

ScreenShare Panel Discussion

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This beautiful thing that happened in New York was as a result of the screen, films like break dance the movie wildstyle crush group, these are real classic representations of it. And then obviously, Jeffrey Daniels when he hosted a TV show called solid soul. He was a famous dancer from a group called Shalimar that that we'd see on TV a lot. And I guess when we're looking at it from a perspective of art. For me, I've always loved the screen as a vehicle while doing solo work to make the golf stage, catch a breath. Then come run back on and then carry on with the performance so Phil was actually a vehicle to help me in performance on my first show called lyrical theater, which are made in 95. There was a previewed to a piece called airplane man. And basically, I just worked with a filmmaker who basically shots me running from left to right, left to right, in a variety of different spaces, parks, just streets. It was always my cars running through London, and then I ran into the theater so there's one shot of me running into the Oval house theater. And then I ran into the stage. So there was always a real desire to, to let dance film be about the live experience and how that could be emphasized. Nonetheless, I worked with. Alison Mari on solo called and replay man that was put out by dance for, as well as film called silence, which was as part of different voices on Channel Four in 1997. And then I took a break for ages just like what Omari was saying, I was hosting dance four, which was a dance for camera season on Channel Four. That was in. Early 2000s can't remember exactly when and yeah I just knocked on the head for a little while and just focused on the live stuff and and focused on working with good filmmakers like Amari for example, within the context of what we're doing at breakin convention. But that will change very recently, and I actually made my own film, I directed the first film I've ever done. And it's called our bodies back, and I really like it.

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Right now I like it I think it's really, it's really great. I've seen, I've seen bits a bit. Fantastic. I mean it's interesting isn't it. I mean anchor for your point of view, you know, working at Sadler's Wells How important is it for dancers and dance companies to sort of embrace screen.

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I think so. I my, my background I come, I was an actor and dancer for 15 years before I came to Sadler's Wells to work on the digital side of this work, and I think I have to go back to why I did that which was very much about wanting to create access representation and innovation in the field that as much as it as much as we like to think of ourselves creatives of times has very old fashioned tropes around what proper dance is. And I think the digital space and screen dance allows us it expects us in a

way that and it creates accessibility and it creates representation in ways that sometimes the theatrical space has been a laggard to do. Now, to your question about how important to screen down so being able to work digitally for artists or venues today, I think. Um, I think it depends on your artistic desires and what you're trying to achieve. Now if you're a venue today. And you want to continue to reach audience, regardless of revenue regardless of anything else if you want to reach audiences in the COVID time, you got to do it like that's the only way to do it. Hey, but artistically. If I do think there is a fundamental difference to working on screen to working on stage there are there are similarities but there are differences and I think it depends on artists to artists what what drives you why you make your work and what you're most interested in.

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And so that is, I mean, what an interesting question is looking at audiences and who is the, who is the audience that goes to the theater venues to watch dance, and who is the audience for Miranda's sort of films. I mean, in a way, we could say that that theater audience would love some of Miranda's audience to join to come in so actually, you know you, you'll. Who would you say Miranda you're making the films to And do you think that they would be as interested in going to the theater will it help break down some of those barriers and make it feel more accessible. Do you think,

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Well, I mean, I think the audience is, is anyone who has a smartphone. And, and I think it does certainly create that doorway into into being theater audiences. Some may be interested in theater, some may not be, but if it wasn't for maybe introducing them to dance in a way that's so bite size so accessible, hopefully enjoyable, and they may never have discovered that they like the girl they don't think it just gives people that opportunity to have the choice. You know there's a real freedom to this kind of work, I think, I mean, I know sort of growing up the only dance that I really saw in theater before you know became became a dancer myself was maybe like the pantomime or like you know I remember I did go to the ballet once and it was this huge big treat, but it certainly wasn't a part of my routine it wasn't part of my communities routine really. And, you know, and that that just wasn't something that was done in that there is, I think there is definitely a certain demographic that goes to the theater, that maybe doesn't include everybody. And I think at the moment social media is one of those tools that really, really does include everyone, you know, I think you'd be hard pressed to find somebody who didn't have access to social media, obviously been aware that you know some people don't have that either, which is important to recognize but I think it certainly opened it up quite a lot. And, yeah, and I just like to get a thing as well, not just audiences performers as well you know if the kinds of films that we make. You don't have to be a trained dancer you don't have had, you don't have to have been rehearsing for hours getting things perfect. It's a lot more kind of casual experience which I think takes the pressure off people and makes people more willing to engage.

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I mean, I think, I think it's definitely true to say that during this time of COVID. We've seen quite a lot of dark online. Did you know we we've seen all sorts we've seen that sort of films, archive recordings, all those things coming out because of a lack of being able to see it in the, in the theater in front of live performance, I mean Alice Did you get a sense that, because you work with dance companies did you

get a sense that they will probably be quite grateful or recognize the need to have these phones, especially at this time.

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Yes, I think. Yeah film. I mean, I haven't filmed loads of full length live shows, although I have done so over the years, a bit but I think those full length shows kind of get watched maybe once for notetaking and development but then get not really seen again. But this yeah this year has really opened it up to kind of bring archive out in the forefront. So yeah, I've had, I had two people contact me to get footage again of stuff that I have filmed and to kind of read, make it alive again and yeah make it make it accessible, yeah live shows. Although filming full length shows is really important. I think it's more important, a lot of people use it for kind of development of the show when they watch back and make notes and stuff, but now. Yeah, as shows have been stripped from the life.

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Process yeah it's very, very important. So,

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what what sort of shows what have you been able to show from Sadler's Wells, what, what, digital offerings films if you like have you been able to show.

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But I think there's, there's a number of different types of sort of film offerings that we've made and I think, you know, obviously John Z's beautiful our bodies back incredibly powerful it's one of the things where we've been, we've been most pleased about being able to share this here but I think one of the things. So there's obviously screen bands like Johnson's film like a collaboration that we did with the Financial Times called moving through a pandemic. And then a rehearsal video of a company of dancers. 37 dancers from African countries from 14 African countries rehearsing peanut butter is the Rite of Spring in Senegal. At sunset we happen to capture this really special. I'm just before lockdown and be able to share that with the world. So in sort of screen dance that's kind of been the world, then there's been a lot of participatory dance as well which is workshop content enabling people to get involved with dance in their own homes in a very risk free environment but also in a way when to be able to be fit active and creative in your own in your own life in a time when everything's locked down. And then the last thing is a lot like what Alex was talking about archival footage of full length works of dance live capture, but I think and I be curious to say, see what other people think but the life capture feels and feels like a necessity of the moment, rather than the offerings we as an as a, as a sector have been able to offer. And that's not really where it's at. It feels like second best to live. It doesn't feel like live capture is like a thing that I want to choose instead of going, I can't go to live so watch the capture and hopefully that stuff generates a, an interest to come back into the theater, but I think in terms of film what's most interesting is the stuff that's made for the stuff, it's made to be consumed digitally

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yeah and and we want to talk about that actually because I think there's a really, you know, it's interesting for dancers and filmmakers to understand actually what the difference is not Omari talking

about things that how dance the dance world has kind of evolved during this time. I mean, what about teaching and things like that because you're also a teacher and you also lecture I mean, have you seen that there's been more classes and teaching online on the digital space.

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Yes. Oh definitely and even more so of people needing to learn how to kind of empower themselves with the basic language of film. In order to continue their studies right now. So, pretty much every student has now become a filmmaker, out of necessity, and not necessarily out of choice. So now it's come to a place where we were advising you know the best practice of getting your footage in for your first show and and other things like that and and trying to get everyone on par. And on a level that they can, you know, get in footage in a decent way, you know, but it's very interesting because not everyone wants to make dance for film, specifically, you know not everyone wants to be just a dance for theater practitioner but it's good to have that balance of things, but it's been very interesting because that sometimes it feels a bit rushed right it feels a bit like okay, if I had more time I could really plan out something in this curriculum, but right now it's like guys, this is a closer. This is mid, here's some stuff we need to learn and and implement them into your choreographic language, so we can know how to move forward in the best way. So yeah, it's a very interesting time and things are getting better and a lot of mistakes are being made, but that's great too because we learn from those and move forward stronger. But yeah, that shift there was a lot of shift of that making work and then in the middle of time, you know, we're on to our screens now. So it was a bit rushed and trying to, how can I get every single dance practitioner in a way this information, you know. Yeah, yeah, so it's been an interesting time lot of pre recorded lectures and split screens.

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And what about Johnson, what about you I mean obviously you. You run conventions and you go to all these battles and how but how has that evolved at all online Have you been able to kind of without being able to travel the world are people still able to share their films and get that sense of community.

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Yes, there's been many dance battles. Some really well produced ones as well Red Bull have just recently been doing some solo battle stuff. And there's a few battles I can't remember all of the names off the top of my head but definitely the Red Bull really stands out where its production values are concerned, and how they encourage and they give, they must give the dancers a template as to what they must look for in their own environment and I mean because most of them are working in studios, some are working from their front rooms in the battle, but yeah it's working this thriving. We did breakin convention online. In May, and the same weekend that we normally do it. And, yeah, we missed it. Yeah, cuz breakin convention in particular such a physically close interactive immersive experiments and I mean so the idea that we were, we were doing that again was we had to get that out of our minds, you know, how do we deliver the, the breakin convention experience through the screen. But yeah, I definitely think that the shift, you know we have to adapt, you know, and the concept of looking at live, work, I think maybe that's something that's interesting, I understand them. I didn't see it but Romberg worked with Vin Vander cables recently. And that was meant to be a really good example of live interactive online, dance, which is something in between recorded film, and the live experience. So I

think that there. There are different ways and I think that, you know, when we're creative man and Jami we've got this wonderful tool, our disposal. And I think that we're going to just see advancements with it.

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And so, when you think of what a how for example with your genre. And you think of the films that are coming out there, there, you know, how what does a filmmaker have to think of, in order to translate that very live experience to a film what, What are the sort of pitfalls that they can fall into the mistakes you can make when you trends, try and translate. I was caught going on a journey, it's the same piece, but it can't be the same product, it has to go on a journey and arrive at something different, even though it's the same thing you know it has to evolve doesn't it to

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know. I did, I have sub, literally just yesterday the day before. I've been filming. Some characters from a solo, that I created called the letter. And the, the solo there's no costume I'm just wearing a very neutral black, and I just have the occasional little prop that would signify these characters. And there's a magic in that. Nonetheless, it felt really good to do, to wear costume and work in the actual situations for example there was a scene that was on a particular corner in both where I grew up. And yesterday we went to that very corner to film the scene and emotionally It was quite a leap. But these things you can't do live, and I mean so in as much as the live experience is irreplaceable. There's something about this. That is special as well.

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And so ankle. I mean, we've worked together on a couple of things actually, and, and, and we've, and you know the film's I'm trying to think of the when you make a documentary about dance, you've got to you've got to also communicate that spirit of that dance Haven't you the essence of that piece that that choreographer is dance have been working on. I mean, when do you think it works. Do you see what I mean how do you when you're obviously we serve as well so you'd have lots of fantastic stuff when do these dance films really work for you.

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I think it's exactly what you're talking about Emma when they

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when they marry artistic intention with audience appetite. Right. And that's what that's the magic that happens in life as well. When the artist is able to air their perspective in a very special way that's authentic to their vision, and to what they're trying to achieve, and they've met the audience at a moment, or in a way that shifted their perspective or made them understand something and on a film. I think you have tools in film that are different and specific that if you as a choreographer as an artist as a maker can manipulate in a way to meet our audience where they are. That's when it's magic. And so if you're talking about documentary, I think documentary is about taking somebody to a place or a timer or a moment and giving them a real taste that they can connect to right and so when dance documentary works really well, it's it's not like a you match the moment with the artistic intent intention, but when I think dance film works really well is when it goes. Dance is a universal language, so anybody can watch this and find something in. And if you can capture that but then use the tools of film

that put it in film, make it special to be in film, then all of a sudden you're winning. You're not and I agree with Jonesy I love live I miss live but actually, if we're in a moment where there is a renaissance of digital dance, and what we shouldn't be trying to do. Place life. We should be celebrating what's special about, Phil.

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Absolutely. I mean, Alice. Do you find that when you're working with dancers that that you have to help them understand this journey to to deliver something rather special and unique and is not just the same as on the stage.

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Um,

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I think a lot of the filming I do it if I'm if I'm working with a dancer or a company, and kind of documenting their process and creating a trailer for their live show. And I think I'm very much fly on the wall. So actually, a lot of the time, I kind of jump into a space, but kind of blend into the background and they hopefully are probably don't really know I'm there, gather a lot, and actually create the assets that they need and whatnot. And then I think it's more about, oh wow I didn't. It's great to see kind of what's being created, I don't know, in a lot of the work that I do don't necessarily think they're too involved in the filming side because I'm, I'm yeah fly on the wall a bit more in kind of the promo trailers kind of short kind of documentary, and films. But yes, I've done a few kind of more screen dance based works, and that is very much more collaborative, and then we chat a lot more beforehand is a lot more planning involved what rather than just jumping into a space, getting some cool footage doing some interviews filming the shows. So it's very different processes for both types of work. Yeah.

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What about you, Miranda I mean you're yours a smaller film The shorter films but they're, they do communicate a real joy around dance. What sort of planning or prepping do you need to do with the people that are in your films in order to get, you know, your the result that you want.

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Honestly, it's usually a coffee to get an idea that personality, because I think that's that's kind of mostly what our tiny dance films are trying to represent is the artist personality. We don't really give them a brief like we don't say to them all we want a dance, based on this this or this. We just say give us something that you want to give. And we'll meet with the person and chat and just kind of, you kind of just know once you start talking to them what their vibe is. And then when you get there you know you take inspiration from the location. You know we always ask to sort of just see a quick rough cut of the, of the dance anyway so we can get an idea of how to plan the camera movement and how we're going to capture that effectively. But it's certainly a lot quicker, that's kind of one of our sort of unique selling points I suppose is that we do everything like nice and quick and bite size. And so the the preparation is really just getting to know the artists who are working with, and then trying to do you know the challenge and task of representing a person in a way that they'll feel, you know embodies their, their personality

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Omari when you when you're working with dancers or or dansko, how, how, how does it work as a collaboration is it, you absolutely telling them what you want them to do or did they tell you what they want to get out of that. How does that

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work. This is such an interesting one. We've done to kind of transpositions from live work into dance film in the last couple of months. One with Academy dance, and one with paragraph Dance Company both South Asian dance companies. So usually that work is about an hour, you know, long, and so we go right well film time works slightly different. Let's work on a 15 minute piece right how can we concise. This one hour piece into 15 minutes of film. And that's where I feel I've made sure I dedicate some time to the pre production process. Let's sit down together and look at this together and and work out this gap in the language, especially if it's your first time working with film and Little things like you know if I shoot high and look down it makes our character look small is our characters more than this moment just to go, Okay, I know how we want this to feel dance wise and in the body. Now, I maybe I can give you some tools to replicate that with the camera. Does that work, and also every role in film and dance has multitudes of of things that they do so a producer does many things from distribution to gather in the budget. So it's about sitting down with the team and going as a choreographer. This is my role as the director, these are the things that I'm going to focus on, so that we know on the day how we are going to work as a team. In this specific configuration. And so yeah, it's about getting that time and a lot of time you don't get that pre production time, usually get one day rehearsal one day shoot. Sometimes right but if you have the luxury of having that time and I always try and now put that into into our quotes now because we make a lot of dance films specific marks cinematic works. So yeah it does take that time. And I think through that you can really understand each other as artists in anything and I learned a lot of that, and started to come to the I learned a lot of that from john z because fostering hybridity and practice. Remember the choreo poetry workshops Jonesy that I filmed. Yes, yes I do. The idea of getting choreographers and poets together We need to talk. Let's work out what each other's art is about. And then we can go, or we can bounce off each other now I can talk to you in French and English. Right. So yeah, it's about bridging that gap and it has to be done no matter how experienced we feel we are or work that we've done in the past every job is going to be so different.

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John's yeah I mean it's interesting isn't it because if there was a filmmaker out there who maybe wanted to find a crew or maybe make a film about that dance or what have you. How do they approach, individuals, or people how do they get their trust and and sort of access that world to make films about them.

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interest in

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mind my recent experience

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it. There's varied approaches because obviously I've not made a film before. So I'm trying to find some of the very best dancers in my world of collections and I mean, and, and they particularly for our bodies back it was very specific. There had to be black women from around the world. And, yeah, meet up with this wonderful dancer XL from Montreal I met her last year when I was out in Montreal doing some workshop, leading some workshops, and I just spoke to her and her energy was just there. It was, it was peaceful, but it was peaceful, as a result of some trauma. Yeah, I mean that's that's the vibe that I got from her. So, I hadn't seen her dots. Yet, when I thought about making this film, someone dropped out, and I called her the very last minute and I just said, Look, I need you to complete this work in three days time. Those are very specific to specific sections I need her to interpret with a body, and she just delivered like with a plot. Yeah.

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But on the other hand, it can work the opposite.

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And sometimes you just don't know the dancer the dancer, I don't know, sometimes I wonder if they even trustee. And I just feel that I can feel a certain reticence from some artists. And, you know, sometimes I just feel like saying from the beginning, like, Look, if you're not feeling it. Maybe we should just

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call it a day, you know,

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because sometimes you just don't know you know I mean,

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I find it really exciting when the magic does happen, but it can be really frustrating as I'm sure you know as filmmakers know when it doesn't quite click, you know, I mean. Fortunately, our bodies back. Yeah, it, it could not have clicked, but some really drastic decisions were made at the last minute and now it just clicks.

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That's great. I mean, I concur with with the films that you've been putting out to Sadler's Wells and and a piece of content. What do you think, um, how do you think that these dancers and choreographers. Have they built up relationships with certain filmmakers Do they have, you know, do, do they come back to the same person, are they open to fresh ideas. How easy is it for a new filmmaker to go and say I've got this great idea I want to do this film, bah bah bah bah what, how is it what how realistic is that, or how should it work.

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I think that collaboration between what I've seen, collaboration between choreographer and director film camera op or director depending on how you work and dramaturg. Like Jonesy saying is so unique to

each set of collaborators and I think it would be very similar for, for live theater for live dance. I think there are a number of choreographers who find that they found their people. And those people make the work that they want to make they have a shorthand which means budgets, stretch a lot further because there's, there's not a lot of prep that's needed everyone can just turn up know how they're going to do it deliver something that that works. So there are definitely closed shops, as it were. But then there are also lots of artists who are now lots of choreographers are now coming and going. I think I'm supposed to make digital work and I don't know what that means and I think there's a lot of artists who are currently looking for partners who are looking for people who are going to go, Joe, I am a filmmaker, and I have a voice and I'm interested in what you do choreographically. Let me help you take that somewhere else and I think there is now more of a market for those makers than there might have been five years ago. I don't have an easy answer on how to find those humans, but I do think. I do think, if you're a filmmaker and you're looking to work in this space there are a number of choreographers I think it's pretty easy to go. Okay, here's 100 choreographers working in this country which of which, which 20 haven't put something out online yet, and maybe send an email.

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It's a really interesting idea isn't it and so people like you Miranda who are already working very much in this space. You probably have a real advantage because you understand, or you're going in with that sort of. And so that's sort of shorthand how to get something sticky or how to get some somebody's going to your. I mean, do you tell me about that kind of the effect of that very short piece of dance compared to a longer piece.

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Um, well obviously it's very very different to a full length, live, work, or even a full length film work it's made with a different intention. I think different people will access it, people will have a different experience. And you know, I love a full length dance work you know a big live show. And there's such a really important place for that as you know, several people on here have discussed already like the magic of, you know, going to see some live theater. And I don't think anything is more important than the other but I think there's really a space for, you know, shorter more accessible things and I think the, the reason that we went for 30 seconds because obviously you know at first we were thinking goodness how on earth can we get anything across to anyone in 30 seconds. But then you only really need to open your phone and have a look at what's out there, you know on Instagram and things like that, whether it's dance related or not. And it's just it's just powerful storytelling really isn't it to be able to get somebody hooked in the first, second, you know that first second is so important. We only have 30 of them to get our message across. So it's really about visually, drawing people in, whether that's your location, you know, your dancer the week the way you angle the shot if you open with a really interesting, unique, sort of film and approach to it as well. And then people, we hope are more likely to stick dig through the rest of the piece I mean we know what that culture looks like it's just swipe swipe swipe. And obviously with with live long full length, dance, you're probably not going to swipe through it because you'd be the pay per ticket to be there in person or you sat down to watch a full, you know full length piece so we really have that. That gamble in that you know someone could just we've allowed people to just walk out of the theater without offending anybody basically. So we're taking that risk in such a short space of time to see if we can capture people, you know, still deliver high quality art because I think it's, it's definitely easy, well not easy but it's definitely doable to create short

entertaining pieces of dance or theater and entertainment is really important to us as well we want we want to you know make people smile, but also if you want to deliver something that's a little bit more on the sort of high quality art side sometimes it takes a little bit more digging and you know going a little bit deeper, which we just don't have the time to do in our style of filming. So it's really about trying to get that balance of, you know, capturing entertaining but also providing a really clear message that's actually going to, you know, do what we will try to do and move people and speak to people.

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I think there's a lot.

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So I just wanted to,

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um, I love the idea of these tiny dancers. And I think that it's necessary to adjust and change our understanding of the way different types of work hits you. Because in a funny. Okay, so I watch a lot of dancers a result of being sad as well, and and haven't seen loads of dogs anyway. In my rollers. Break adventure. And I think most dogs is too long. It just feels. You know sometimes you're watching an idea and you think I get it, and people want to do it this way and, and then do show you the same phrase that well. And can I get it, move on, you know, and. And I do think that this idea of the challenge of trying to do a full beginning, middle and end and reach deeply, you can do that in 30 seconds, and I fitness. I can't wait to check out what you're doing random. I mean

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I think that's right i think i think that what you're I've seen what's that I think that's something that it's a real expression. It's a real expression of something happens in that 30 seconds that feels that you can it's a member talking to Alastair who's from Sadler's Wells and he said that it's a very unique way of communication because it's completely nonverbal dance. And so, except, of course, but when you're doing poetry. But on the whole, and that we don't do that much in a day and so when you can actually connect with a piece of dance is really quite special and it feels like you're sort of enriched by it, even though it's only 30 seconds, you know, but I really like shorts. I like dance shorts and I like longer piece but I'm already I mean you make all different lens, what, what do you what is your favorite length for peace what should these new filmmakers be aiming for with that first 30 seconds actually is a challenge, isn't it so

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Oh definitely. And yeah, it depends on the output. And what I always ask my students the question what screen, are you making for right because if you're making for a cinema screen, then you're obviously going to have an audience sitting in a dark room, they're similar to theater, who will be forced to watch that length of time so you can have longer times but we make for film festivals specifically when we make light independent work or works with with companies, so we film festivals, you're obviously looking at maybe eight or nine films a screening. So we say around 15 minutes or shorter, you know, that sort of length is really good because obviously screened arts film festivals are looking to get an hour of material so they want to, obviously stretch that and invite as many artists in as possible.

And we have yet to make a feature and even though that's something that we're looking to do in the future but right now yeah it's been focusing on short form screen dance, and in the film industry that's under 45 minutes, But in dance film, it tends to be around the 1520 minute mark would be max length of, if you want to be in a, in a screening with other films in that sense.

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I mean it's interesting, I mean I'll wonder if you're talking about the Jonathan Glazer very briefly about that film that we did, and it is it hadn't had an ambition at one stage of being longer, didn't it. I've been twice the length to talk a little bit about that because that was filmed remotely during this time and I'm wondering if we're seeing more, more, dancers and filmmakers having to make these films in in difficult circumstances but actually coming up with something really well the wonderful,

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but I think there's a film was called 15, eight, basters 1518, and it was really a joy for for sad as well as BBC Jonathan Glazer, all the partners involved to take to work on in that, again, it was artist led Jonathan wanted to make a film about this dance epidemic, where a whole town was sort of taken over by this frenzy of dance and and chose to use dancers from around the world, and filming themselves remotely sending in footage and then editing it into this really spectacular response over without being a response to COVID it felt like it captured exactly how I was feeling stuck in my house but it wasn't about COVID and I loved that about it, and it was through dance and therefore it felt. It's, it felt global in nature it felt like it connected us all through that, and I think I'm just struck by what Joe is saying in that you know like in the theater it's rude to leave. Right. Sometimes I wish I could be, like, I want to be. I'm done. I've paid my ticket. I'm happy to leave, and I as a viewer want to have that agency. The flipside is true in film, you know, if you've given a film away for free, which a lot of arts organizations ourselves includes are guilty of now, you're giving this stuff away for free average watch times are between what 10 and 15% of the content. So there's I think there's a misconception that if you put up a full length workout that anyone's actually, the majority of people are watching the entirety of that work. And so I think this notion of finding the sweet spot with audience appetite for free content versus paid content, I think we're very different right and, you know, even if you think about paid content for us. If we get people to pay for content they're watching between 45 and 60% of that content, even after they paid right so digital consumption I think storytelling how you think about what your audience is actually going to do with the film that you've given them matters and that's what I loved about going back to your question about Jonathan's film felt like you could dip in and out of that film wherever you wanted to and get an experience. And if you watch the whole thing you get an added bonus because you actually get the full arc of the film but if you just watch 30 seconds of film it's pretty powerful any 30 seconds of that film. And that I think is something that I took away from that collaboration that I worked on with you.

39:51

I also think what's quite interesting about that is it was meant to be about half an hour and it ended up being about 12 minutes right and that is what they felt was the right time, and I think he's right he was right you know you don't get to be Jonathan Glazer not get that if you know what I mean. But actually, I think there's something really powerful in short films. And do you think that that's what we've learned. do you know what it means to this whole post COVID era, we're learning about the power of social media, where, you know, we wait for dance, not too big, not to be snapped up a short burst the

importance of those of those moments, but also it allows you to open up to different audiences. I mean, Alice Do you think your films are watched on all sorts of different platforms by all sorts of different age groups now.

40:41

Yeah, absolutely. Yeah.

40:44

It's really opened up accessibility. I think, although I should I share my films, kind of, mainly on Instagram, Facebook, the people who hire me in the first place, then share it on their website and then they get shared out for various different things and reach various different people and, depending on the project I do a lot of kind of community based projects. So they're going off to kind of intergenerational kind of projects where it's not just two dances coming up or kind of in the mid 20s or 30s like that. You kind of the projects reaching kind of a target audience. And then everyone around that and then it kind of just filters off to so many different people. And you don't necessarily have to have Facebook, to be able to view these now everything's on YouTube, Vimeo is getting bigger, although it's not as accessible I don't think as YouTube is, but also just going back to kind of time length. People are. I think it's getting people to realize in short and sweet is good. I think filmmakers have always kind of known that because if you monitor your videos on YouTube or Vimeo where a lot of people keep them, you can see exactly how long people are watching Safar. So it's quite, it's quite disheartening but it's quite. I mean, it's reality, it's kind of, you can then make a plan, as to okay that didn't maybe work as well. And you go on to like your next project and think about that a little bit more and. So, yeah, it's really interesting to kind of monitor people, how people view your work, and it's easy now because you get so much statistics from Vimeo and YouTube and even Instagram now. Yeah.

42:41

Do you think so what do you think John's, the future of offspring dances Do you think it's um, do you think is to get short to get more out there, what do you think is the is the is the thing that people will be driving at now that we've been through this shift,

42:59

and the future of it. I believe it's going to be ocular Oculus, I can't remember this Oculus Rift, but free dimensions. And we're gonna be able to look around and be in this dance environment in which we can have a duet with the image of who we're dancing with. I mean, it definitely sounds like a really horrible dystopian Brave New World, but I think it will be fun, you know, as the technology becomes smoother and slicker. Yeah, I could imagine. We will. I think that part of this crazy corporate world that we live in. The whole idea of surrogates I don't know if you seen this film, Bruce Willis, where he his whole existence is lived through an avatar body. Yeah. Yeah, I think that we're not quite there yet, but I think that we will be there soon.

44:06

And what about you a Mario, what do you think I mean what do you think the future is for the dance on film or not and how do you think it's evolved after, you know, during this time,

44:17

so interesting, you kind of get worried that when something becomes very popular in a very short amount of time that faddish qualities will emerge. You see there's a lot of tropes are already happening in the screen dance world and there is a screen dance industry, you know, of people who practice green knots but dominantly and academics have been screen knots and that word is very small as well. I think in the immediate future what's amazing is that we're seeing different types of bodies now emerge on screen in all of those worlds, both in the social media world but also in the film festival, and more could call it high art screen dark spaces where before it felt like pockets of communities who are practicing in very different ways. So my hope is that we continue to talk to one another and not necessarily. There's a very. There's an individualistic kind of thing that happens sometimes with with art where people find their little pockets of things but screen notes is something that is still quite new and growing and we're kind of figuring out. So it's nice to be able to go, well let me look at the people before me. Look at the also the people who are running adjacent to me and we're making this work before the COVID Time. In order to know where we're going next right and have a vision of what was before to know how to move forward. So I think that's also very important as well. Yeah,

45:42

and Miranda I mean obviously things like this, this Cobra time has been rather a boon for you that that Tick Tock is well you know the fact that it was out there from grannies dancing in their kitchen to people on the, you know, on their balconies, it became very freeing actually didn't it to have that DIY sensibility about making dance films.

46:08

Yeah, I mean, I'm not gonna lie here. I also tried to learn some of the dances of tic toc and was dancing around to some of the routines that were setting you know like it's when we were all stuck in lockdown. And you know, a lot of us still are, it's, it was this whole, it opened up this whole world of just pure fun like something that got you off yourself and got you to have fun and it was using dance, and you know it wasn't like it wasn't dancers and choreographers working on this, it was just your regular people, I remember seeing a video of this Irish family who worked for days and days and days to try and perfect this Tick Tock routine, and it was so funny and so yeah you can see that that family would never have done a family dance together that was just complete that was never gonna happen, but they're just also because they also on tik tok they were like great we're gonna have a goal everyone's doing it. Everyone's sharing it. And it's like what I was saying before about how the power of social media with that web effects you know that ripple effect, it's not like us, I just share my work amongst my audiences, you know, if I share something. Alice might then share it with her audiences and Omari might share it with his audiences and you know that the way it spreads is kind of terrifying but great if it's if it's for a good cause you know and and i think Tick Tock just really took off and spread like wildfire. And yeah, I think it really just brought Dunn's kind of into a different. I don't know just just made it a bit more comfy, like it was a bit more comfortable and fun and sort of no pressure no stress. I mean, you know, I think sometimes what my experience of the dance world. You know, is it can be it can be quite an intense environment, a lot of the time you know if you're trying to make high quality art it's got to be, you know, really meaningful and you question everything. And there's absolutely like a really important place for that in the world but there's also a place to just move in your body to music and piano and doing it terribly and making mistakes and doing it with your granny and you know that that's, I think that's what

connects us all. Like, as humans, more so than some of the more intense stuff sometimes you know i mean we all, we're all put on to move. You know we all connect with music so I think tik tok really. Yeah. I think it did a really good thing for the world of dance I think it brought it to a lot more people.

48:28

And just just despondently with you than this this idea, do you think that has informed, lots of dance companies this kind of social media revolution is digital really that's happened this through this complete democratization of dance by being everywhere on, but do you think it has had an impact on how people can either. Does it make does it make it for that you're sort of companies that are sold as well. Do you think it allows people that wouldn't normally come to them to see this, that, that Be brave it and look at stuff that they wouldn't normally look at. Do you see what I mean, does it help open the doors to some of these other more saving more challenging dances.

49:10

We believe in a guess Wait, wait, and quite frankly if we didn't think that we wouldn't be giving it away for free and making tons of investment in it right like. We're a charity we do work because we care about it we make our, our mission is to make sure fires assault, but at the same time. In this time, we're suffering enormous financial losses. And so if we didn't believe that putting dance online, sharing it with audiences either through social media through Vimeo through YouTube through our website. If we didn't believe that that would actually touch them and be meaningful for them. We would not do it. We don't have the money to do it and we don't have the wherewithal to do it and we don't and I think much to Miranda's point if it wasn't bringing joy. I don't think we would do it. And similarly I think companies that we work with are finding that as well, is going there is meaningful interactions. I think a really good example of this is, we did a company of elders workshop series for Sadler's Wells earlier in the summer, which was aimed at people over the age of 62 International dance style is under suits on did a workshop in a coatney technique. Top five countries for viewership were in Africa, let's not be jokers Sadler's Wells does not reach those countries, as, as it stands. Tell 700,000 views in the first two weeks of her workshop, India, again Sadler's Wells does not have a presence there at that scale. Right. And so you go, Okay, there are audiences around the world who loves dance. There are audiences around the world who want to be touched by dance and who want to interact with dance. And I think there is, there is a there is that we have the capability and there is a market it's just about two things. One, how does it pay for itself. I think we still haven't cracked that because we gave everything away for free for a very long time. How do we crack that how do we make sure that it can enable artists to make work and not work for free to how, um, how do you enable the diversity of voices within the art form to be able to speak because ostensibly there is room. If you look at the world's theatres and how many tickets you have to sell and the economics of that there are only so many people who can get in the door right period on making. Whereas in this space ostensibly. It's when can you marry up the economics of the thing, plus the number of artists who want to make this work, and represent the diversity of what they're interested in making and diversity of what people want to see. I think, sorry I'm gonna guess a little bit more. But to your point about length of work right It feels like screendance has always known that there is a value in the short story on the novel. And that screendance has always been screen downs professionals have always known that it just feels like those of us who work in the theatrical community or those of us who have worked in other parts of dance are just catching on. And I think that's the difference right and i. If the short film or the or the full length, the feature film, or if the

novel or the short can always work in theater we've always thought short dance works had to be put in series of three, and be shown as a triple bill. Whereas now we're going actually a short dance work is a thing of itself to celebrate, and that is I think a very significant for the industry, and hopefully create space for artists and audiences to interact in a different way.

52:41

And I mean I just want to give unless you've lost while because everybody else has done their rounding up do you think the future's bright for you you filmmaker of screen dark, I think so, what is what is on the cards for you.

52:55

Was that for me.

52:58

Um, yeah i think it's it's developed developed over the past. I mean, like Mario was saying I kind of jumped in and kind of 2012 2013. And from then it has just gotten bigger and bigger.

53:16

And

53:17

a big part of that is social media. And because the type of work that I do. Now a lot create is just pushed out on social media massively to create attention for maybe one live work or something else or an event. And, I mean, I think it's grown, because of social media, but also the the want or need to kind of see shorter content shorter form content as well and like little snippets of things and process I like process I love process films. I love delving into how things are made, not just seeing the final product but giving people the chance to see a kind of okay the ins and outs of creation, it's not all amazing and smooth it's there's so much involved in it. And yeah, I think the need, and the one for that has grown massively, and hence my work has increased and I've kind of got more and more work from it, which I'm so grateful for and I love working with the people that I work with and hopefully create new content contacts and,

54:24

yeah, do more. Know what I see a lot of live dance, and I see a lot of screen dance. And you know what, I think they work beautifully together, you know, what we, you need, we need each other, don't we you know what I mean. One feeds off the other and actually, that's what is so good about this that you can have your 32nd moment and you can have your 90 minute performance, and, and, and they can be from the same choreographer, it can be a little taste it could be an inspiration or it could you know it's it's a different thing but I think as long as we're all out there trying to keep dance alive during this difficult time then, then it's a great thing and thank you to you all for your brilliant efforts in this area. Now I'm going to hand back, I think, to Alison, Emily, because, um, and see if there any questions there but it's been really fantastic everybody thank you so much I feel it's really optimistic and inspiring. So great. Thank you.

55:28

Yeah, we've had a few questions coming in, thank you guys that was just so wonderful to listen to and I could just sit back and soak up all of your knowledge, just before we go to audience questions I wanted to ask, Emma, and you've been chairing so we've not really had a chance to ask about your experience but I wanted to ask if you had anything to add from like a broadcaster perspective in the BBC and how the BBC is responding to film, and more screen shots work and you know I know with lockdown they had the whole culture in quarantine program and filmed in lockdown and I just wondered if you could speak a little bit about the BBC his perspective and what it's like and posting and commissioning these works.

56:06

And you know what, as as Commissioner for dance what I really try and do is I really try and get the spread of what dance is out there, so I will have my ailing by the Royal Ballet, and the full number, going all the way through, really quite long production but actually amazing, and I'll do a half hour films we say set as well as danceworks which are documentaries but really they're about choreographers, and that what they're thinking and what they're inspired by, and so there's bits of beautiful dance in that, but it's actually a little, little into their world. And then I have things like men at the bar which was a it's just much more character driven looking at male dancers and how that's changed for them over the years. So, for me, for us at the BBC I think we have a, we have a commitment to will range of audience. And I think I want to be able to give them the Royal Ballet Nutcracker and Shani ELLs techno brilliance, as well as a kind of really taking you know, it was really understanding the characters who are actually dancing making them real people. So it's an absolute privilege for me to be able to enter all these worlds and commission these fantastic films. We also do a few shorts. We hope to do that too. We also, you know, do young dancer, where we're trying to do a kind of a slightly different format this year what that is but really trying to access new what it's like to be new dancer on the, on the stage with all these different genres so it's good you know the BBC has been really great. You know commissioning dance. And, you know, I hope I hope to carry on doing that.

57:54

Yeah, I absolutely loved the culture and quarantine program and all of the films that came out with that was just great. Okay, so we'll move to audience questions now we've had a couple if a burning question comes up please still add it in the box there we've got a bit of time for questions. So the first one is from Kaiser, and I'm going to direct this to Omari if that's the case. So crisis said it's very interesting that the thought of creativeness or creative work can actually be quite strict and formal and perhaps even conservative. Do you feel that there are views that don't should not be on screen because it's something that's usually been experienced in the movement or viewed on a stage.

58:31

Very interesting one.

58:36

I mean that's a hard one because dance has always been on screen since like late 19th century. You know from Loyola to the works of Maya Deron Norman McLaren. All of these crazy amazing people who worked with movement and film in some way and film in itself is capturing movements

cinematography is the movement of the camera in itself so I feel like, yeah, it's kind of always resistant in some ways, whether it is through archival or through something that was specifically made for the camera. But I understand that there may be practitioners who don't prefer that as a form of field it takes something away. David Hinton has quite a very interesting quote David Hinton directed for deviate think he did. Strange fish. and one quote he says is that dancers want to be seen dancing right so in the sense of Fred Astaire everything was wide, everything was one take. However filmmakers wants a cut. Right. They want to cut up the body, but once we understand that and know that that is the process we're entering into, then we're empowered to do something with that. And so yeah, I think that's my answer a little bit is. Yeah, I don't know if that wasn't the question,

59:51

no it does. Absolutely. And I think almost the two different mediums and I know you talked earlier, the panel talked about how kind of that adjustment that has to happen if you're translating a film from stage to screen. But what I love about screen arts is that you can do things that you can't do on stage exactly that was it I know you talked about this the age of split screen, but there are things that have made possible through the Edit, which you can't do on screen so that's a great answer. And someone has asked Miranda. How did you get the word out about tiny dances, sometimes I feel like social media is so massive, it's actually tiny, how do you get people to know the work is out there. Um, well, I mean the whole world doesn't really know about us at the moment I mean It'd be great if we had thousands and thousands of people on board but you know we are still quite small. In terms of our outreach we you know we haven't been gone a huge amount of time just coming up to two years. But, um, we basically, I mean I suppose it you start in your own community. Don't you I mean we, you know, we began, I mean, I'm based here in New Castle, which is where I live and we just started with our own, you know, the dances in our area who we knew, and they shared amongst their people. And then, you know, you just sort of hopefully gradually expand a little bit from there. We did take a trip down to London, last year to get we did a little marathon of shoot loads of Thai dancers in one day to try and bring that to London as well but, I mean, I suppose, the beauty of social media is you don't have to physically go places to get your word out, you don't have to go fly around in the streets, necessarily, it was it was like what was discussed earlier about you know you had audiences in India and Africa watching these films. You know that actually really inspired me I thought okay right What am I going to do to get our work out to other countries as well. But you know i mean i wouldn't say I was an expert on it I know some people who were like, proper social media, like, you know, all these influences and things. They have all the tricks of how to just reach everyone in the world and I don't have those tricks. You know, we just tried to make the work. We hope that if it's if people want to engage with it they will, and if it touches the top, it will they'll share it amongst their communities and hopefully they'll just grow from there organically I would think. But you know we're not enormous at the moment so I don't think I'm an expert on that subject, but um yeah you just got to stay, stay true to, you know, the work and stay true to making good quality things that are going to reach people and hopefully the people will will connect to a bit and then and then share it amongst others as well. Yes, is that thing is that your tribe will find you the people who are meant to enjoy this work will find it. And who knows, you might get a few more followers after tonight, it's at tiny dot dot says if anyone wants to go and follow Miranda's project. There was a comment slash question from Lizzy in the chat and anchor I think you mentioned this about knowing how the watch time for audiences he said they dropped off after 10 to 15% and Lizzie says it would be useful for artists to have access to information around how audiences are engaging with online content,

like the viewing whether it's paid or unpaid as it will help structure the work with this in mind, and I know Alice mentioned using kind of Google Analytics YouTube Analytics but just wonder if you had any advice for Lizzie on kind of how she can understand more how her audiences are engaging with her work.

1:03:20

I think. Before I answer that I have an, I have a question, I guess, Miranda and to tie this maybe to Mario's question to Mario's expertise but I'm curious about about social media and this notion of Omari what you were talking about which is like filming for the screen on which it will be viewed so knowing that somebody is going to see it on square and Instagram or somebody, see it, you know in portrait and fit on Facebook, but also that people go to these platforms for different purposes, right Facebook is a communal platform it's it's where I interact with my friends. Twitter is a news platform. Instagram is an inspiration platform, you know, and you can. That's how I describe them but it could be any number of ways. And I think making making With that in mind, sorry not making with that, distributing with that in mind going, I want to make this thing. So I've made this thing now where does it sit, not assuming I've made this thing and therefore it should sit on Facebook Graham's Instagram TV and tick tock right that's different humans, and they use those platforms in different ways to be really specific Okay, this is what I've made. This is why I think it's for this is what I think it's trying to do and therefore, it should go here that I think is what sometimes is missing is that thoughtfulness of distribution, just because I have it doesn't mean it goes everywhere across all of the platforms to your notion on analytics. Yeah, I think, I think, Alex hit it, he talk about it perfectly right like every platform where you release your, your content will have an analytics. That will be able to tell you, this is your average view time. These are your unique views, this is, this is how people are behaving this is where they're from you, you have that information. I think it's about deciding what's important. So for Sadler's Wells engagement is really important and engagement is more important than reach, so you know I shared some views stats with you. We had 800,000 views in India for Sita Patel's workshop over a certain period of time for us that's unique views who watched it for more than three seconds, right, that doesn't indicate an enormous and that's not very helpful. Just because there's many people didn't just go past it on their feet. What matters more to us is average watch time, or actually engagement, or how many people made it to 95% of that film. And we've had films that people will go oh that looks amazing your view. That's right. You go 2 million people saw that video. 2 million people by video for five seconds. 2000 people made it to 95% of that film. And that was a full length film and therefore, more people saw the whole film than we can fit in Sadler's Wells Theatre on one night, and all of a sudden that's a meaningful stat. And I think that's what's really important is to be thoughtful about what you're going for average view times for us. Vary hugely based on the content based on,

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on, on, on the content the platform, whether you pay or not.

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But I think going, I am making this work for somebody to see it the whole way through. Or I'm making this work to reach as many people as possible, and it doesn't matter how much did they see I think they're very different questions and you have to be quite thoughtful as a makers to which matters and

then you make your choices based on what you've made. I know it's really vague and it's weird but I think you have to have that dexterity and a central for understanding the analytics.

1:06:49

Yeah, that's so helpful. Lizzie said, Lizzie said thank you, in the chat. So, I think you've answered her question. And we've had a few more questions. I'm just trying to pick which one to answer because they're also good. I'm going to go with the second one at the moment which says, How is making screen dance change with the use of iPhones, and I think anchor This is kind of what you were just touching on with igtv and YouTube in other different spaces. Miranda I'm gonna throw it to you obviously because your work is mainly in social media and also because your video is portrayed tonight. And I just, there's nothing wrong with that, but I just think it's interesting. We were talking the other day about, you know, as a filmmaker you would never ever use portrait mode, and now it's becoming much more common so yeah they've asked how is making screen shots change with the use of iPhones.

1:07:40

And

1:07:43

I suppose it's kind of a risk in there isn't it because it basically means that. Absolutely. Anybody can make a film it can be a beautiful thing but also a risky thing because it risks. You know, screendance, come in, overwhelming. You know, but then, I think. Yeah, we essentially have the equipment that we need in our pockets. iPhone cameras and you know certain cameras can can be really really good quality and we actually myself and Julia when we make our tiny dances we actually use a combination of a phone and a proper camera. You know, and if anything, it just means that you know we have a phone on a stabilizer, as well as you know the camera that we use to film, and then it just gives that, you know, it actually allows us to work more effectively because one of us can be on one device and one on the other. And it just, yeah, it just gives us that freedom to be able to use that and and i think i think it's definitely making films on your phone is something that is become, you know, a force to be reckoned with as well, and not just in terms of the film but also the editing, you know you've got all these kind of apps and things that are gonna support you with editing on your phone, it's you know it's gonna it's going to produce a different product, and I think you know you really can't. I would it be difficult to replace you know the quality of something that's been edited, you know really carefully on software with somebody who really knows what they're doing. And that you can really put together a decent piece of work. Just using your phone, it's going to have a different feel to it and the same that you know i mean this isn't my Come on portrait now maybe has a different feel to do this it's fine like the portrait sort of more like this is just on a phone has a more kind of conversational value, and more sort of casual value, whereas the landscape gives it a more like, this is a film kind of thing. And so yeah, it's just different, different messages different styles. Both of our loads and I think embracing the iPhone style. And I'm not sure if a knife, I wouldn't really say that an iPhone and an app, being used to make a film is going to whatever be able to sort of replace you know the the alternative of using proper camera equipment and proper editing software, but it certainly gives a different field. And I think it's valid in its own right. Yeah. And it just just allows everybody to sort of have a go if anything I mean, you don't necessarily have to pledge to become a filmmaker and quit your job and become a filmmaker, but you

can, you can have some fun when you're out and about with some filming and editing and just, you know, everyone deserves to have access to that world really, if that answers. Yes that's it does definitely.

1:10:20

The film that I just made our bodies back. There were three camera make camera, people. One was in Montreal. One was in London. Yeah, I was in London, and I used an iPhone. Yeah. And it can shoot in 4k. And I think about what it means to have technology, when some of the greatest films that were made were made in the 1930s that feature dunks, and I mean, and it makes me think more about. Surely it's about the idea, as opposed to your access to resources, which is where we are now, and I made her think that some of the most popular things online weren't necessarily made with the dopest equipment in the world. In a world. And also, I just think for access. It's really important because there was a time where talent, wouldn't have been able to make film because you couldn't afford it. So I think now is definitely democratized filmmaking.

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