

January 11th, 2025

To the Admissions Panel,

It is my great joy to recommend Tessa Russ for the 2026 cycle of Springboard Dance Pittsburgh.

Throughout my time working with Tessa, their standout attributes have been a relentless determination and drive to grow their craft. These qualities show themselves in class and rehearsal processes, where they are unafraid of pushing themselves for the desires of the work. She constantly is asking more of herself, making working with her as a choreographer a fruitful process. I have trust that if I ask for specific intention, she will throw herself into creating that vision.

Possessing a mature and grounded presence, when Tessa is present in a rehearsal space, I feel confident that she will be present in the process, providing creative input to drive the process forward. Their risk-taking nature allows for new ideas to be tested, making choreographic processes exciting and productive. Their mature and ambitious nature makes them a strong leader in rehearsals, encouraging their peers to invest further as well.

I have known Tessa within choreographic processes for 7+ years now, and have never lacked in my respect for her professionalism that she brings to a process. Whether it is a piece set by a peer or a mentor, she is steadfast in offering the utmost level of respect to others in the room. There is a focus to her practice that has allowed her to continuously grow in her artistry over these many years. I am certain that Springboard Dance will be another opportunity for further expansion of Tessa's already vast wealth of bodily knowledge. Not only will Tessa gain from her time, but her choreographic mentors as well. There is no greater pleasure than setting work on them, they will take the work, process it, and embody it in novel methods that will leave others feeling invigorated.

With Warm Regards,

Morgan Cogley

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Morgan Cogley', written in a cursive style.