

July 19 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to write this letter of support for SALT Contemporary Dance Company as it is unlike any other dance company in Utah.

When I first saw them in the spring of 2016, I was immediately struck by the technical virtuosity of the dancers and the currency of the choreographers they commission. There are several dance institutions in Utah, and to their credit provide unique artistic offerings for the local dance-going public. For example, Repertory Dance Theatre is *the* company that keeps choreography from the early-to-mid twentieth century alive and relevant. Ririe-Woodbury offers an aesthetic largely defined by late-20th, early 21st-century post-modern choreographers. In contrast, SALT has tapped into an aesthetic that is now broadly called "contemporary dance." This I will imperfectly define as a European-inspired balletic experimentalism, uncoupled from the historical aesthetic demands, gender assumptions and hierarchies of traditional ballet. Thus, the dance that SALT presents is the result of ballet-informed choreographers, working with ballet-trained dancers to experiment at the edges of what ballet can be. These choreographies can run so far afield of ballet that the word "ballet" may not always serve as an adequate descriptor.

Whereas classical ballet has a very recognizable definition of virtuosity, vocabulary of movement and a strict hierarchy of dancers (principals, soloists, demi-soloists, corps de ballet), contemporary dance re-defines virtuosity by emphasizing movement invention, collaboration between dancers and choreographers and focusing on the ensemble rather than "stars". SALT is a company of great currency. They are unlike any other company in the valley. They represent an aesthetic strand in the vast web of professional concert dance that is "the look of now."

If I can be of further service. Please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



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