

Insights for Filming

This summer, Julie Roos was a member of the NSDA Equity Committee and was able to watch hours worth of competition from the eTOC. She noticed these things were very important:

Unique Advantages of the Medium:

- Cameras allow us to control how close we are to the judge's eye, e.g., the camera. The best performances utilize proximity to the camera.
 - ◆ Effective use of proximity can overcome limitations in filming. The [champion in Program of Oral Interpretation](#) at the eTOC had her iPhone propped up on top of an Amazon box to film and filmed in portrait mode, but she's mesmerizing because she's effectively connecting with the camera.
- Stay close for speaking events like Informative and Oratory.
 - ◆ It's rare that a speech needs to have more than the upper half of the performer's body in frame.
 - ◆ In Informative, keeping the boards in focus is important, and if you can [create a sort of frame using a table like eTOC Champion Selina Cheng](#), it's incredibly effective. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=16b_R9qkhvc&list=PL6xLHF4dYRIWrPSsMkkN-_tdbXqEuwQyX&index=4
- If you need extra space, use a https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=16b_R9qkhvc&list=PL6xLHF4dYRIWrPSsMkkN-_tdbXqEuwQyX&index=4 corner.
 - ◆ Liza Rotty, who took 2nd place in both DI & POI, [demonstrates how shooting toward the middle of a corner can create more room for a performer to move](#).
 - ◆ The camera can manage to be closer to the performer while still showing their whole body and allowing room for movement in this setup.

Upload the completed video to an unlisted YouTube link:

 [How To Upload Unlisted Videos To YouTube \(Guide\)](#)

Things to avoid:

- Thinking filming in low quality, weird lighting, or an awkward part of your room is going to count you out.
 - ◆ Denzel Rodriguez placed 3rd in DI and [his video does all of those things, but is captivating](#).
- Thinking your whole body needs to be in the frame.
 - ◆ Even in interps, a 3/4s view was generally advisable, and a waist-up view was often fine.
- Filming from below.

- ◆ Just don't do it. If the choice is between showing less of the body or shooting from below, show less of the body.
- Lighting from below.
 - ◆ Unless the premise of the piece is that the character is evil, a light source that is even with you is most advisable, or one that's overhead.
- Thinking you need to still wear heels or hard-soled dress shoes.
 - ◆ Since most videos will be shot from the calf-up or higher, and many floors in Vegas are tile, feel free to ditch these often loud pieces of footwear.
- Cutting off your hands.
 - ◆ If filming from the waist up - or higher - hand gestures may need to be elevated so that they'll be seen.
 - ◆ Also, framing should be checked so that the view doesn't cut off the hands exactly at the shirt cuffs. It makes the performer look weirdly handless.
- Open doors.
 - ◆ Sometimes it's unavoidable that a door is in the background, if this is the case, try to make sure it's closed.
- Giving yourself "ceiling fan propeller head".
 - ◆ Ceiling fans will be an important part of cooling Las Vegas homes for most of the season. Just make sure that the fan isn't directly overhead, or turn it off for the performance.
- Background noise, as much as possible.
 - ◆ Bringing the microphone closer to you through headphones or a lavalier mic ([this set from Amazon would get you 2 mics for \\$20 with a 6ft. cord](#)) is a really good idea.

Remember, the most important thing is how well you perform your piece. Everything else is just possible icing on the cake.