

# Re-Count: A How-To Workshop on Documenting Performance

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## Best Practices From a Dancer

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### Tip 1: Document Anyway

- Work and Venue: Culture Deprivation/Degradation – Mount Vernon Space
- Choreography and Performance: Lela Aisha Jones
- Videographer: Alex Shaw
- Equipment: Low Level

### Tip 2: Document Anyway

- Work and Venue: Gathering – Painted Bride Art Center
- Choreography: Lela Aisha Jones
- Performance: Kùlú Mèlé African Dance and Drum Ensemble
- Videographer: tiona.m.
- Equipment: High Level

### Tip 3: Document Your Ideas (even if you don't know where they are going)

- Work and Venue: Street Grace Series (Early Stages) – Elkins Park
- Choreography: Lela Aisha Jones and Deneane Richburg
- Performance: Deneane Richburg
- Videographers: Breana Copeland and Lela Aisha Jones
- Equipment: Medium Level

### Tip 4: Document the Feeling of Your Work (even though funders say they only want wide shots)

- Work and Venue: Street Grace Series: Native Portals of Lynching and Love – Christ Church Neighborhood House
- Choreography: Lela Aisha Jones
- Performance: Saroya Corbett, Oiya Lowe, Peaches Jones, Lela Aisha Jones, Maritza Ogarro, Deneane Richburg
- Videographer: tiona.m.
- Equipment: High Level

### **Can you describe the best experience you have had with documenting and/or being documented? Why did it work?**

- As much as you can discuss your work, create relationships with a documentarian, and discuss their/your methods and ideas.
- Have the documentarian attend a rehearsal (preferably in the venue in which they will be shooting the work) before the actual shoot when possible.
- Document dress rehearsals as opposed to full performances in most cases. Document more than one performance if possible and try to get multiple shots (close, wide, side, or back angles)

### **Can you describe your worst experience and why?**

- Realizing I did not know how to use or edit the data I was being offered by my documentarian because I did not have the programs necessary to open them. If you have paid to have access to your media data, make sure your documentarian is willing to guarantee or not your ability to open the documents and/or use with the programming you have on your computer.
- Decide whether or not you are buying data your documentarian can use or edit and/or media you can use/edit easily as well. Find out what that requires in the beginning of the conversation in terms of computer programs/software, etc.

### **What do you think makes for good working relationships (subject and videographer, as colleagues)?**

- Preview a documentarian's previous work!
- Interview the documentarian before hiring them and make sure you want to work with them.
- Be open to learning but make sure your documentarian is as well. It is ideal if both parties walk in knowing they don't know it all and may have to help each other through the process—both parties willing to spend a little more time educating one another. I think this is essential to a good process.

### **What are reasonable expectations for both parties?**

- Be sure to set expectations.

### **What is fair compensation?**

- I generally pay as much as the other artists/performers/dancers in my project.
- Dancers are generally paid last, which is unacceptable to me as there would be no FlyGround performances without them, so if I can't pay my dancers, then sometimes I don't have high-level documentation.
- My payments range from \$100-\$300 per shoot. This depends on the experience of the videographer, the type of shoot I am requesting, the number of shoots requested, the quality of the equipment in use, and whether or not editing is involved (generally extra). I am also an individual artist that builds relationships/exchanges with the people in which I choose to work. I don't think I would receive some of these rates without that aspect. I generally am not able to pay extra for rehearsal attendance.