

PERFORMANCE TO VIRTUAL

Tools, Tips and Techniques

Bart Weiss, Dallas VideoFest



EPISODE 3 – Video: Theater and Dance

Editing, Post-Production, Distribution

In this episode, producer Bart Weiss focuses on editing software, and what to do with your work once you have completed it. He will have links at the end of the worksheet.

Editing

Editing is about condensing, finding the best moments, and putting them together in a coherent way. As producers, we get very attached to all the video we've spent days or weeks recording. But when it comes time to assemble, you must set that aside and put yourself in the position of the viewer.

"If you were watching, how far into this before you would check out a text message" says Weiss. "When in doubt, cut it out."

Editing will make or break your video. It is where you develop the rhythm, pacing, and feel of a video. Editing allows you to guide the audience to what they should see. It's a natural fit for dance companies looking to take their art to a new level, says Dallas choreographer and producer Danielle Georgiou.

"Dancers understand where the cut is supposed to go," says Danielle. "They understand where to shift and redirect focus. So I think for dance, this new world of using film is the next step for them."

There are a range of editing software options. These will all give you the basic tools of cutting, trimming, and assembling scenes into a video production. They'll also let you utilize special effects like dissolves, fade to black, and adding font identifiers.

Editing Software

iMovie

- iMovie is a free basic editing software tool that comes installed on all Macs, iPhones and iPads. It may be a good way to dip your toes in. However, whatever software you decide to use, plan to invest some time to learn how to use it, or plan on hiring someone to do the editing.

Final Cut Pro

- Bart recommends Final Cut Pro. It takes some time to learn, but once you do it's a powerful tool widely used by producers. This runs \$299 or \$199 for an academic bundle.

DaVinci Resolve

- Another powerful editing software is DaVinci Resolve by Black Magic Design. Again, it needs some instruction time as it's not intuitive, but it will give you a lot of options. And it's free!

The type of videos can help determine what you should use. If you're simply memorializing work or doing interview videos requiring basic cuts, iMovie may be a good place to start. If you're looking for higher production values, and considering asking viewers to pay, you might step up the quality a notch or two. To sample, check out YouTube tutorials to see what might work best for you.

Distribution

Once you have your final product, you can "broadcast" your video using platforms like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Vimeo, and TikTok. Each have their pros and cons, and different viewing formats. You can create a channel on YouTube to put all your company's work. Post videos on your organization's Facebook page. Ask your colleagues in other organizations what works best for them!

Monetizing Your Production

During the pandemic, a number of Dallas dance and theatrical organizations were able to generate revenue from their virtual productions and fundraisers. They placed their video on a site such as Vimeo or YouTube that could only be accessed by ticket-holders.

Bruce Wood Dance had great success doing this with its highly-acclaimed production of *Hope*. BWD utilized [Vimeo's OTT](#) service (OTT is **over-the-top** media service offered directly to viewers via the Internet that bypasses cable, broadcast, and satellite television platforms.) They liked it because it provided expertise and one-stop shopping. It handled the streaming, ticketing, and provided basic patron data including name, email and some locational data. Patrons were able to purchase access to the video for a defined window of time. *HOPE* was a success for BWD, attracting viewers from around the world.

Live Streaming

Another option for getting your work out to the world is Live Streaming. This is similar to the days of live sitcoms. You can utilize a single camera, or use multiple cameras whose signals go through a switcher, to “broadcast” the work through Facebook, YouTube or Vimeo.

Some groups, such as Dallas Black Dance Theatre and Dallas Theater Center utilized a mix of streaming and video content for productions and for fundraising. Much like a newscast, portions of their programs were live with hosts introducing video pieces of interviews or produced work.

While live streaming can generate the excitement of a live performance, it also involves a complex layer of technology with little room for error. This requires a very strong internet signal, a good technical director, careful camera blocking, audio board, in short – your team must possess critical expertise.

“Or hire someone to do it so you get it right,” says Bart Weiss. “There’s a good chance something will go wrong the first time you try it. If it’s the first time you’re doing it, finding somebody who has the gear and knows what to do, means you can focus on getting the performance the way you want it.”

Packaging Your Work

While utilizing social media platforms is a great way to push out your work in a one-off fashion, if you are consistently doing enough work, consider packaging your offerings under a branded umbrella to keep your viewers engaged on a regular basis.

The Dallas Opera created a fandom experience with [Dallas Opera TV](#). It provides a range of free offerings of interest to Opera fans, but also includes a monthly subscription model providing access to features, performances, classes, programs from TDO’s archives, and the TDO Network. Many of the programs are hosted and creatively shot and edited by TDO’s very talented staff.

The AT&T Performing Arts Center has done that with its [ATTPAC@Home](#) channel on YouTube. The channel provides a wide range of content including its LISTEN concerts featuring local artists; family videos including craft, storytelling, dance classes – many bilingual; education product such as its Virtual Monologue Competition; tours of the Center and more.

Build Your Own

If you are committing the resources to create a branded umbrella, invest in some long range planning. Can you imagine and generate enough content to fill the next 6-9 months? Build that out on a calendar with deadlines. The last thing you want is to get a

strong start on building an audience, then go months without a new piece of content. Do you have the staff and resources who can keep it going (shooting, editing, talent, passion, etc.) To help spread the costs, consider collaborating with other arts organizations (inside or outside Dallas) to share relevant content. If you decide it's not sustainable right now, start small. Push your work out on Facebook or Instagram, and house it on YouTube or Vimeo and see how it goes!

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PERFORMANCE TO VIRTUAL *Tools, Tips and Techniques* **LINKS - Episode 3**

Video Editing Software



DaVinci Resolve (free)

- [DaVinci Resolve Training](#)



iMovie (free on all Macs, iPhone and iPad)

- [iMovie training](#)



Final Cut Pro X \$299.00 (Apple)

- If you are a student you can get the [academic pro bundle for \\$199.00](#).

Switcher for Live Streaming

- [Atem Mini by Black Design](#)
 - [Product information](#)

If you have questions on purchases or need help email 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.

