Tips for a Successful Recording

There are many different ways to record a successful pre-screening or recorded audition video. To help with the process, here's some guidance on creating the best recording!

Please note that this information is meant to be a helpful guide of resource options, and is in no way intended to be a list of requirements. We encourage you to create your best recording with the technology reasonably available to you.

General Tips
- Utilize the best available technology you have
- An iPhone/smartphone can produce successful recordings
- It is not necessary or expected to record in a studio
- Equipment: Highly technical recordings are unnecessary. iPhone/smartphone recordings are perfectly fine, but some extra recording equipment may be helpful (ex. an external microphone, earbuds, a tripod)
- Recording: Be yourself and present your best work!

The Recording Environment
- Location: Record in a successful space; if it is a dance audition, record in a room with space for adequate movement, if it is a music audition, record in a room with good acoustics, etc.
- Keep in mind that any sort of background noise can interfere with overall audio quality
- Consider proper lighting, and use extra lamps or a ringlight if necessary
- The angle of the camera should best showcase your full range of motion, whether it be dancing, a movement-based monologue, or instrument movement
- Check recordings for any distortion or excessive "buzz"
- In general, neutral backgrounds (and clean spaces!) are preferred
- Dress professionally, as you would for an in-person audition (unless it is a movement-based recording)
- Pay attention to room acoustics

Equipment Tips
- Video Recording: iPhone or other smartphone, or an external camera (ex. Canon or other video recording device)
  - If filming on an iPhone/smartphone, horizontal videos are generally preferred
  - Ensure that the phone microphone is not covered or obstructed
- Good quality external microphones: Blue Snowball, Lavalier Microphone Speaker for iPhone, Conference USB Microphone
- Headphones: any Earbuds, AirPods, Beats, etc.
- Other optional equipment: Ringlight, smartphone or camera tripod

Technological How-Tos:
- Upload/Save Quality Files:
  - To record a video on a smartphone/camera and then upload to a PC: send the file to yourself via email or connect phone/camera to the PC via cable
  - To record a video on an iPhone and then upload to a Macbook, you can: utilize AirDrop, email the file(s) to yourself, or use a cable connection between your phone and computer
- Reduce Video File Size:
  - Trim any excess footage off the beginning and end of your video
  - Downloadable file-reducing software:
    - VLC or Shotcut - any computer
    - QuickTime Player - Macbook

Editing and Submitting Recordings
- Allowable Edits: global adjustment of balance or levels (to ensure that the volume is acceptable and that the stereo is balanced), trimming the start or end of a recording to remove long spaces, adjustment to the image quality–color correction, white balance correction, and image stabilization
- Not Allowed: reverb, chorus, auto-tune, rhythm correction, or any other effects; any sort of splicing
- Review your recordings before uploading to ensure that they are of good quality and represent your best work to date
- Do not submit a multi-camera, highly technical studio video.

File Information for the SMTD Artistic Profile
- Individual files can be as large as 5GB, but keep in mind that larger files may take some time to upload.
- .mov files may not upload correctly if taken on the latest iPhone. We recommend converting these files to .mp4 if you are encountering post-processing issues.
- Preferred File Types:
  - Audio: aac, aif, aiff, iff, fla, m4a, mpa, mp3, ra, wav, wma
  - Video: avi, flv, m1v, m2v, m4v, mkv, mov*, mpeg, mpg, mp4, webm, wmv
  - Document: doc, docx, odg, odp, odt, pdf, ppt, pptx, rtf, wpd
  - Image: jpeg, png, gif, jpg

Department Specific Information
- For specific department requirements, please refer to the "Requirements for Pre-screening/Portfolios & Auditions/Interviews" section of the SMTD website

The faculty genuinely want you to succeed in your pre-screening and audition process! We are excited to hear/see/read your artistic creations. Do your best, and know that we are here to cheer you on and help answer your questions!