

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my enthusiasm and recommendation for Jim Donak as a teacher, coach, and master of circus arts-specific body and training knowledge. I have been a student of Jim's since 2016, and he has served as my personal mentor and movement coach to my acrobatic theatre company, for almost as long. I trust no one else (including doctors, PT people, and especially not most coaches) with my body - which is my primary tool as an artist.

Jim has spent his life dedicated and passionate about movement training for circus artists. I honestly don't think there is anyone else in the Bay Area (and potentially in the world) who can match Jim's incredibly diverse and extensive wealth of knowledge about the circus athlete's body. His expertise comes from Eastern and Western movement and therapeutic techniques, as well as dissection. His knowledge of the impact of movement and training on the inner workings of the body is unparalleled and I trust him completely. In fact, I've called Jim while on a performance tour, more than once, and he's talked me through caring for an injury from afar.

As a performing artist with a background in theatre and continued training in acrobatics and circus, I appreciate Jim's teaching approach. He is highly creative and adaptable in the classroom, and creates exercises that are specific to my needs in a performance or in order to obtain a skill I am working toward. Only someone with such an extensive body knowledge, and over 30 years of teaching can improvise with this amount of skill and safety. Furthermore, I simply enjoy his lighthearted and playful teaching style.

Thank you so much for taking the time to read this letter. I highly recommend Jim as the highest caliber teacher I've had the pleasure to work with and learn from!

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hannah Gaff', written in a cursive style.

Hannah Gaff
October 25, 2019