



September 2, 2009

To whom it may concern:

I am pleased to recommend to you Seth Panitch for promotion and tenure. I had the great pleasure of working closely with Professor Panitch during the summer of 2009 at the Texas Shakespeare Festival, where we worked closely together on *Romeo and Juliet*, which I was directing and he was fight choreographing. In Texas I also had the opportunity to enjoy his production of *Tartuffe*.

Seth Panitch's skill, talent, grace and work ethic made him a very effective and well respected member of the Texas Shakespeare Festival. *Romeo and Juliet* is a tragedy that relies heavily on the combat. During the play there are numerous acts of violence from duels to suicides to gigantic brawls involving numerous fighters. We began working together on the combat choreography for *Romeo and Juliet* during the winter of 2009, five months prior to our first rehearsal. I was immediately impressed with his questions, the intelligence behind those questions, and his willingness to demonstrate choreographic sequences via video email. During our collaboration he demonstrated an extreme amount of adaptability, easily adjusting his choreographic vision based on my responses to the work. This flexibility proved critical when we were in rehearsal with the actors, many of whom were less adept with sword work than we had been led to believe. Despite these setbacks the choreographed violence Professor Panitch put on stage proved to be a vital and exciting addition to the production providing both spectacle and visceral danger.

It is impressive that Professor Panitch was able to deliver these results while also directing *Tartuffe*. I had the opportunity to see the final dress rehearsal of this production and was impressed with its energy, size, and humor, as well as the interpretive choices that guided his decisions. It is also worth mentioning that he was a favorite among the actors who often commented on the ease and freedom they felt within his rehearsals and the pride they experienced in their performances.

Personally I found Professor Panitch to be a generous, intelligent and socially graceful member of the company. I was very impressed at how easily he dealt with the challenges related to bringing Cuban actors to the US to perform *A Midsummer Night's Dream* while maintaining such high artistic standards as director and fight choreographer. Though I have never seen him teach, I am confident that his exceptional combination of level headed problem solving, talent, work ethic and skill would make him an excellent teacher, colleague, and asset to the University of Alabama.

Thank you for your time. Please contact me if I can provide any additional information.

Sincerely,



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