

**UTAH DANCE FILM**  
• F E S T I V A L •

## REASONS TO MAKE DANCE FILMS

Most visual and performing artists have reasons to be more fluent in film, lighting, sound and production design. Plus, everyone has a hierarchy of aptitudes to become specialists in a favorite field. It's an amazing production muscle to flex.

*Control*  
Directed by Saemi Kwak  
[@kwak\\_saemi\\_clara](#)

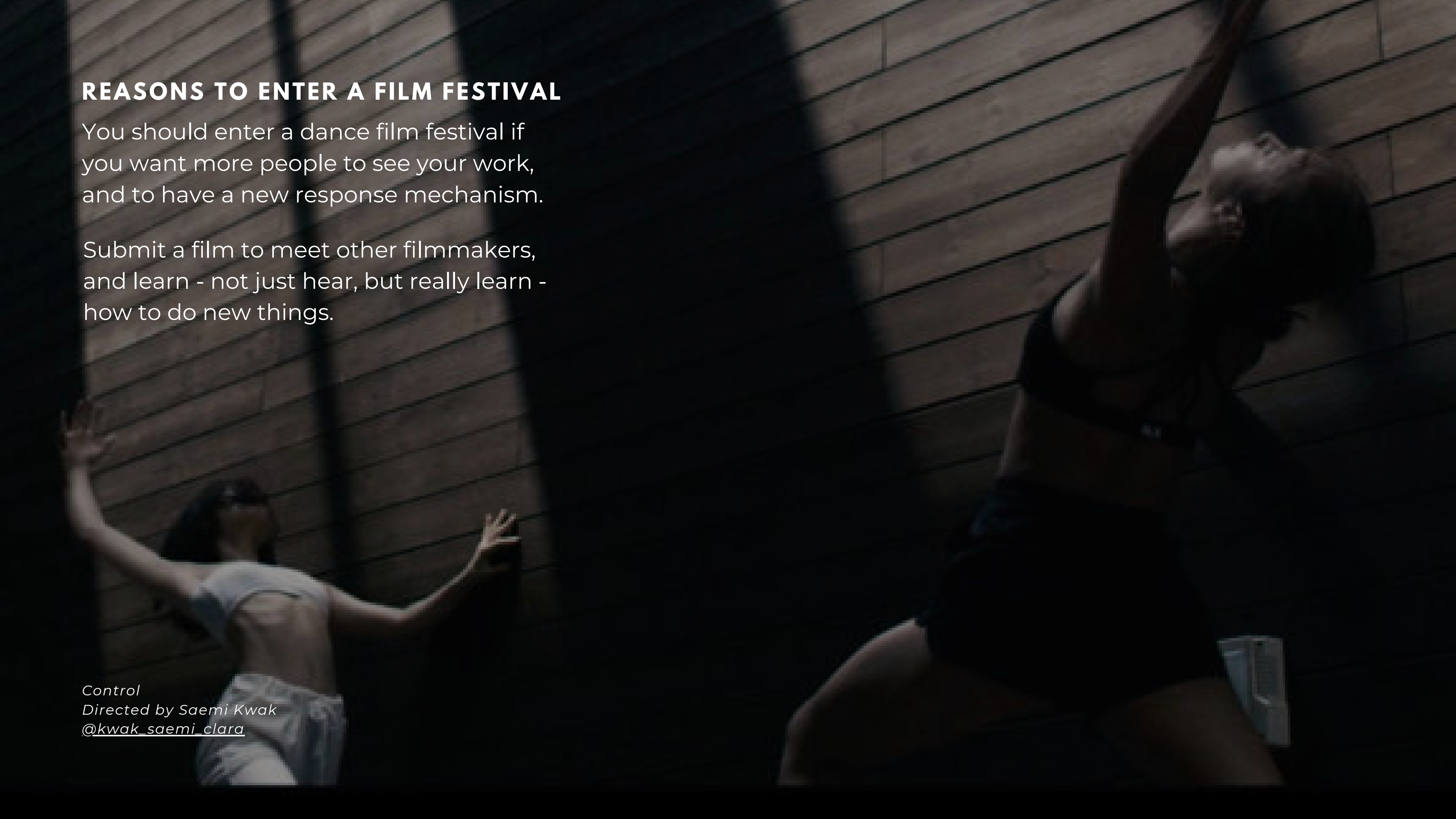


## REASONS TO ENTER A FILM FESTIVAL

You should enter a dance film festival if you want more people to see your work, and to have a new response mechanism.

Submit a film to meet other filmmakers, and learn - not just hear, but really learn - how to do new things.

*Control*  
Directed by Saemi Kwak  
[@kwak\\_saemi\\_clara](https://www.instagram.com/kwak_saemi_clara)

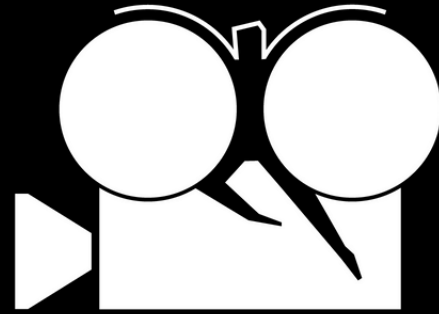




## REASONS TO ENTER A FILM FESTIVAL

It's a good incentive to bounce yourself over an imposter-syndrome fear, and do things like rent film gear, learn an editing program from the beginning, build a shot list.

*Behind Barres*  
Directed by Sophia Bender  
[@sophiabenderfilms](https://www.instagram.com/sophiabenderfilms)



# UTAH DANCE FILM

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Judges watch all official selections and present films with awards based on outstanding attributes. There are no scoring systems, just conversations.

Award Categories include:

- Documentary
- Costuming
- Editing
- Sound Design
- Lighting Design
- Choreography for a Lens
- Directing
- Ensemble Performance
- Cinematography
- Audience Choice
- Special Effects
- Original Music Composition
- The Humanity Award, for films that ring the humanity bell
- and the Arches Award, for an outstanding film made in Utah or by a Utahn.



Artists pay a fee to enter a submission. All submissions are viewed by the Jury.

The Jury is comprised of volunteers who watch films, and write responses. Formal writing is not required, and jurors are welcome to write in any language. Jury members write about what they notice, feel, and prefer. Analysis of cinema or dance is not necessary.

Jury members sign up to watch between 5 and 25 hours of dance film submissions in the month of January. The schedule is flexible.


Filmmakers who submit work to the festival are welcome to join the jury.

The festival directors read every jury response to determine official selections. Officially selected films are screened at our fest, adjudicated and featured in UDFF media.

The 2022 Jury included 75 members from all over the world, and they wrote over 2,500 responses to 357 films.

**IF YOU'RE INTO IT, JOIN THE JURY ON OUR WEBSITE**



A high-angle, top-down photograph of three dancers in a circular formation on a floor covered in a large, abstract mural. The mural features swirling, organic patterns in shades of brown, grey, and black, resembling ink wash or a natural rock formation. The dancers are positioned in a circle, with one dancer at the top, one at the bottom, and one in the center. They are all wearing dark, short-sleeved shirts and dark pants. The dancer at the top is in a crouched position, leaning forward. The dancer at the bottom is lying on their back, with their legs raised and bent. The dancer in the center is sitting on the floor, leaning back. The overall mood is artistic and contemplative.

To attain mastery in dance, what is required?  
To attain mastery in film, what is required?  
**THERE ARE MANY SHARED ANSWERS.**

Cohort 707  
by Lawrence Fung  
[@krakenstillandfilm](https://www.instagram.com/krakenstillandfilm)



# IDENTITY

If, as a dancer, you feel like you don't have permission to make a film, please remember: you are a body expert. It's just a new use for your training, and a few new languages.

It will disorient and confuse you. And yet, you are absolutely capable, and better prepared than you may realize.



# VISUAL LITERACY

We are among the most visually literate species on the planet. We have evolved rapidly and selectively to discern subtle clues about quality, intent, subjects, references, language and style from just a few frames of motion.

How we perceive, detect and determine what to watch is a body-based practice: what we choose to watch has to be physically watchable, what we hear needs to be in a specific range of frequencies, and applies to cinema, film, movies and videos.

To achieve literacy in dance, you have to become movement fluent.

To achieve literacy in film, you have to become movement fluent.

## **WHAT IS SHARED?**

Dance is a practice of body literacy, and a mastery of the whole body as a tool.

Dancers have many languages to interpret movement for a lens, and to communicate about bodies dancing for a camera.

Filmmaking is a practice of body literacy, and often mastery of an external, technological set of tools paired with highly trained senses.

Filmmakers have many languages to interpret scientific principles of visual and sound design, and to communicate stories and ideas in pictures.



## **SKILLS**

Actions are repeated with exact precision

Stamina

Pathways must be built to begin to  
communicate about an idea stuck in your head

Languages, vocabularies, shortcuts

Space is attended to - marks are hit, focus is  
clear, goals and intents are synchronized

Improvisation and composition

Painful frustrations are possible, but managed

Endurance

## **SPEAKING TOGETHER**

When dancers talk with filmmakers, everyone in the  
conversation understands the timing of bodies.

When dancers talk with filmmakers, everyone in the  
conversation understands specific movements and  
detailed patterns.

## **SUCCESS**

Equity of the art forms

Build your project with the tools of cinema  
and film active in the process

Have a huge idea budget

Visualize your ideas as a film in your mind's eye

## **WHY?**

Movement will evolve into complex coded computer languages in our lifetimes, and in order to ensure those languages are equitable to all bodies, we need wildly diverse stories to be told using all bodies, for many kinds of cameras and media.

All other reasons to make dance film will ultimately point to this huge reason.

The virtual world of the future will function better for some people than others if dancers don't contribute their gifts using technology.



# WATCHLIST

The Field  
by Wilder Project  
US - 7 min



Etch  
by Abby Warrilow  
& Lewis Gourlay  
Scotland - 7 min

A Trio  
by Amy O'Neal  
US - 9 min



Cygnus  
by Cara Hagan &  
Robert Uehlin  
US - 6 min



Night Dancing  
by Barney Cokeliss  
UK - 6 min



## **ADVICE & WISDOM**

- You can't buy an outstanding film
- Start with a huge idea budget
- Look again & look closer
- Let go of un-made choices
- Tell the story using cinema tools
- Practice thinking in pictures

## **APPROACHES**

- Bring a camera to rehearsal
- Spend equal time preparing specs and tech
- Rent gear & ask questions when you do
- Write a script or treatment
- Use call sheets
- Use camera logs
- Use the sun as a lighting design
- Look in the monitor
- Make a plan for power
- Make a plan for offloading clips & DIT