

Cesc Gelabert

dances a solo by
Gerhard Bohner (1936-1992)

Im (Goldenen) Schnitt I / In the (Golden) section) I

Durch den Raum, durch den Körper / (Through Space, through the Body)

Choreography	Gerhard Bohner
Reconstruction and dance (1996)	Cesc Gelabert
Spatial Installation	Vera Röhm
Music	Johann Sebastian Bach from "The Well-Tempered Clavichord", Vol.1, Prelude and Fugue 1-12 as interpreted by Keith Jarrett (ECM-835246-2)
Video documentation	Cosima Santoro (1989)
Artistic assistant	Lydia Azzopardi
Technical director	Rüdiger Kratzert
Tour management	Inge Zysk

A coproduction of the Akademie der Künste, Berlin-Brandenburg, and the Gelabert-Azzopardi Companyia de Dansa, Barcelona

AKADEMIE DER KÜNSTE

60 minutes without intermission

In 1996 and 1999, the Catalan dancer and choreographer Cesc Gelabert reconstructed Gerhard Bohner's solo dances "Im (Goldenen) Schnitt I" and "Im (Goldenen) Schnitt II", which had premiered in 1989, for the Berlin Akademie der Künste, using material by the video filmmaker Cosima Santoro. Following the original concept, Gelabert presents works and elements selected by Bohner from three distinct artistic disciplines—dance, the visual arts and music, all of which relate to each other in the simultaneity of performance while remaining autonomous works of art. In "Im (Goldenen) Schnitt I" the dancer reacts to a space designed by the sculptor Vera Röhm, which is made up of constellations of wood and Plexiglas pillars that he can move through and around. The music is provided by Johann Sebastian Bach's "Well Tempered Clavier". Gelabert knew Bohner (1936-1992) well and the two respected each other highly both as artists and human beings. Despite his strict adherence to the choreographic blueprint, Gelabert preserves his artistic individuality as a dancer, so that the impression that he is trying to imitate Bohner never arises.

In the (Golden) Section I, II and III 1989

Chronology of a Production in Three Parts

Gerhard Bohner's interest in the visual arts is reflected in all of his choreographies since 1964. Dance, as the shaped movement of the human body, reacts to the spatial environment and, where applicable, to its fashioning through decorations and props. Here dance and the visual arts can meet and combine.

The starting point for Bohner's three-part solo piece was a series of separate queries from three visual artists asking whether he would be willing to create a dance piece for their installations. After a longer period of indecision, Bohner developed the idea of a variable choreography. Within the framework of the E 88 summer workshop in Berlin he put together a set of choreographic building blocks in 24 pieces. As Bach went through the keys in his "Well-tempered Clavichord", Bohner went through his body from head to toe, registered and systematized movements, and moved his body through space in order to grasp the elemental possibilities of bodily and dancerly action. Thus units arose out of small structures, which could be combined into larger ones, allowing the dancer to react to various different spaces. Using the spatial arrangements of visual artists, it was possible to test how a choreography both changes and asserts itself in reaction to different environments. In 1988-89 this concept was thought through together with the Berlin Akademie der Künste as producer with an eye to performance during the Akademie's festival "Pantomime-Music-Dance-Theater" in May 1989 in spatial installations by the sculptors Vera Röhm and Robert Schad. Vera Röhm's space was to consist of wood and plexiglass pillars, composed according to the principle of adding individual objects to walk-through constellations, which she had been developing for years in a group of works entitled "Additions" [*Ergänzungen*]. The viewer moving randomly through a spatial constellation was to be replaced by the ordered movement of the choreographer reacting to the works of art, the arrangement of which the sculptor and choreographer would decide together on the basis of the available site.

The second space for movement, created expressly for this occasion by the sculptor Robert Schad, was the result of a long-term dialogue with the choreographer. Schad, who said of himself in another context that he makes sculpture move instead of his own body, translated Bohner's "Primal Movements" [*Urbewegungen*] into a sculpture space consisting of five parts in "untreated" steel in which Bohner's "frozen" movements are contrasted with those of the living dancer. Here, too, the performance space in the Akademie der Künste determined the arrangement of the parts, which the sculptor and choreographer discussed beforehand and tested using small models.

In spring 1989, while Schad was casting his steel sculptures at Mannesmann in Duisburg, the questions of musical accompaniment, title, costumes, performance venues and dates were decided. Bohner originally considered using improvised music by the free jazz trombonist Conny Bauer for his actions in Vera Röhm's installation, but then decided instead upon the prelude and fugue 1-12 from Bach's "Well-tempered Clavichord" Volume I in a version by Keith Jarrett (55 minutes). Bach's music was played live by the pianist Heidrun Holtmann, with the addition of fugues 13 and 14 and a prelude from Volume II (60 minutes) as accompaniment for the choreography in Robert Schad's sculpture space.

With the title "In the (Golden) Section I and II", Bohner referred to the proportion used as a formal principle in Classical architecture and in the Italian Renaissance, which followed from the "continuous division" of a straight line. The Akademie's festival "Pantomime-Music-Dance-Theater '89" opened on 2 and 3 May with Bohner's solo in Vera Röhm's installation. On the broad but shallow black stage in the Akademie Studio eight pillars were installed at regular intervals at the front edge of the stage, and one more at the rear edge, with a free view of the rows of seats in the so-called "little stalls". Wearing a midnight-blue suit he had tailored himself, along with an overcoat and walking stick, Bohner added his movement sequences "through the room/ through the body" in an austerity appropriate to the music. Towards the end of the festival, on 20 and 21 May, the choreography was performed, using the same repertory of movements but in a different order, on the 20.5-meter broad and 12-meter deep surface of the large exhibition hall. Bohner wore a kind of black track-suit against the white floor and backdrop.

Version 3 of "In the (Golden) Section" arose in the summer and autumn of 1989 as a production of the Hebbel Theater in Berlin and premiered there on 7, 8, and 9 December 1989. In the background of the stage, which measures 8 x 8 meters, hung a 4 x 3.6 meter enlargement of a painting by Paul Uwe Dreyer entitled "Horizon". In "Version 3", however, the term installation referred more to the musical spatial composition created by Roland Pfrengle, whose tonal structures were partially dependent upon the dancer's movements. In this constellation, Bohner's pre-determined movement units, performed in a dark suit and white shirt, were no longer recognizable in their original contexts.

The production's bringing together of various art forms, persons and institutions makes it unusual, and exemplary, in an age of looming cultural apathy.

Dirk Scheper

Secretary of the Department *Performing Arts*, Akademie der Künste, Berlin, 1990