

UTAH DANCE FILM

• F E S T I V A L •

Pre-Production for Dance Films



Presented by Katie Bruce
Utah Dance Film Festival 2017



Pre-Production for Dance Films

A dance film is a form of visual storytelling that uses motion and movement in place of dialogue.

Pre-production for dance films includes two branches of process:

Concept, Schedules and Rehearsals
Equipment, Crew and Location



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Concept

Whenever possible, hold concept sessions in an environment where you can move!

Distinguish between directives for the dancers and assignments for the crew.

Finalize your ideas on paper as a typed script, including transitions and cut points.

Schedule

Count the number of shots that correspond with your concept - this is your shot list.

Count the number of times you will need to change lighting, sets or camera equipment - this is your setup list.

The shot list and setup list will determine your shooting day schedule.

Rehearsals

Plan rehearsals with your film crew - several in a practice space, and one on location.



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Equipment

Lights, camera, lenses, monitors, audio equipment, hard drives and speakers.
Costumes, makeup, hair styling tools and craft services.

Crew

Camera operator(s) and assistant(s), gaffer, grip, editor and colorist.

Location

You will need water, restrooms and a reliable source of power.



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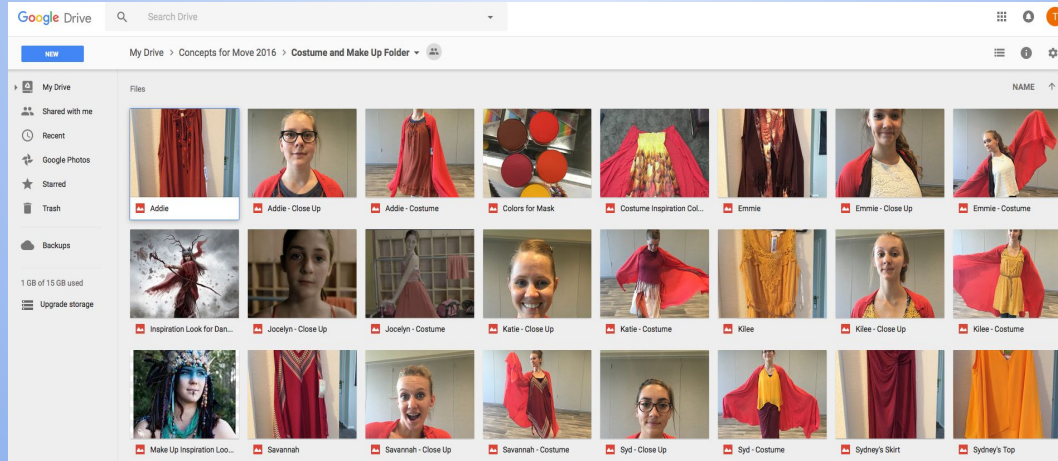
Concept

The meaning of a movement can change just by seeing it through a lens.

Cameras, like bodies, have limitations and needs.

Your dance film will have better flow and a quick editing process if you plan transitions.

Once you have decided on your concept, find a digital tool to organize and prepare your cast and crew thoughtfully, collecting notes in one place.



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Schedule

Using your shot and set up lists, create a shooting schedule.
Group similar shots, lighting or lens setups together.

Allow **at least** 25 minutes for your team of filmmakers to change set ups.

Email this schedule out to your team,
along with the contact information for members of your project,
directions to the location and a listing of project responsibilities.

Use this call sheet to inform cast, crew and volunteers about their arrival times.



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Rehearsals

Have your performers practice modifications in formation, dynamics, spatial orientation and speed so that you can be prepared for options on set.

During rehearsals with filmmakers, create solutions rather than decisions.

Experiment with your light - discover different textures, intensities and colors.

Test costumes on camera.

Utilize footage of rehearsals to create your edit plan.

Continuity and coverage matter, even if the dance is not linear.

Think in pictures, speak using visual words.



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Equipment

Consistency of equipment is absolutely essential.

File organization is necessary.

You will likely need tools, such as ladders, buckets, boxes, screwdrivers, wire cutters, pliers, rope, string, clothespins, sandbags, lens cloths, light diffusers, stands and GLOVES.

If you need quality audio for your film, plan on using a slate or have your performers clap at the beginning of a take.

Be consistent with playback on set.

Food is a piece of equipment - everyone will feel more creative if they eat well!



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Crew

Different departments will need more or fewer crew.

Know who you should speak with for each department - lighting, audio, camera, DIT, or editing.

Optimum workflow flourishes when you have your concepts, schedules and setups digitized or printed for your whole cast and crew.

Carry snacks in your pocket - incentivize your team with protein.



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Location

If you choose an exterior location, find a place where you can manipulate and supplement natural light.

If you choose an interior location, be certain that you have enough room, power and temperature control for big, warm lights.

Smooth camera actions require different pieces of equipment - choose terrain that will enable your crew to use their devices with success which will also be comfortable for your performers to dance on.



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Post Production

Your footage, also called “assets,” will need to be copied to several drives.

If you recorded audio, the audio tracks will need to be synced with the video.

With editing, you can have two out of these three qualities:
quick, beautiful or inexpensive.

But not all three.

Plan how your film will be screened, and export accordingly.

Footage filmed in challenging conditions cannot always be
“fixed” in post production.



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Resources for Dance Film Makers

“Dancefilm: Choreography and the Moving Image” by Erin Brannagin

“Envisioning Dance on Film and Video” by Judy Mitoma, Elizabeth Zimmer & Dale Ann Stieber

Sun Scout

360

Pocket Call Sheet

Utah Film Commission

Allen’s Camera in Provo and Orem

The Utah Dance Film Festival!



Utah Film Commission

- State of Utah agency
 - Established in 1974
 - Market the entire State of Utah as a filming destination
 - Promote Utah crew, support services and locations
 - Support productions filming in the state.
 - Grow the Utah film industry
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Community Film Incentive Program

Create industry growth by providing film incentives to local emerging content creators

- Projects under \$500,000
 - 20% cash rebate on qualified spend
 - Post-performance
 - Narrative, documentary, episodic, reality, shorts
 - 85% local cast & crew required
 - At least one above the line crew person is local
 - Minimum \$100 a day for cast and crew
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UTAH DANCE FILM
FESTIVAL

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS



UTAH DANCE FILM
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FRIDAY

4PM Registration/Networking Social
5PM Film Workshop: Pre/Post Production
6PM Festival Screening
7:30PM Festival Screening
7:30PM Dance Workshop: Contact Improv w/ SALT Contemporary Dance
9PM Underground Crew Hip Hop Live Performance

SATURDAY

9AM Registration/Networking Social
9:45AM Dance Workshop: Contemporary w/ Jen Pendleton
11AM Festival Screening
1:30PM Film Workshop: Dance/Film Collaboration with BYU's creative team
2:30PM Festival Screening
4PM KEY NOTE Jay Carlon, 'Dance Film Selfies'
6:15PM Festival Screening
7:30PM AWARDS SHOWCASE

FEB 24-25 | SCERA CENTER FOR THE ARTS | OREM, UT

