



CONSENT IN DANCING WHAT? WHY?

While acknowledging that our dance spaces are permeable to structural power relations, we can remain vigilant to the emotional comfort and integrity of all.

In the law, consent is defined as necessarily:

- Free (no financial, social or physical constraint)
- Prior (no surprise)
- Informed (lucid, given by someone old enough to understand and take responsibility for one's choice, in the capacity of voicing consent, in full command of one's faculties, neither asleep nor drunk/under the influence of drugs)
- Unambiguous (clearly stated)
- Continuous (to be renewed throughout the experience; committing to a dance or to any interpersonal experience does not entail having to pursue it until its end, we do not "sign" this commitment)

In the context of dancing, in order to build a culture of enthusiastic consent, we can:

- Allow ourselves to talk and ask questions in order to ensure our partner's comfort
- Interrupt a dance if needed, without feeling obliged to justify ourselves and without guilt
- Examine what feels right for us and what doesn't, what we like and what we don't
- Check that the pleasure of the moment is shared
- Leave space to see if our partner comes closer
- Be attentive to verbal as well as non-verbal signals

It is important to be collectively responsible for individual consent. Depending on the circumstances and on each one's individual story, refusing a proposition can be very difficult if not impossible, for various reasons that can be societal as well as psychological (see the work of Muriel Salmona). Let us transform our spaces of festive conviviality into laboratories of care, equality, safety, and hence, joyful freedom!

