

October 18, 2019

To whom it may concern,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing as a Circus Center (CC) teacher alumni and professional circus performer and teacher of over 20 years. I arrived at the SF Circus Center in September 2003 with a lifetime of training in dance and holistic health. I began teaching at the CC in 2004, and called it my home for upwards of 8 years. I had the honor of teaching and training along side several masters including Lu Yi, Xiao Hong, Elena Panova, Serchmaa Byamba, and many more.

The reason for this letter is to focus on one person, Jim Donak, who I became friends with and began working with soon after I arrived at the San Francisco School of Circus Arts (SFCC). I received bodywork from Jim, attended some of his classes and assisted him in some of his cutting edge workshops such as 'How to Train and Not Get Hurt,' and his shoulder anatomy workshop. Each time I assisted these workshops, I deepened my understanding of the \ physical body and training as well as Jim's mastery and ability to teach it.

Since then I have co-taught with Jim several times. Again and again I see the mastery at which he teaches and improves the physicality of his students from beginner recreational students to professionals. His knowledge of the human body, physiology, Chinese and sports medicine, and his passion to teach make him one of the most valuable instructors I have known. His grounding of traditional arts mixed with his ability to customize teaching depending on each student's needs shows he is unexpendable.

Jim is extremely personable and can see past linear understanding in his students. Jim spends his time working with individual needs even within a group class. He excels in this. Acknowledging Jim's 35 years of teaching and studying is the draw. With the ongoing popularity of circus arts these days, and the growing numbers of new/beginner teachers who have no background in physical arts, we need teachers like Jim Donak in our schools more than ever.

Feel free to contact me for further info or questions. I reside in Mexico where I run my small circus school, but I can call you per request.

Sincerely,



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