

Dear miss Bari,

Dear Dance Teachers,

Dear Dancers,

It had been a great pleasure for me to be member of the jury in the first national qualifier for Romania and Bulgaria, held in Bucharest on Saturday, March 10, 2012. I think you chose a very suitable theatre with a large stage and an auditorium where the audience was able to see well from all places. The schedule of the competition was excellent, and timing was precisely kept to the very end without any delay at all. As far as I had been able to observe the general atmosphere was a warm and friendly one with a good and competent staff of helpers. Thank you for having achieved such a great task.

During the competition some questions arose, and I am now trying to answer as many as possible.

1. Judges and scoring:

The three other judges had beforehand received all information about the DWC rules and our scoring system, and they had read everything most carefully.

Each of us scored separately without looking at any of the sheets of the others.

Afterwards when looking at the final results we discovered that in about 95% of the dances we always had the same opinion and scored very similarly.

The judges did not know at any moment of the competition where the dancers came from or who the dance teachers / choreographers of the dances were.

Points needed to qualify for DWC

According to the rules a dance needs to achieve a minimum of 75 points in order to qualify for DWC. Yet a maximum of three dances from one country may qualify for DWC. This means that in case in a particular class the standard is very high, a dance which achieved 75 points may nevertheless not be qualified because there were three other dances with even higher points.

As this had been the very first competition of this kind in Romania, and as we did not want to be destructive but rather wanted to encourage the young dancers, we decided, however, that we make exceptions and in certain classes allow dances which did not achieve the qualifying mark to go to DWC Villach nevertheless. All these special cases we discussed together after seeing the final results of the class in question.

This was the very special case for this first edition in Romania. It does not mean that we will repeat this next year.

2. Certain dances in particular

a) Child Appropriateness

This to DWC is very important! A dance should be fit for the special age and ability of the young dancer.

This e.g. was the reason why the dance “Dansul Soriceilor” the little mice achieved first place. The dance had a logical story and was most suitable for the very young age of the dancers.

On the contrary we do NOT want to see any Can Can, Carmen or similar dances in the children's age group. We even think that these are problematic in the junior age group. A Can Can was originally created to have a very special “purpose” of how to attract the audience. A child should never perform an erotic dance!

b) Classical variations

In a ballet performance with adults classical variations are performed not by professional dancers only but by soloists with high dancing skills. It is good for dance students to learn classical variations and to work with these in the course of their education. But working in class and performing on stage are two different things.

According to the rules of DWC in the age category “Mini” it is NOT permitted to perform original classical variations, and we also do not want to see any “free variations after classical variation.” We think that a child age 9 or younger should perform a dance suitable for the age and the technical ability of that particular age. The “Dying Swan” in particular is an extraordinary dance created for Anna Pavlova and performed by the most outstanding ballerinas of this world. It should never ever be performed by a child, not even by a junior dance student! We are well aware that it means a lot more work for the teacher to find a suitable music and then to choreograph a dance for this particular child than simply to copy a classical variation seen at youtube in many varieties. The “Polca” and the “Balade” performed in MiniSB are very good examples for excellent dances for children of this young age.

We even think it is problematic to perform a classical variation in the children's age class. Here the dance “The Dream” was a wonderful example for an excellent choreography suitable for a child.

c) Styles of dance we offer at DWC

We are aware that there exist a lot more styles of dance than those that we offer at the DWC competitions. We are trying to create new classes according to the suggestions of the dance teachers provided that the demand is there. But it might occasionally be necessary for the teachers to look at our rules first and then to choreograph a new dance, than to choreograph a dance and afterwards to try and fit it into one of the styles that we offer.

d) National and Folklore dance

This shall be a dance that represents the way of dancing in a particular country. It may be very close to ballet like e.g. in a Mazurka or Tarantella that we often see on stage, or it may have nothing to do with classical ballet at all like e.g. an Indian dance.

We kindly ask the teachers to add to the name of each national or folklore dance what country this particular dance represents. We cannot expect from DWC participants from Latin America or Southern Asia to know what e.g. a “Veselaya Kaldril” is and in which country this is performed. Nor do we expect of Europeans to know that “Pole Dance” is a typical Philippine dance. So please help the mutual understanding by always adding the country to your national dances.

Some dances like e.g. the “Rapsodia Ungarä” we shifted from the ballet section to national because we, the judges, agreed that in national this dance would be better placed.

Other dances in the national section of style we did not really know what to do

with. In JGN e.g. we saw a very beautiful “Evantajele” very well performed. But which country should this dance belong to?

d) Modern, Contemporary or Jazz, Show Dance?

This often is a real big question especially as in different countries around the world the idea of what is what may vary considerably.

In duets and trios we do not yet differentiate because we do not yet have that many entries in none of the age classes. In Mini we offer “W” = Show Dance only because we think that modern and contemporary are styles that a very young child is not yet able to execute properly.

For those that will come to DWC Villach it might help to watch the modern classes there in order to get a better impression of what we consider to fit into which category of style.

f) Hip Hop and wording in the music

All schools that have dances in the Hip Hop category of style and that qualified for DWC we kindly ask to check their music (preferably with the help of a native speaker) with regards to the wording. Occasionally in these songs violent, obscene, or sexual wordings may appear, and these are not permitted in the DWC competition and would result in disqualification of the whole dance. Dance World Cup is a competition mainly for children and young people, and we do not want to confront them with violence etc. in dance or words or songs.

Finally let me encourage you to continue this excellent work in Romania. Romania and Bulgaria from what I saw in this competition have a great potential of very skilled dancers and dance teachers. If you qualified for Villach, Austria, I am looking forward to meeting you there again. If you have not yet managed this year let me encourage you to try again next year and to work hard in the meantime.

Dance World Cup has originally been created for the children of this world, and it has been growing ever since. Consider yourselves now part of this big family, enjoy meeting and competing WITH the other children of the world but not against them and always be ready to find many new friends.

Korinna Söhn

Artistic Director of DWC