

To whom it concerns,

My name is Sarah Arrigo and I am a licensed Occupational Therapist and owner of a small business based out of Arcata, CA that uses circus arts as a therapeutic modality for both professional circus artists and differently-abled individuals. I am writing to recommend and speak of Jim Donak's value as a teacher and circus practitioner.

I am an alumnus of Circus Center; I trained for 3 months in the professional aerial arts program back in 2009. After such I went on to perform internationally, in Belgium, France, the UK and Canada.

I first met Jim as a student in the professional program. Even then his knowledge of the body impressed me, and I took many of his principles on how to train into my practice. Living and working as a circus artist overseas, I trained with high level artists and saw how in their circus education they were learning a similar pedagogy as to what Jim teaches in injury prevention and understanding of one's own body. I believe this educational element is crucial to training circus artists. There is now an entire movement of Physical and occupational therapists dedicated to this practice, of which Jim arguably has equivalent expertise has been practicing for over 20 years. His expertise is particularly unique and valuable in that he connects these fundamental teachings of functional science to actual practice of circus arts. The ability for circus artists to know and be able to care for their own bodies is crucial, especially in the U.S circus economy, where health insurance is infrequently covered by circus companies. Later on, as a student of occupational therapy, I attended his cadaver workshops. Learning about the body in this unique hands on approach had a profound effect on understanding how my anatomy enabled abilities as a performer.

In the world where circus arts and science meet, recognizing a master teacher in a discipline not specific to an act and/or apparatus is very important. Jim is not only versed performer and teacher; I believe he is a master of what can often be a more elusive discipline: Functional circus training for overall health and wellness.

Thank you for reading. If you have any questions, please feel free to email CirqueErgo@gmail.com

Kind regards,

Sarah Arrigo, OTR/L. Licensed in the state of CA #19239



CIRQUE ERGONOMICS

Occupational Therapy for children and adults