

Ingo Guenther

president of the Berlin section CID

former High School teacher of music, dancer, composer and director of the baroque dance ensemble <contrem(p)s berlin> and the Institute of Historical Dance Ingo Guenther, Berlin/Germany.
Member of CID since 2005.

Dear colleagues and friends of historical dances taking part in this teleconference. Unfortunately I cannot speak to you personally as my health is rather poor at the moment.

Let me first say a few words about myself and my work. I've been busy with historical dances for more than fifty years when I first came across this matter as a student of music at the university in Berlin. After intensive studies by German, American, French and English specialists I started performing and teaching dances between 1600 and 1900, focussing during the last two decades on the 18th century (Baroque and Rokoko era). Our group <contrem(p)s berlin> has been performing in many European countries including Poland and Greece. After 2010 we have developed a certain kind of Baroque Dance Theatre that means a combination of original or selfchoreographed baroque dances (like Manuet, Sarabande, Chaconne, Gavotte a.o.). We choose a composer (Bach, Handel, Telemann, Lully or other), and look for a typical (mostly historical) scene in their life and put up to 8 dances in the progress of the play. Last year, for example, we staged a scene in which Bach and his family arrive in Leipzig in the year 1724 when he took over the post of the 'Kapellmeister' (choirmaster) for the famous Thomauer Singers. In the following video you will see two of his younger children playing/performing the famous Badinerie, a movement of the second orchestral suite. The tempo is slower than we are used to hear this music. But it has to be like this as it is the music of a Gavotte dance, in the sources described 'slower than a Bourrée'.

I've been working on this subject quite a lot (tempo and character in baroque dances) and I've written a booklet on this subject. The title will be shown after the video so that you may order it from me if interested. My choreography is composed after French sources.

Video: Badinerie

Picture: Character and Tempo in the Dances of the Baroque Suite

Some personal ideas concerning CID.

I would like to start with the question: How to promote historical dance in CID? To me CID members are open-minded and interested in dance generally. Most people I talk to about this matter outside CID tell me that they want to stick to other people with the same profession or hobby. I am sure that there are people with a wider scope of dance in every group or society but how to find or get them interested? What are the advantages of society like CID who is not aiming for competitiveness between members and strictly non-political? To me the versatility and many-sidedness of CID comprising all sides of the phenomenon human dance is much more interesting than sticking to just one field of dance. Besides, folk dance and historical dance have always developed from the same roots, folk dance being the older and bigger one. - Bringing people from many (maybe politically different) countries together under the subject of a basic human expression (that's dance for me) is highly political. It unites different people and ideologies under the name of love and understanding, making people feel acknowledged and happy. In this sense CID is to me one of the the greatest and most important peace movements on earth.