



**GREETINGS FROM DOWN UNDER
SYDNEY DANCE COMPANY BRINGS PREMIERE OF
GRAEME MURPHY'S "ELLIPSE" FOR SIX-WEEK,
10-CITY AMERICAN TOUR, BEGINNING FEBRUARY 5**

Imagine beaches awash with blue water, white sand and gleaming bodies. Imagine shining cities with streets alive with the international wit of a confluence of cultures. That is the irrepressible spirit of Australia. It is also the heartbeat of its foremost contemporary dance company, Sydney Dance Company, headed by Artistic Director Graeme Murphy and Associate Artistic Director Janet Vernon.

When the company returns to the U.S. for a coast-to-coast, 10-city tour beginning in February, it will bring the American premiere of Murphy's "Ellipse," which was greeted with ecstatic applause and rave reviews when it opened at the Sydney Opera House in 2002.

Set to a collage of scores by contemporary Australian composer Matthew Hindson, "Ellipse" is Murphy stripped to the bone. Australian visual artist Gerard Manion's set is a simple metal construction that creates a parabola through which the dancers move and Damien Cooper's lighting flows. Testing the limits of the performers' limitless energy and Murphy's infinite imagination, "Ellipse" is a suite of seven dances, united by their sensuality and varying emotional resonances. The dance travels through feelings of lament, joy, desire, rivalry, tenderness—all rivetingly expressed by the company's dancers. The costumes are by renowned Australian fashion designer Akira Isogawa, who together with Manion and Cooper, collaborated with Murphy on the choreographer's 1999 "Air and Other Invisible Forces."

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The company's 2004 tour opens at the Annenberg Center for the Arts in Philadelphia, where the company plays February 5–7. The tour continues with a performance at The Concert Hall at SUNY, Purchase College (February 13); Staller Center for the Arts at SUNY, Stony Brook (February 14); The Joyce Theater in New York City (February 17–22); Gaillard Municipal Auditorium in Charleston, SC (February 24); Fox Theater, St. Louis, MO (February 27 & 28); Aspen District Theater, Aspen, CO (March 2 & 3); Yardley Hall at Johnson County Community College, Kansas City, KS (March 6); Jackson Hall at University of California, Davis (March 9); and Memorial Auditorium at Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA (March 12 & 13).

Headed by Graeme Murphy since 1976, Sydney Dance Company was created in 1969 as The Dance Company (NSW). Since the repertoire and dancing reflected the innovative energy of its home city, the name of the company was changed to Sydney Dance Company in 1979. Under Murphy and his artistic associate Janet Vernon, the company has become one of the most original and innovative troupes on the international dance scene with over 20 international tours to Asia, Europe and North and South America. The company's performing home base is the spectacular Sydney Opera House, where the troupe has performed semiannually since 1977.

Murphy has choreographed over 42 dances (24 of which are full length) for Sydney Dance Company since he became its artistic director 27 years ago. Beginning his dance career as a performer with The Australian Ballet, for whom he also created his first ballet "Ecco Le Diavole" in 1971, Murphy later danced with the Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet and the Ballets Felix Blaska in France. In addition to his work with Sydney Dance Company, Murphy has choreographed five works for The Australian Ballet, including an original, complete "Nutcracker" in 1992 and a hugely successful, new "Swan Lake," which won the 2003 Australian Dance Award for Best Choreography. He has also created ballets for Nederlands Dans Theater, the Royal New Zealand Ballet and the Canadian

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Opera Company and was commissioned to create a solo for Mikhail Baryshnikov for White Oak Dance Project's 1996 Australian tour. Other works include 2000's "Mythologia" for the Sydney Olympics International Arts Festival and "Tivoli," a dance musical from 2001, which was awarded four Australian Dance Awards.

A successful director and choreographer for opera, Murphy has directed Brian Howard's "Metamorphosis" and Giacomo Puccini's "Turandot," in addition to Richard Strauss's "Salome." In 1994 he created a new production of Hector Berlioz's "Les Troyens," bringing the singers and dancers of Opera Australia together with the Sydney Dance Company. In 1999, he choreographed The Metropolitan Opera's production of "Samson and Dalila" which was later aired nationally on PBS Great Performances. He has also worked with former world champion ice skating duo Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean to create their world tour production and TV program "Fire and Ice."

Murphy is the recipient of his country's most important honors including an AM in 1982. He was honored at the Inaugural Sydney Opera House Honors in 1993, named a National Living Treasure in 1998 and is the recipient of three honorary doctorates. In 2003, he received the Centenary Medal from the Australian government for service to the development of dance in Australia.

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PLEASE SEE ATTACHED TOUR SCHEDULE.

Sydney Dance Company's 2004 tour to the United States has been made possible with the invaluable support of the following organizations: Australia Council for the Arts; Australian Consulate-General, New York; Novell; Qantas Airways; City of Sydney; Wallenius Wilhelmsen; and NSW Ministry for the Arts.

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Sydney Dance Company
USA Tour Schedule
Ellipse

Date + Time	Location	Tickets
February 5 at 7:30pm; February 6 at 8pm; February 7 at 2pm & 8pm	Philadelphia, PA <i>Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts</i>	Box Office: 215-898-3900 http://www.pennpresents.org
February 13 at 8pm	Purchase, NY SUNY, Purchase College: <i>The Concert Hall, Performing Arts Center</i>	Box Office: 914-251-6200 http://www.artscenter.org
February 14 at 8pm	Stony Brook, NY SUNY, Stony Brook University: <i>Staller Center for the Arts</i>	Box Office: 631-632-ARTS http://www.staller.sunysb.edu
February 17–21 at 8pm; February 21 & 22 at 2pm	New York City, NY <i>The Joyce Theater</i>	Box Office: 212-242-0800 http://www.joyce.org
February 24 at 8pm	Charleston, SC <i>Gaillard Municipal Auditorium</i>	Box Office: 843-577-7400
February 27 & 28 at 8pm	St. Louis, MO <i>Fox Theater</i>	Box Office: 800-293-5949 http://www.fabulousfox.com
March 2 & 3 at 7:30pm	Aspen, CO <i>Aspen District Theater</i>	Box Office: 970-925-6098
March 6 at 8pm	Kansas City, KS Johnson County Community College: <i>Yardley Hall, Carlsen Center</i>	Box Office: 913-469-4445
March 9 at 8pm	Davis, CA UC Davis: <i>Jackson Hall, Mondavi Center</i>	Box Office: 530-752-1915 http://www.mondaviarts.org
March 12 & 13 at 8pm	Palo Alto, CA Stanford University: <i>Memorial Auditorium</i>	Box Office: 650-725-ARTS

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