

Mats ek



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Mats Ek is legendary Swedish choreographer whose work is always been outstanding, surprising, extremely emotional and with brilliant choreographic solutions, technique and genial simplicity. He is not only choreographer, but also intelligent psychologist who makes his story very strong and nobody can stay unmoved. His fantasy doesn't have borders, he doesn't repeat, there are always something new some fantastic genial movements what makes his style so unique so it's not possible to mingle him with other choreographers.

His work is truly delight for dance lover. That's why I choose to write about him, because he is my inspiration and I want to read more and study his way of thinking and working. For to discover this special artist we start with his life path from beginning. He was born in Malmö in 1945, the son of the Royal Dramatic Theatre actor Anders Ek (one of Ingmar Bergman's favourite actors) and famous choreographer, founder of Cullberg Ballet Birgit Cullberg.

His parents were giving him perfect environment to develop his talents, although as a kid he didn't feel attraction to dance art, at age of eight he danced with his twin sister in their mother's ballet Medea, but this was his only (childhood) experience of the medium. As a young man, Ek initially trained in dance with Lilian Karina and Donya Feuer, but shifted to drama, which he studied at the Marieborg Folks College.

He began his career in the theatre, directing the Marionett Theatre and the Royal Dramatic Theatre (Stockholm) between 1966 and 1973. In-between he decided to go back to dance, joining the Cullberg Ballet in 1972 where he learned choreography from Maurice Bejart and Jiri Kylian. In 1975 he began an engagement as a dancer at Ballett der Deutschen Oper am Rhein in

Dusseldorf. He created his first choreography for the Cullberg Ballet in 1976, entitled *The Officer's Servant*.

He also produces *Soweto* and *St. George and the Dragon*, in which he dances the main role. In 1978 is Ek's major breakthrough as a choreographer comes with *The House of Bernarda*, a phenomenal success. *The House of Bernarda Alba*, set to organ music by Bach interspersed with Spanish guitar pieces, is freely adapted from Federico Garcia Lorca's last play, *La Casa de Bernada Alba*, written in 1936 shortly before his execution by Franco's supporters.

In a Spain on the verge of civil war, *Bernada Alba*, a proud and sanctimonious woman, condemns her five daughters to stay in mourning for their father and to live isolated from the rest of the world. They are forced to remain cloistered in their sinister house for 8 years and the tragedy reaches its climax when the frustrated youngest daughter throws herself at her eldest sister's suitor only to find herself pregnant and deserted by him.

On stage, the work's overall clarity of purpose is dizzying, with expressionistic storytelling reminiscent of Kurt Jooss, all the way to the gruesome last scene in which *Bernarda* tries to shove the youngest sister's hanged body under the floor covering. The play explores repression, conformity, passion and the impact that men have on women. Lorca focused on a mother (*Bernarda*) and her five daughters, only alluding to men, who are only talked about and never seen.

Ek not only introduces male characters to the story, he casts a male dancer as *Bernarda*, hinting at the character being a representation of masculine power over the "weaker" sex and to the vulnerability and leverage inherent in maternity. This was the first time I really understood that dance (like all <https://assignbuster.com/mats-ek/>

art) could function as social commentary. Ek created a structure that literally bridged classical and contemporary dance while acknowledging their differences and shared origins and retaining technique at its core. The bridge between these had yet to be built, and Ek was one of its principal engineers.