

# How to Make a Good Dance Film

**Dance and the camera are a magical match. To get the most out of their teamwork filmmakers should consider the following advice:**

- **Make a plan.** Storyboard or list the shots you need and think you might need to make your idea come to life. Be detailed and specific.
- **Film, film, film.** Too much footage is better than too little.
- **Edit, edit, edit.** Be willing to cut anything that isn't working with the overall piece, even the parts you love most (but hang onto it! It might be perfect for another project). If your film isn't well edited, it doesn't matter how beautifully danced or filmed it is, it won't be enjoyable to watch.
- **Take a break.** Set aside your film for a day or two and then come back to it with fresh eyes. You'll see new problems and new solutions.
- **Be creative.** Do what it takes to get what you want. You might need to duct tape your camera to the ceiling to get the best shot, or use a skateboard to get the smoothest pan. Be an artist and do the weird thing.
- **Don't reinvent the wheel.** Whatever questions or problems you are having were had by filmmakers before you, and someone has probably discussed their solutions in a website or video online. Seek and you will find.
- **Be intentional.** Don't let anything be in your film that you don't choose to have there. Move items out of the frame. Cover them with a backdrop. Take control of the costumes, the lighting, the location, as well as the choreography and the cinematography. Every part of the film should have a reason to be there, and that reason should support your overall story or message.
- **Variety is interesting;** until it isn't. Changing the shot, location, speed, focus, sound, light, and any other part of your film will catch the interest of the viewers, but if transitions happen too often or for no good reason, you will lose your audience. Their eyes and their thoughts will give up on your film, and your job as a filmmaker is to make sure that your work is interesting and has a point.
- **Make it yours.** Creating art can be hard, but if it doesn't feel honest and personal, then it isn't worth the work. Do it with love. **Do it from the heart.**