

Deborah Colker
Writer, Director and Choreographer

As a child in her native Brazil, Deborah Colker grew up in a creative environment. Her father was a violinist and conductor and she started piano lessons at the age of eight. "Though I was quite good at it, playing with an orchestra at 14, I soon realized I needed to express my emotions physically as well, through sports for instance," she says. "I was very passionate and intense and contemporary dance gave me the chance to fit together physical and intellectual emotion."

Deborah became a member of Uruguayan choreographer Graciela Figueroa's Coringa company in 1980. In 1984, she began creating choreographies and directing piece movements for musicals, shows, TV programs, movies and samba schools.

Wanting to create a choreographic language of her own, Deborah founded her company, Companhia de Dança Deborah Colker in 1994, and created many highly acclaimed full-length dance pieces for it, including *Vulcão*, *Velox*, *Mix*, *Rota*, *Casa* and *4 Por 4*.

In Brazil alone Deborah's individual works have attracted large and loyal audiences. "My work is like Brazil," she says, "the mix of colors, the dynamics and rhythms, the happiness and possibility of a long way of discovery. It's an honor to me that my background is this beautiful, creative, and musical country."

Deborah's award-winning work quickly caught the attention of the entire dance world. In 2002, she was invited by Komische Oper in Berlin to choreograph a full program, *Casa* (a piece originally created for Deborah's own company in 1999) and *Ela*. In 2006, she went on to create *Maracanã* for the Culture Factory of Kampnagel in Hamburg. Deborah became the first Brazilian artist to win the Laurence Olivier Award, one of the most important cultural prizes in the UK, in the "Outstanding Achievement in Dance" category for her choreography *MIX* in 2001.

Working with *Cirque du Soleil* called for a departure from Deborah's customary way of working. She is used to developing concepts as an integral part of the rehearsal process, but for *Cirque 2009* she had to come up with the concepts a year and a half before rehearsals began.

"OVO presents the world of insects with the emphasis on constant movement and color," says Deborah. "I have a very physical choreographic language and for me the insects' movements translate into emotion. *Cirque 2009* reflects my background in dance, of course, but it also represents my lifelong love of music, the inspiration I draw from sport and the liveliness you can discover in every aspect of life. I love to work on a large scale and create a big impact with tons of energy and excitement on stage."

Deborah Colker was born in 1960 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.