



## The Mark Sieczkarek Company

Mark Sieczkarek cannot be placed as a choreographer in any school or box. The stations, classical ballet training, years as a dancer with Pina Bausch, works at the Folkwang, are there as sediments of experience, but not obvious on the stage. With each piece Sieczkarek has mostly taken a new direction and with each phase professional and personal issues have flowed together.

This is perhaps seen most strikingly in his work *Drops of rain in perfect days of June* created in 1995 as a stunning and poetic obituary to the death of his Brazilian friend Caique Ferreira, who had died of AIDS in 1994. In the following period Sieczkarek worked with the theme of Aids several times which promptly earned him the label: the Aids choreographer a superficial image without contrast which however accounts for Sieczkarek's work. Where *Drops of rain in perfect days of June* harnessed on stage the simultaneity of beauty and death in a colourful paradise, it was followed by *Funky Drummer* (1996) a joyful- ironic Samba piece in a black and white setting.

The recurring motifs in Sieczkarek's work are life influences which often pulsate subliminally. Being gay is just as much a fact as is living for over 20 years as a Scot in Germany. In part he has remained an outsider and the search for identity continues. He traced back to home with *Home - thoughts from abroad* (1999): with folk music and Scottish mini-skirts on stage, the movements radically contrasting the folklore. His works are not rooted, but universal in the best sense. When he, as in the piece *Eu estive aqui (I was here)* 2010, gave his movements to Brazilian dancers from Porto Alegre something unique appeared through their acquisition, Brazilian and yet foreign. Choreography knows no origin.

Sieczkarek always has clear images in mind, but he is not a concept person and prefers to enter the rehearsal as pure as possible, placing no story in front of the dancers and the audience preferring to remain open about meaning. The use, for example, of recycled materials in the sets and costumes could be interpreted in various ways and is neither a comment about the conservation of nature or the material situation of his free company, with which for him it is impossible (to the regret of many dancers) to work continuously with an ensemble, but also the need for reinvention which has light and dark sides. His movement vocabulary has grown so or so continually.

His movement vocabulary has certainly grown continuously. It is striking that in a piece like *In person* (2011) Sieczkarek deepened again the many solos in his repertoire-creating whole new elements from earlier expressions of oneness.



Mark Sieczkarek returned in 2008 with *Fearful Symmetries* to the school of his origin. The evening which was staged with a cast of 20 students shifts between reverence and teasing. Long time no see, Miss Bausch. The following piece *Tabang* (2012) - Korean for “The other side” also emerged with the Folkwang students and was directly dedicated to the then already deceased Pina. They are two choreographies which correspond to each other and reveal much about Sieczkarek’s work and his talent to play with ambiguous living tableaux, where the individual emerges again and again, his composition of virtuosic movements and hands which often begin with a bare finger and, last but not least, his deeply poetic understanding of relationships between people - in all its mysteriousness.

Mark Sieczkarek has brought his choreography to a perfect concentration-that of pure dance. He creates pieces such as *Moon Song* (2008) which breathe an Asian simplicity and universal love. The Far Eastern influences have grown with *Oblivion Suave* (2011), a restaging of the Wuppertal work *Waiting in Vain* (2009), a meditative celebration of beauty and harmony in front of the beguiling image of a field of lotus flowers. Also *Symfonia* (2011), inspired by composer Henryk Goreckis third Symphony resonates as a dance between the artists worlds of pure spirituality.

Mark Sieczkarek has meanwhile found a perfect concentration in the choreographies He creates dance, pieces which breathe an Asian simplicity and spiritual love as in *Moon Song* (2008). Whereas most choreographers bring prose to the stage, Sieczkarek is one of the rare poets.