

## Solo for Bohner

Gerhard Bohner was a difficult personality, rough-looking like certain noble and uncompromising characters. And he was a great figure of German dance, however practically unknown on this side of the Rhine. Dominique Bagouet professed his greatest respect for him, and the fact that he is admired by a Catalan choreographer like Cesc Gelabert, a frequent guest of the Akademie der Künste of Berlin and artist in residence at the Hebbel Theater, clearly expresses the fascination that Bohner, born in 1936 and deceased in 1992, had for his peers. When he saw Bohner dance his solo „Im (goldenen) Schnitt I“ in 1989, Gelabert cried with emotion. However, had it not been for a video artist, Cosima Santoro, who was ready to finance a film version of this solo, the Catalan would never have been able to refer to a document one day in order to revive it, and nothing but a memory would be left of this masterpiece today.

As soon as the performance begins, a certain indefinable something announces that it will be exceptional. Generously embracing the space right from the start, the performer takes possession of it with wide steps and gestures of bewildering simplicity and beauty. He walks like a lord of a legend, like a philosopher roaming through the world of ideas, with superior serenity and aloofness. Everything in the solo's three successive parts entitled „Kopf“ (head), „Brust“ (chest) and „Arm“ (arm), where body studies are developed with rigorous refinement, suggests that in this work, the creator's art has reached its summit: it is sober, intense, extremely concise, almost minimalist, free of anything superfluous. Everything is presented in a fabulous equilibrium, just like the extracts from Bach's „Well-Tempered Clavier“ that accompany the work. It is also the summit of a life, the legacy of a man who knew only too well that his death was near and who dedicated this solo to his companion who had preceded him to the grave. It is probably his whole life that Bohner conveyed in this work, with absolute discretion however. One can imagine the sufferings of this life, its power, sadness and grandeur, and most of all its impressive serenity that flows through the work from beginning to end. It took a man of full physical and intellectual maturity to revive such an intense work. Today, an equivalent to Gerhard Bohner's memorable solo has been found in Cesc Gelaberts's excellent interpretation, which is another masterpiece.