

# PERFORMANCE TO VIRTUAL

## *Tools, Tips and Techniques*

*Bart Weiss, Dallas VideoFest*



## EPISODE 2 – Video: Theater and Dance

### Exposure, Lighting, Lenses, Mobile Devices, Art of the Possible

In this episode, producer Bart Weiss focused on some finer points of controlling the video camera – exposure, lighting and lenses. Again, with a focus on simplicity and getting quality work, on a tight budget. And he'll have some links at the end of the worksheet.

### **Exposure**

To achieve good video results, adjust the **exposure** to ensure sure your subject receives the lighting you desire. Three settings should be considered to get there – **shutter speed**, **aperture**, and **ISO**. (These sound really complicated, but stick with me.)

- **Shutter speed** adjusts exposure and determines **how long** light is hitting the image sensor per second during recording. A slow speed (such as 1/10) can create motion blur. A high shutter speed (such as 1/2000) creates a jittery look to your video. Through practice you can find the right speed for your project, and how to manipulate the shutter speed for effect.
- **Aperture** determines **how much** light is hitting the image sensor. Like the pupil of the eye, opening the aperture in dark conditions allows more light through. When bright, shrink the aperture so the light is not overwhelming.
  - The size of the aperture is the “**f stop**.”
    - The lower the number, the bigger the hole and the more light coming in – creating a shallow depth of field. This means less in your shot will be in focus, but you can zero in on a subject leaving the background soft.
    - A high f-stop number means a small hole, and less light – creating greater depth of field. More things in the shot will be in focus.
- **ISO** tells you **how sensitive** your image sensor will be to light. The lower the ISO, the lower the sensitivity. This usually will create optimum recording conditions. To boost light conditions, you can raise the ISO and your shot will lighten up. But your shot will become more grainy.

## Lenses

- **Wide angle** lenses can provide a strong sense of the space, and if you are shooting with a Digital Single Lens Reflex (DSLR) camera it can be very hard to determine focus with the small screen, by shooting a bit wider you have a better chance of keeping things in focus.
- **Telephoto** lenses compress the space and reduce the sense of motion.

## Mobile Device

The tools above are most commonly utilized when using a more complex camera like a DSLR camera for your recordings. However, to get started you can start with something as simple as your **iPhone** or **Android** devices. They record video; can zoom to achieve tight shots or wide angles; can set your resolution quality which affects your file size; have auto focus and auto exposure, or you can adjust yourself; and can shoot in slo-mo, or time-lapse. Many of these tools can be accessed within the camera under settings in your phone.

## A Few Tips:

1. Make sure you shoot everything in a consistent orientation. For instance, most film and video and material for YouTube or Vimeo is shot in horizontal or landscape mode and fits well on a movie screen, television, or computer monitor. Projects for formats like TikTok and Instagram, vertical or portrait mode are more common. Pick one – and just be consistent.
2. Be sure when you start recording, that you are actually recording. It's not uncommon to miss the button, or to hit it twice – start and stop really fast - and not record your best moments. Once you've hit record, take a pause to make sure you're rolling and the timer is moving, then start your interview or scene. You can tighten it all up later in editing.
3. Before leaving the shoot make sure you got everything you thought you were supposed to have. Check that shot sheet!

## Art of the Possible

Still have your doubts? Listen to Gayle Halperin, Bruce Wood Dance Executive Director in Episode 2. Gayle shares how BWD dancer Cole Vernon imagined, shot and edited a [highly-acclaimed virtual performance](#) – all by himself - during the

pandemic shutdown. The video was so well done that WFAA-Channel 8 News showed it to close out their 10PM newscast.



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### *Tools, Tips and Techniques*

### LINKS - Episode 2

### Instructional Videos

- [Aperture/Depth of Field](#)
- [Shutter Speed](#)
- [ISO](#)
- [Types of shots](#)
- [Lighting Basics – 3-Point Lighting](#)

### Shooting with your iPhone/mobile device

Since the capabilities vary from model to model, simply do a Google search for tutorials about video recording with the type and model of your mobile device. A lot of good stuff out there.

TIP: As you master your device, take the next step and turn your IOS or Android mobile device into a powerful professional tool. Bart recommends the software **Filmic Pro**.

- [Filmic pro](#)
- [Filmic pro tutorials](#)

### Lighting

- [GVM 800D-RGB LED Studio 3-Video Light Kit](#)

If you want your video to look it's best, Bart recommends investing in this lighting kit.

### **Lighting on a budget!**

If you're just trying this out, aren't ready for a big investment, or just working on a tight budget, check out [this video by Nolan Molt with ThinkMedia](#). It has some incredible tips for lighting on a budget - from \$1 to \$200! (How about filtering light through a cheap shower curtain?!) He has links to purchase all his recommendations on the YouTube site, but to make it easy... [we have included the link right here](#).

### **Mobile Device Clamp**

- [Square Jellyfish Jelly Grip Tripod Mount for Smartphones](#)

If you're buying a tripod, most do not include a clamp for mobile devices. So be sure and get something that holds your camera and allows you to have a clean view of what you are recording.

### **Tripods – Regular**

- [Magnus VT-300 Video Tripod with Fluid Head](#)

There are a lot of tripods out there. You want fluidity of motion in case you're doing a pan or tilt without everything shaking. And you want sturdy. The reviews on this indicate it can be a bit fragile, but buyers liked the quality of the shots they were getting.

### **Monopod**

- [Benro A48FD Series 4 Aluminum Monopod with 3-Leg Locking Base](#)

A monopod could be a great alternative to a tripod, especially if you are moving around a lot.

### **Tripods – Short**

- [JOBY GripTight PRO 2 GorillaPod](#)

Because this can wrap around trees and fences, this is great for low shots, outdoor spaces, or spontaneous ideas when you don't have a bulky tripod handy. It also includes the clamp mount for the mobile device.

If you have questions on purchases or need help email [bart@videofest.org](mailto:bart@videofest.org)

The **Virtual to Performance** series is a collaboration between the AT&T Performing Arts Center and the Video Association of Dallas, with support from the City of Dallas Office of Arts & Culture. These videos are free to Dallas arts organizations and artists. To

sign up for the links and materials, provide feedback, or be notified of future projects, email [SupportingDallasarts@attpac.org](mailto:SupportingDallasarts@attpac.org) .

