LOW LAZARUS & LORD DIVERUS

Traditional. Arranged & adapted, with additional lyrics, by Joel Mabus ©2017

Deliberately, with strong beats

As it fell out one Christmas Day
Lord Diverus made a feast
He called for his gents and his ladies fair
With hats & capes and bows & scrapes
The revelries did begin

Low Lazarus was a beggar man
As poor as a man could be
He had no friend, no food, nor fire
No Christmas barley-bree

As it fell out the very next day
Lord Diverus shivered and died,
Two Serpents slithered up from hell,
To sit on a dragon's knee.

"You have no right, low Lazarus,
To come begging at my gate
No meat nor drink will you get from me,
Not for Jesus Christ his sake!"

"Some meat, some drink, brother Diverus
For Jesus Christ his sake!"

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To come begging at my gate
No meat nor drink will you get from me,
Not for Jesus Christ his sake!"

"Some meat, some drink, brother Diverus
For Jesus Christ his sake!"

Lord Diverus laid him down and down
And down at Diverus' gate
"Some meat, some drink, brother Diverus
For Jesus Christ his sake!"

"He is not to be fed.
He is not to be fed.
No meat nor drink will you get from me,
Not for Jesus Christ his sake!"

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While traditions change over time, there is tension between introducing new ideas and maintaining something recognizable as the same tradition. In our case, the challenge was to change many seemingly integral elements of our dances while still clearly dancing morris. For us, the essential elements of morris are the stepping, the figures, the interaction among the dancers in the set, and the focus on performance. Morris stepping is distinctively different from other dance traditions. There is lots of leaping and large, vigorous arm movements with hankies or sticks. In moving to Zoom, very little about each dancer’s movements has changed. There are of course differences between introducing new ideas and maintaining something recognizable as the same tradition. In our case, the challenge was to change many seemingly integral elements of our dances while still clearly dancing morris. For us, the essential elements of morris are the stepping, the figures, the interaction among the dancers in the set, and the focus on performance. Morris stepping is distinctively different from other dance traditions. There is lots of leaping and large, vigorous arm movements with hankies or sticks. In moving to Zoom, very little about each dancer’s movements has changed. There are of course differences...
Zoom required many changes to the dance choreography. The audience of a Zoom performance is always in front, so side and back movements had to change. Quick step sequences or fast changes of direction easily become visual chaos, so we do longer sequences with more repetition. Contrasting stillness with movement is very effective, so we split choruses where some dancers move while the rest are still, and then switch. Blocks of dancers moving together are visually stronger, so corner interactions changed to row or column or neighbor interactions. These interactions demand a lot from the dancers, requiring them to know where on the screen they appear and to adjust directions based on that position, with very little feedback. We place dancers by controlling the order in which people turn on their cameras, but each dancer has to translate between the position they appear to be on the screen and the position the audience sees them in.

And what the audience sees is important. Berkeley Morris is a performing team. From the outset, we intended to perform and needed a form that worked for an audience. By the first of May, we had a set of dances and a scripted show for dancing the sun up on May Day—19 dancers and seven musicians, connected over Zoom and live-streamed to YouTube. We have continued to perform since.

Laid out like this makes it sound like we had a plan at the start. We didn’t. As we danced each week, we discovered which people turn on their cameras, but each dancer has to translate between the position they appear to be on the screen and the position the audience sees them in.

Check out CDSS’s new podcast, Contra Pulse!
Hosted by Julie Vallimont, Contra Pulse interviews a wide range of musicians in the contra scene, exploring their styles, histories, and experiences—taking a snapshot of this time in the contra world and the beauty of our multifaceted community.

Episodes so far include in-depth interviews with George Marshall, Audrey Knuth, Kate Barnes, Noah VanNorstrand, and more, along with great musical selections from each artist.

You can download Contra Pulse on Apple Podcasts or wherever else you get your podcasts. Or find episodes, transcripts, and more at contrapulse.cdss.org!

Check out cdss.org/portal for hundreds of resources that support singers, callers, dance musicians, organizers, families, educators and more. Here are a few recent additions and updates.

COVID-19 Resources
We recently completed a major update to the COVID-19 section of the portal, including adding many new resources for organizers, freelancers, and callers.

Courtesy and Etiquette Guidelines from CDSS
The CDSS Community Culture and Safety Task Group has been working hard to develop a comprehensive Toolkit for local leaders to address community culture and safety. The Toolkit will include information on: (1) statements of community values, (2) codes of conduct, (3) courtesy and etiquette, (4) complaint response procedures, and (5) the physical venue. The third section is now complete and posted on the website: cdss.org/toolkit. The first major update of the toolkit completed focuses on courtesy and etiquette. This resource includes a template with options for language and also examples from different communities.

Vision: First Things First
Back in 2011 at the first Puttin’ On The Dance conference, Bob Henshaw, David Millstone, and Delia Clark led a fantastic workshop on vision and mission statements. The workshop stands the test of time and is a great resource to use if you’re developing a vision statement or want to revisit and update your mission statement. Plus, there are some other great resources about vision statements in the Portal that can help as well. Dig in!

Suggest new resources to be featured at cdss.org/share-your-resource. We welcome resources for all sections.

NEW COMMUNITY RESOURCES HIGHLIGHTS

By Emily Addison

Shared Weight is excited to announce that two brand-new email discussion lists have been launched this fall! Join the conversations at sharedweight.net.

Alt Choreo
This new group discusses how traditional dance (contra, English, community, square, family dance, etc.) can be changed for virtual spaces or distanced choreography during the pandemic. The group’s goal is to support each other by:

- Asking and answering questions of interest to choreographers.
- Changing the way we think about traditional contra, ECD, and square choreography.
- Thinking about physically distanced dances.
- Discussing and testing solo, two-person, and small-set choreography.

Growing Up Trad!
This list is for caregiving adults who love traditional dance, music, and/or song. Conversations focus on nurturing these traditions within our families, particularly with the children in our care. Topics include:

- Songs, dances, and tunes that we can easily teach/share with our children.
- Creative ideas on how to engage our kids in traditional music and dance.
- Learning opportunities for children (e.g., online workshops).
- Opportunities for families to connect at traditional dance, music, and song events.

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and bottoms, and progressions around the screen. We can’t clash sticks, but we can work with sticking up and down or to the corners or the sides, giving a visual interaction with neighboring dancers.

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