

**6th February, 2019**

**Dear Suzy Blok,**

I write this letter, moved by the concern that the Dansmakers space in North might be closing. This space have supported young generations of choreographers make an inspiring transition from art education into professional artistic fields since already decades in the city of Amsterdam. It has supported not just many of us (young choreographers) developed our artistic career but also gave the opportunity to a wide range of styles and scenes within the dance field to have a space, get visibility, feel recognise and legitimise with their work. A part from being a platform that gives space and opportunities to people that otherwise will not have it, it also brings together a wide range of audiences from hip-hop and ball room dances to experimental dance, from experimental dance to ethnic dances, from ethnic dances to artistic interdisciplinary arts initiatives and everything around and in between! There is hardly an space in Amsterdam that is as inclusive and with the possibility of bringing all these different crowds together as Dansmakers does. Dansmakers is a space where people get to know things outside of their comfort zone and therefore get the chance to see things through other eyes, perspectives and angles. The diversity that Dansmakers welcomes is a possibility for audiences/citizens to experience life differently, to appreciate things they haven't even imagined before, to get to interact with people that otherwise they would have never had the chance to.

Art is the space where we can imagine and re-create futures, boiled new realities, new ways of being and interact; where we can experience, meet and perceive outside of normative skims; were we can exercise our ability to be critical and not just be servile to profitable neoliberal agendas; were we get empowered, inspired and find ease for our sorrows and frustrations... Therefore is a tool with the capacity to make us better people! In our times where too little to no investment and/or attention is being put on the improvement of emotional and psycho-somatic aspects of the well being, progressive societies should be making sure that people have ways in which to detox and reboot from all the difficult challenges we are facing in our contemporary times. Art making has the powerful potential of improving the life quality of people, we should be putting all our effort in investing on initiatives that contribute to a brighter future not a darker one!

Joining the forces in hope that this letter together with the other many, help us save the beloved and needed space of Dansmakers in Amsterdam!

With love, care and unconditional support,

**Paula Chaves**

***(Colombian choreographer, performer and activist living in Amsterdam)***