

May 10, 2014

To the Promotion Committee:

I am proud to call Seth Panitch my mentor, and even prouder to be a voice in his application for promotion to Full Professor. In all honestly, his direct contributions to my craft and my career are immeasurable. He came to the University of Alabama's Theatre Department in my junior year, and he changed absolutely everything for me. He changed my outlook on which roles I could be cast in, opening a realm of possibilities I had no idea existed. He changed my understanding of what the art of acting could be, allowing me to see myself in my work more clearly, and gave me the confidence to stand up for that internal truth onstage. He changed my plan of attack for achieving a professional career, setting me on the path to my present and future successes. In fact, he daily changes my disposition to the better with a single telephone call, when this business of Film and Television becomes simply overwhelming to me, as it sometimes can.

Seth taught me that the real truth of a character lies within and that I must continually question my own experiences in order to answer the significant challenges of a character's emotional and intellectual transitions. This was both a terrifying challenge and an absolute relief, as it led to my my understanding of acting as an intensely personal art form I could practice, as opposed to merely a half felt performance I would halfheartedly manufacture. Working alongside him in classes and rehearsals pushed me to discover and excavate myself in ways I had never understood before, techniques I will never be without again. Under his guidance I developed a brand new craft, but more importantly, Seth demanded I develop "My Craft." It is this personalized craft I have carried with me into the professional world, and it has proved successful beyond my wildest dreams. I've been blessed with near constant success in film, TV, and theatre, including major roles on network television's *The Walking Dead* and *Once Upon a Time*, a leading role in an independent film officially selected as a Grand Jury Prize Nominee at the 2009 Sundance Film Festival, a supporting role in the McCarter Theatre play *Fetch Clay Make Man* starring Ben Vereen, a guest starring role on USA's *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*, and recurring roles on Lifetime's *Army Wives* and CBS's *The Good Wife*.

I even owe my initial residency in New York to Seth as well. He convinced me, over a number of personal objections, to participate in the 2007 UA New York Showcase. Since I was planning on moving to Los Angeles after graduation, I felt the showcase would be pointless for me. He implored me to rethink my judgment, as he was convinced that starting in New York was the best first step for my career. Although I went, I was still unconvinced, that is until Seth, more or less, threw me into a taxi and demanded I take a trip to Central Park. I finally conceded, and it remains the best professional decision I have ever made. Once I moved to New York I realized that I had a substantial head start over most of my peers. Not only had Seth prepared me to act as well as anyone I went up against, I had learned a tremendous amount about the business itself from Seth's "Careers in Professional Theatre" class, and I was therefore able to hit the ground running without looking back.

I'm so grateful and honored to have been a student of Seth's. He has helped to shape who I am as an actor, in every way. I cherish the fact that he continues to do so, more than six years past my graduation, sometimes in person when our paths cross, and other times over a frantic phone call to his office. As the man I call my mentor, and considering the immeasurable contribution he's made to my ability to follow my dreams

considering the irreplaceable contribution he's made to my ability to follow my dreams, my great wish would be for him to consider me to be his protégée. I will forever be thankful for his presence in my work and in my life, and as a former student, I urge you to consider the tremendous impact he has made on all his students' careers as you review his application.

Very Sincerely Yours,

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