



May 15, 2013

To whom it may concern,

I write this letter in support of Karina Elver, whose work I observed during the period January-April, 2013 when Ms. Elver was staging and coaching excerpts of ballets by August Bournonville for the Indiana University Ballet Department in Bloomington, Indiana.

As background, I am a former principal dancer (1979 -1987) with New York City Ballet who performed numerous works of Bournonville under the direction of Danish master teacher Stanley Williams and the Danish-trained principal dancer and now New York City Ballet Director Peter Martins. The technique and style of August Bournonville have been a fundamental part of my artistic identity since my student days at the School of American Ballet, where Stanley Williams was the principal male teacher.

Since leaving my performing career with New York City Ballet in 1987, I have founded Ballet Chicago (1988), opened the School of Ballet Chicago (1995), directed numerous ballets, choreographed many works, and done much guest teaching nationally and internationally, including consecutive engagements at the Royal Danish Ballet in 2011 and 2012.

From mid-January to late April of 2013 I watched Ms. Elver bring Indiana University dancers from the learning stages of excerpts from August Bournonville's ballets to a high performance level that well represented Bournonville's beautiful lyricism, demanding technical challenges, and unique artistic style. In addition, Ms. Elver made certain to costume the dancers and scenically dress the stage in a manner that accurately and charmingly evoked the period in which Bournonville's ballets are set, important to the overall artistic product.

In my professional opinion Ms. Elver is a highly qualified teacher, coach, and stager of the choreography, technique, and style of August Bournonville, and I confidently recommend Ms. Elver to anyone who may be seeking her expertise.

Sincerely,

Daniel Duell
Artistic Director
Ballet Chicago

