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To The Pfister Artist in Residence Review Panel,

I'm writing this letter of recommendation for LaSonia Ragsdale for the Pfister Artist in Residence. I've known LaSonia for 5 years, we met as fellow Artist in Residence at RedLine Milwaukee in 2017. In that program we were required to be in studio for a minimum of 10 hours a week, attend professional development days, have our studios be open to the public during all gallery hours, collaborate with peers, create new work, and assist with curating/installing and promoting a yearly art exhibit and work towards creating a more structured and focused body of work.

During our time at RedLine, our open concept studios were across the hallway from one another, and we were often in our studios during the same hours. Because of that we got to know to each other quickly and relied on each other for support (moral and artistic) and feedback on ideas, new concepts, and thoughts on how to get more art out into the world. During times in which patrons would be walking through our studios LaSonia was always willing to invite people in to watch her work and discuss her ideas/process. She has an extreme talent for making any studio space warm, welcoming, and most importantly, workable. Her background as an educator definitely came through in her ease of talking to anyone coming through the studios from children to adults to other artists.

Over the years, and since leaving our Artist Residency, I have watched LaSonia continue to grow as an artist, have visited her studio, she has dedicated herself to new concepts and ideas, worked on building a dynamic website, has worked towards more showings, and most recently has gotten back into the art of the spoken word. She is always looking for new ways to get involved in the Milwaukee art scene and loves to get others to join her. She is someone who continues to nurture the relationships she has already built, while still bringing more people into her creative circle.

Beyond her talent as an artist, she is someone who is passionate about art education, is a joy to collaborate with, and is willing to bring anyone into her creative world. Her outgoing nature is a force - anyone who comes into contact with her will not only get a wonderful conversation, but will also come away with a better knowledge of why and how she translates her concepts into beautiful art. She would be a huge asset to any Artist Residency.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if you need any other information. Thank you for taking the time to read through this recommendation.

Best,



Tara Monnink