

I have had the immense joy and privilege to have Anne Penner, not only as my professor, but as a colleague and brilliant mentor. I am more than delighted to submit this letter of support for Anne to become Full Professor at the University of Denver.

When I was a student at DU, I was lucky enough to have been in a couple of Anne's acting and movement classes. As a professor, she is quick, grounded, and specific. She supported and encouraged the idea of "play" and our imagination, and pushed us to be bold and take risks. I always looked forward to Anne's classes; she made me feel safe to lean into discomfort and fail gloriously. Anne is also someone who works explicitly alongside her students - she does not coach and guide from the sidelines. A lot of professors will just watch and tell their students what to do, but I remember vividly that Anne would participate with us in various movement and/or vocal exercises, periodically hopping out to observe, but was always an active and engaged member in whatever activity we were doing. It was really exciting to have a teacher like her deconstruct the traditional "professor/student" power dynamics with her accessibility and teaching.

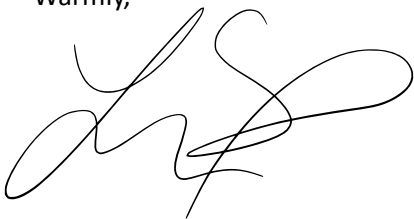
Alongside being her student, I had the privilege of acting with Anne in a couple different regional productions - one particular instance was Colorado Shakespeare Festival's *Romeo and Juliet*. First and foremost, Anne is a breathtaking actor. She received her MFA from Columbia and has acted professionally across the nation, so beyond being an educator, she is also a well-trained and formidable performer. In *Romeo and Juliet*, she played Mercutio, and coincidentally enough, I was her understudy.

Being in the room together meant I got a close and personal look into how she navigated work and texts as an actor, and I was beyond inspired of how she took up space and leaned into her power. Mercutio is a role that is traditionally played by men, and Anne stepped into the part fluidly and with ease. Watching her work every night was a masterclass in acting and female empowerment. She led the role with grace and wit, and blew us all away with her agility and range of motion. Everything she had taught me as my professor, I saw explicitly with her acting.

Anne is captivating, smart, kind, and more than capable. She was instrumental in my growth as an actor and I feel so lucky to have been her student. Any institution would be so lucky to have her in their midst.

Please accept this letter of support for Anne Penner to become Full Professor.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lois Shih', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Lois Shih

BA: University of Denver '19

MFA: UC San Diego '22