

To Dance Studies Association Response

Neta Pulvermacher

The following is the October 16th DSA (Dance Studies Association) Board Statement in response to the October 7th Hamas Attack on Israel – and the continuing Israeli – Palestinian conflict. The DSA statement was removed from the DSA website after DSA received email threats. Nevertheless – the statement was sent via email to all members of DSA all over the world.

It is important for to state unequivocally that no matter how wrong a statement might be, (which the DSA statement is), it is absolutely wrong to issue threats to a person, an organization, a race, or a nation. We all must all respect the rights of others to hold opinions which differ from ours, (as long as there is no call for violence on the basis of such statement).

THE DSA Statement:

October 2023 ,16

Reflecting on January 2020's "Statement on the Inviolability of Movement as a Right," DSA recognizes the inviolable right and freedom to move as well as the right to stay and exist as an integral part of self-determination.

Grieving the loss of civilian lives in the past week and past seven decades in Israel and Palestine, we stand in solidarity with the people of Palestine, Israel, Syria and Lebanon during this incredibly painful time. We stand firmly in our commitment to dance practice and scholarship that condemns the violences of settler colonialism, and call on the United Nations to demand an immediate ceasefire and an end to war crimes in this region.

Signed,
The DSA Board of Directors and Executive Director

Professor Neta Pulvermacher's response:

Oct. 17, 2023

Dear DSA Membership and Board,

With all respect and love, I would like to advise that all of you outside of Israel and Palestine - use more caution publishing opinion statements about the Israel-Palestinian conflict, its roots, and the resulting horrible - current war. We, Israelies didn't choose this war, it was brought upon us on October 7th at 06:30am when Hamas begun a ruthless and murderous attack, during one of the holiest Jewish holidays, an attack by terrorist on innocent, peace loving people from kibbutzim and small towns in the south of Israel, and - an evil attack on thousands of dancers participating in the Nova Party. Nova was a rave party dedicated to peace near kibbutz Resim a few Kilometers from the Gaza border. Many of the Nova dancers were murdered and many more were taken hostage. In some kibbutzim near the Gaza border 1 in 4 people was murdered or is missing or is held as a hostage in Gaza, and - all of Israel (Jews, Muslims, Christians) have been under continuous rocket attacks and fear of terrorist infiltration each

and every day and night.

Please also remember that Israel has had to fight for its existence (as it still does today) since before the declaration of Independence in 1948 and ever-since. The pogroms against Jews in Palestine (under the British rule) started even earlier: in 1929, followed by a never-ending list of wars: The Independence War (1948), The Kadesh/Sinai War (1957), the Six Days War (1967), The Yom Kippur War (1973), The First Lebanon War (1982), the first Intifada/Uprising (1987-1993), the second Intifada (2000-2005), the Second Lebanon War (2006), the Cast of Lead (2008/9) in Gaza after Israel withdrew from the Gaza Strip, Amud Annan/Pillars of Defense- Gaza (2012), Zuk Eitan – Gaza (2014), Shomer Homot – Gaza (2021) and Haravot Barzel/Iron Swords (2023). When we were kids, our parents told us that when we grow up there will be peace and there will not be a need for an army. We continue to believe that peace is possible and that it is the only possible way, despite the never ending conflict.

Your statement, while I am sure, was written with good intentions, is blind to the complexity of the situation: "Grieving the loss of civilian lives in the past week and past seven decades in Israel and Palestine, we stand in solidarity with the people of Palestine, Israel, Syria and Lebanon during this incredibly painful time. We stand firmly in our commitment to dance practice and scholarship that condemns the violences of settler colonialism, and call on the United Nations to demand an immediate ceasefire and an end to war crimes in this region."

This statement by the DSA board is deeply ignorant of the complex history of the region, of Israel and of Palestine and of the holocaust. Additionally, it lacks the knowledge and understanding of the geopolitical context of the region and its thousand years history.

Please also keep in mind that we are all bleeding literally and figuratively and that in this long conflict there are no winners – we all lose...

In this complex region and country/land there is no one truth... rather there are multiple often conflicting narratives that attempt to contextualize the multiple rights and perspectives of reality and "the" history. Please remember that it is always more complex than it seems. I am reminded of King Salomon's judgement: Kings 3:16–28: recounts that two mothers living in the same house, each the mother of an infant son, came to Solomon. One of the babies had been smothered, and each claimed the remaining boy as her own. Calling for a sword, Solomon declared his judgment: the baby would be cut in two, each woman to receive half."

Have we not learned anything since then? There has to be a different way of splitting the land, while honoring the rights of both Palestinians and Israelis to live in freedom and dignity on this land.

And finally, the words of Patty Smith:

And these things we heard as

prophecys lullaby.

The mountain is the mountain. The Lord is the Lord.

The holy city belongs to none. The

mountains of Judah belong to none.

The yielding seed belongs to none.

And we are the new Jerusalem.

(Patti Smith, The New Jerusalem 2018)

With love and light and hopes for peaceful times.

Sincerely, Professor Neta Pulvermacher
Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance