrious American curator Lance Fung, who invites artists from all over the world to respond to a specific snow-filled location – in this case, on the mountainside near the Olympic downhill events.

At three venues in the city, contemporary art will be served up in abundance at the Turin Triennial, a host of shows under this year's theme of the Pantagruel Syndrome, after Rabelais's Renaissance super-slob. Another highlight should be Landscapes and Views from Poussin to Canaletto: Paintings from the Palazzo Barberini at the Pinacoteca Giovanni and Marella Agnelli. The Barberini is Italy's national gallery, but is undergoing – like almost everything in Rome – a lengthy restoration. The collection is especially strong in masterpieces from Rome's fecund 17th century.

The musical programme features a pinch of fare with wide appeal, such as a series of performances of Beethoven, Mozart, Vivaldi and Sibelius, along with perennial Puccini faves *La Bohème* and *Manon Lescaut*. A new version of *The Tempest*, based on both Shakespeare and Purcell's versions, with new music by Carlo Galante and a new libretto by Luca Fontana, will be premiered at Teatro Carignano. Perhaps

the most intriguing musical fare on offer is a newly commissioned piece based on Turin's most famous relic, the Holy Shroud, by Estonian composer Arvo Pärt. Titled *La Tela Traslata*, it will be performed by the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir in San Giovanni Battista cathedral, along with other works by Pärt.

Drama might be a difficult thing to pull off for a multilingual crowd, but that hasn't stopped local theatre group Teatro Stabile from putting together *Domani*, a series of five (count the Olympic rings) productions with ambitious themes: history, war, biotechnology, finance and politics. Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* is among the offerings on a mixed English and Italian menu.

The best bet for dance looks to be *Il Colore Bianco*, directed by Giorgio Barberio Corsetti and choreographed by Fatou Traoré. Based on Nordic myth, this spectacle will feature acrobats, actors and dancers hamming it up as divinities, giants and wolves. Elsewhere, the Cinema Massimo, Italy's National Museum of Cinema, will host "Twenty Classics of Italian Cinema", a retrospective of Italian films from the early post-war years to the 1980s.

The dart of love that prompted this affair between sport and culture is, of course, dipped in a cocktail of economics and PR. Cultural Olympiads has a distasteful ring, as if the art organisations around the world were suddenly taken over by management consultants: this is partly about converting Turin, once a famous factory town where Fiat was king, into a culture factory. Yet questionable motives shouldn't detract from the genuinely terrific, wide-ranging arts programme on offer. If you can't stomach watching another flag being

raised to the strident twang of a national anthem, then edification – or just a good show – is just beyond the medals podium. **Craig Burnett**

The Cultural Olympiads: highlights

Visual arts

The Snow Show
Curated by Lance Fung. Artists include Daniel Buren, Yoko Ono, Norman Foster, Kiki Smith, Jaume Plensa and Arat Isozaki Sestriere, February 3 – March 20

Turin Triennial Three museums: The Pantagruel Syndrome
Curated by Francesco Bonami and Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev. The triennial features solo shows by Doris Salcedo and Takashi Murakami along with work by 75 contemporary artists. Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Castello di Rivoli and Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, February 10 – March 19

Landscapes and Views from Poussin to Canaletto: Paintings from the Palazzo Barberini
Pinacoteca Giovanni e Marella Agnelli, January 13 – May 14

Music

La Tela Traslata and other works
World premiere. Newly commissioned work by Arvo Pärt, based on the Holy Shroud. San Giovanni Battista cathedral, February 15

The Tempest
World premiere. New production, based on Shakespeare and Purcell. Music by Carlo Galante, libretto by Luca Fontana.

Teatro Carignano, February 13, 15, 17, 19 and 20

Theatre

These productions are all part of Teatro Stabile's "Domani" project.

Dizionario per l'Uso (Biblioethics. A Handbook)
Gilberto Corbellini, Pino Donghi and Armando Massarenti. Teatro Vittoria, February 14 – March 10

Lo Specchio del Diavolo (The Devil's Mirror)
Giorgio Ruffolo. Lumiq Studios, February 6 – March 11

Troilus and Cressida
William Shakespeare. Lumiq Studios, February 2 – March 10

War Plays: a Trilogy
Edward Bond. Teatro Astra, February 3 – March 12

Il Silenzio dei Comunisti (The Silence of the Communists)
An adaptation of sketches by Vittorio Foa, Miriam Mafai and Alfredo Reichlin. Limone Fonderie Teatrali di Moncalieri, February 5 – March 12

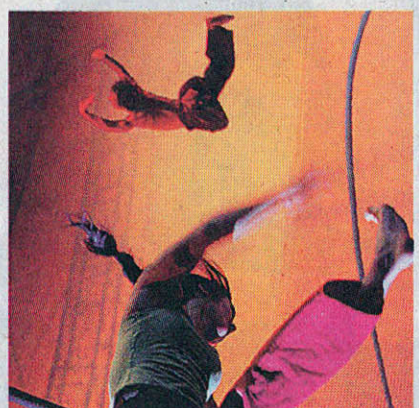
Dance

Il Colore Bianco
Directed by Giorgio Barberio Corsetti and choreographed by Fatou Traoré. Chapiteau Parco della Tesoriera, February 16 – 19, 21 – 25, 27 and 28

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Turin Triennial Three museums: **The Pantagruel Syndrome**, 2001-2005 Takashi Murakami/Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved



Far left: Turin Triennial Three museums. Melissa Martin, Little Pig, 2004, courtesy George Lindemann Jr. collection, Miami
Left: Il colore bianco, directed by Giorgio Barberio Corsetti and choreographed by Fatou Traoré

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REFRESH YOUR LIFE

Your essential guide to feeling refreshed and alive this winter



The budget airlines have run out of flights, your partner is using your snowboard as a clothes horse and you need medical assistance to squeeze into your ski suit – seems like an escape to snowier climes might be off the agenda. So, is a severe bout of SAD the only thing you've got to look forward to this winter? No. There are other ways you can enjoy that refreshed just-back-from-the-slopes sensation, without even having to leave your house, in fact, without even having to leave your bathroom.

From the minute you get up in the morning, Original Source's range of revitalising shower and bath products are on hand to kick-start you into life, leaving you feeling as energised and refreshed as you would had you been prancing around in the snow all day.

The secret to Original Source's success is down to the carefully chosen essential oils, which go into every product. All Original Source products are made from 100% pure and natural essential oils, each specifically selected for their physiological and psychological effects. The result is a

range of bath and shower solutions, full of natural goodness, which refresh your skin and your mind all at once. Next time you need a boost, try one of these:

*** Mint and Tea Tree Shower Gel**
Combining the cleansing effects of tea tree oil with the invigorating effects of mint oil.

*** Lemon and Tea Tree Shower Gel**
Packed with natural lemon essential oil, extracted from fresh lemon peel, for a shower with added zest.

*** Pure Lime Shower Gel**
With pure essential lime oil for the ultimate in rejuvenation.

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