



Biography

Mark Sieczkarek was born in 1962 in Inverness, Scotland and already as a child felt the urge to dance and create his own world on stage. He grew up in an artistic home with music and poetry and, between 1973 and 1981, studied classical ballet at the Royal Ballet School in London. It was a time when both the avant-garde modern dance of Merce Cunningham and Punk rock appeared in the city. Both fascinated Sieczkarek. The study was a double life between classic and club decadence.

The first engagements after school were stations of a search. Sieczkarek went to “Scapino Ballet” for children in Amsterdam where he composed some short choreographies. Between 1983 and 85 he danced with “Penta Theater” in Rotterdam, a free collective with an accent on dance-theatre which released Sieczkarek finally from his classical roots. With the horizon broadened he realised that dance could be more than technique. In retrospect a good preparation for Wuppertal.

In 1985 he joined the company from Pina Bausch and it was a spiritual kinship between two silent people. The flow and simplicity of the choreographies corresponded as philosophy by nature to Sieczkarek’s basic movement desire of dance as an expression of feeling. However three years later he left the company as it was impossible to develop as a choreographer under the strong arm of Pina.

Bausch mediated him in 1988 as a free dancer and choreographer to the Folkwang School in Essen. The first work there was a fury loaded coup: *September Moon* (1988) was a scandal not least due to a slide show of naked men. The early phase at the Folkwang School with Raimund Hoghe as dramaturge was strongly marked with questions about male identity. Soon however Sieczkarek struck, as often in his career, another direction with softer works like *Easy to Love* (1993) or *Funky Drummer* (1996) and later in 2002 *Macbeth* in Schloss Broich in Mülheim. He advanced during the 90s to become a much sought-after choreographer in North Rhine –Westphalia and was awarded the Förderpreis des landes NRW in 1996.

In 1998 Mark Sieczkarek founded his own free company for which since then he has worked solos, gathered changing ensembles and made a name both nationally and internationally. In the year 2002 Mark Sieczkarek travelled through an invitation by the Goethe Institute to Ghana and within the frame of a workshop presented the piece *Drops of rain in perfect days of June*. As a result



of this meeting the piece *Living with Aids* was made with dancers from Ghana the following year. In 2003 a piece about poverty *Broke* followed. Sieczkarek has also established a mature work relation with Brazil. There have arisen several productions with the Porto Alegre Cia de Danca including recently the highly praised *Eu estive aqui (I was here)*.

The artist resides in his chosen home of Wuppertal and continues to be present in Germany. He was house-choreographer of the Ringlokschuppen in Mühlheim from 2001 to 2004 and continues to produce at the Folkwang School where he created *Fearful Symmetries* in 2008 and *Tabang* in 2010 with the students. Also recently and new ground for Sieczkarek, was the free artist's invitation by the Städtischen Bühnen Münster, the first during the era of Daniel Goldin where he directed the piece *Common tones*.

Mark Sieczkarek can be considered, with over 30 stylistically astonishingly diverse award-winning choreographies, which have appeared during 20 years and toured worldwide as well as several dance projects and workshops in Africa, South America, and Europe, without doubt one of the most prolific and remarkable dance-artists of his generation.