

# THE NEW YORKER

## GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

### "SHUNKIN"

Big Dance Theater's ingenious directors, Paul Lazar and Annie-B Parson, have updated Junichiro Tanizaki's 1933 tale of kinky, transcendent love by turning its female protagonist—Shunkin, an impetuous, abusive, seductive, and blind musician—into a present-day rock star. They've added snatches of dialogue from rock documentaries where "people are behaving awfully and perversely," Lazar says, "but then go on to achieve something that the rest of us only aspire to." And Shunkin, played by three actor-dancer-singers in succession, including the adorably odd Gloria Deluxe front woman Cynthia Hopkins, now has a band. "The band hates her, she's completely shitty to them, and just when everybody's on the verge of tears or homicide," Lazar says, "they go into this sweet, sweet song that feels like the pure product of a harmony between them." Is it anything like the actor-director's own experience in the theatre? "I haven't consciously drawn that connection," Lazar says, "but I think there's something there." (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th Street, at Tenth Ave. 255-5793. Sept. 5-8 at 8. Through Sept. 15.)