

THE WEEK

SEVEN DAYS OF ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

191 MUSIC & DANCE

SYDNEY DANCE COMPANY

One of Australia's top companies, known for its athletic performers, returns to the Joyce with a new work. (See highlight, page 191.)

THE WEEK

MUSIC & DANCE

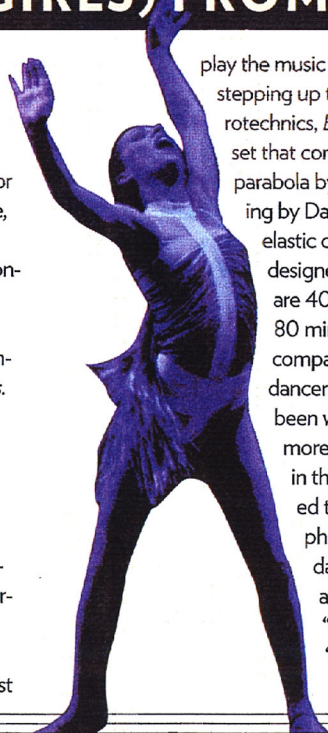
EDITED BY TOM SAMILJAN

PREMIERE

THE BOYS (AND GIRLS) FROM OZ

GRAEME MURPHY'S SYDNEY DANCE COMPANY RETURNS TO THE JOYCE.

SOMETHING I ADORE IS RESPONDING to music," says Graeme Murphy, artistic director of the Sydney Dance Company. Music—in this case, seven pieces by Australian wunderkind Matthew Hindson—is one of the central pillars of *Ellipse*, a non-narrative set of dance vignettes that will receive its New York premiere this month when the SDC returns to the Joyce for the first time since 2000's enthusiastically received *Air and Other Invisible Forces*. Though the group is well versed in narrative blockbusters like *Swan Lake*, the latest endeavor from Murphy and the Sydney Opera House's resident dance company is a return to nonprogrammatic choreography—a bonus for audiences, since the troupe is renowned for its energy and athletic virtuosity. "The music has been a hard master," says Murphy of a score that ranges from orchestrated versions of techno and metal to lyric romanticism and film music. "It's been liberating and wonderful to just



play the music and respond." Besides stepping up the choreographic pyrotechnics, *Ellipse* features a striking set that consists of a large metallic parabola by Gerard Manion, lighting by Damien Cooper, and bold elastic costumes by Australian designer Akira Isogawa (there are 40 costume changes in 80 minutes). All this for a company of seventeen dancers, many of whom have been with the company for more than a decade—eons in the dance world. "Provided there are choreographers who can accommodate their particular artistry," says Murphy, "dancers don't have a 'use-by' date." (See "Dance.") T.S.

Dance

AUSSIEFIED: The Sydney Dance Company's Tracey Carrodus in *Ellipse*.

★ **SYDNEY DANCE COMPANY**
Presents the New York premiere of Graeme Murphy's *Ellipse* on 2/17 and 2/18 at 8 (runs through 2/22). (See box.) • Joyce Theater, 175 Eighth Ave, at 19th St. (212-242-0800); \$30-\$55.