

STUDIO 360°

an up-close look at artist's working spaces



Introduction

We learned a lot over the course of creating *Studio 360°*, particularly in relation to filming and editing. From the outset we documented best practices, things to remember and things to improve on. Most of these “top-tips” have been compiled by Rebecca Blankert, *Studio 360°* Intern who was the videographer and editor for this project.

Before Beginning

Seek out people with experience. For this project we partnered with Struts Gallery & Faucet Media Arts Centre. The expertise and mentorship provided by Faucet was essential for the success of this project.

Look for examples of best practice. Identify videos that have an approach or aesthetic that you would like to achieve. Clearly articulate this “look and feel” in order to build a common understanding within your project team.

The Interview

- Research your subject.
- Prepare questions. Include general questions that you will ask in all interviews as well as ones that relate specifically to the person being interviewed. Be ready to rephrase or ask follow-up questions.
- Arrange a pre-interview. A pre-interview can be done over the phone and allows you to have a sense of how the subject will respond to your questions. It will also put your subject at ease and give them the chance to prepare for your questions ahead of time.

Filming

- Test your equipment thoroughly and well in advance to make sure it's all working properly.
- Ideally, seat the person being interviewed. Avoid swivel chairs as they tend to move and can also squeak.
- Watch out for windows! Don't position

a person in front of a window as the person will be backlit and appear in silhouette.

- If using a lavalier microphone, make sure the person being interviewed doesn't have anything around their neck that could obscure sound (i.e. a scarf, long hair or jewelry). The mic wire should be placed out of sight under clothing.
- Where appropriate, ask the person being interviewed to reference the question at the beginning of their answer, this makes editing easier. For example, if you ask, “When did you know you wanted to be an artist?”, get them to begin with, “I knew I wanted to be an artist when...” This way you have context to the question.
- Don't be afraid to stop the interview at any point in order to have the person repeat him/herself or to readjust the camera view.
- Always use a tripod and don't do the hand held thing, it doesn't work and any jerky movements in the video from handheld filming can be distracting in the end product.
- When interviewing, never move away from the person being interviewed to capture something they are referencing, you can capture that after the interview in the b-roll footage.
- In addition to filming the interview, film b-roll. B-roll is all of the added shots and alternate footage edited into the main footage in order to reference things talked about in the interview or to show more of the space that is being talked about. You can never have too much b-roll.
- Get lots of b-roll. Aim to capture everything referenced in the interview with at least five different angles (left, right, up, down, zoom in, zoom out etc.). You want a variety of shots to

choose from when editing.

- Get wide shots as well as close ups.
- When filming always think about the editing process as you go along. Think about how any decision you make while filming will effect editing.

Editing

- Build your story before you start editing. Make detailed notes on the interview and topics covered. Rearrange as needed to add flow and context to the interview.
- When beginning the editing process, make sure all the settings are correct in initial setup in your chosen video editing software. These settings will effect compression and export if not done properly.
- Keep all your footage organized.
- In the project timeline, label all your footage with the interview question it pertains to. This way you have a quick reference to use instead of having to look back on the footage.
- Don't start a new scene or question too abruptly. Make room for some silence before beginning the next scene.
- Balance interview footage with b-roll. Don't let the person talk too long in the video without adding in helpful or engaging b-roll.
- Watch for jump cuts--abrupt transitions between scenes. You can clean this up by putting in a cross dissolve or editing the transition slightly.

Finishing

- Multiple project team members should review early edits and discuss any continuity issues.
- Allow yourself time to test compression settings. Determining optimum compression involves a certain amount of trial and error. Take time with this final stage of the process.
- Take time too, to reflect on your own project and the lessons learned over the course of the process.

Studio 360° is produced by the Owens Art Gallery, Mount Allison University in partnership with Struts Gallery & Faucet Media Arts Centre and funded by a grant from the Sheila Hugh Mackay Foundation.

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