



University of Colorado at Boulder

Department of Theatre and Dance

C132 University Theatre
Campus Box 261
Boulder, Colorado 80309-0261
Theatre: (303) 492-7355
Dance: (303) 492-5037
FAX (303) 492-7722

Monday 12 May 2014

To the Promotion Committee:

I am very pleased to endorse Seth Panitch's application for promotion to full professor.

I think, somewhere, Seth Panitch has an enormous closet, because I have seen him wear so many different hats that it boggles the mind. He is seemingly able to change them in the blink of an eye – faster than Clark Kent transforming into Superman – and never showing a sweat.

I take that back. I worked with Seth most recently on his dazzlingly concise and clever telling of an epic story, *Hell: Paradise Found*, during the summer of 2012 in Alabama and New York. It was my first visit to the South, and no one could deny the heat of the season. Yet, Seth Panitch handled his hat changes with the aplomb of a breezy spring day. He was writing, he was directing, he was acting, he was producing, and seamlessly all the while, he was mentoring.

I had first witnessed Seth Panitch's work as a fellow actor at the Colorado Shakespeare Festival here in Boulder. His portrayal of Don Armado, a parody of a courtly Spanish lover, in *Love's Labour's Lost* made a fantastic first impression upon me, and the breadth of his acting range was truly impressive. But nothing could prepare me for the incredible professional I witnessed in Tuscaloosa. Seth's commitment to his students, his department, his artistic endeavors – of course, he practices more than one – and his professions both on campus and in his creative work would humble even the greatest of theatre artists I have worked with.

The craft of theatre is done collaboratively, with many people intricately involved in a production on both sides of the footlights. As the director of *Hell: Paradise Found*, Seth led the team with grace and ease. He inspired the company with passion and drive, and displayed a great ability to listen and to speak in language suited to the individual actor.

The students at the University of Alabama are so very lucky. In Seth Panitch, they have a teacher who is a jack-of-all-trades, and a master of them all. Seth's work is most telling in the quality of the students he prepares for the profession

and for life, and his students are rightly his greatest advocates. Working in *Hell: Paradise Found* I got to know Seth's recent students as castmates. Their readiness for theatre was outstanding; they were prepared, prompt, disciplined, thoughtful, motivated, and respectful. And every one of them told me personally that they had Seth to thank for those skills. I came to consider these young thespians as colleagues in our efforts together.

The chances of success, as the general public would define it, in the entertainment industry are frighteningly slim. Seth prepares his students in the best way possible; he shows them how to leverage their specific disciplines in the craft of theatre to make themselves better citizens and leaders.

If there were a United Nations for the Arts, Seth Panitch would be on the executive committee. His reach as an artist extends not only across the US and back again, but also to Cuba where he has become an ambassador for the arts, collaborating with foreigners by using the common language of theatre.

Always a reliable mentor, Seth nourishes his students' career development by creating opportunities for them in his creative work, both at home and abroad. As the company of *Hell: Paradise Found* rehearsed in Tuscaloosa and then performed Off-Broadway in New York City, Seth offered continual guidance to his former students among the cast. By citing examples of past training methods he had employed with them in the classroom, Seth was able to speak personally to each of them about how to continue their artistic development. Further, he put each step of this professional experience into context for his former students, offering them a sense of ease through understanding their work within the theatre industry. The whole experience was a boon to their training and personal growth.

I'm sure that you will hear similar reports from others about this bright and gifted individual. Seth Panitch is worthy of your full attention. Please feel free to contact me for more information about him.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chip Persons". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Associate Professor
chip.persons@colorado.edu
(303) 492-1797