

# SHAKE FEST STUDIO



## Fine Tuning

### Finishing touches and things to check.

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#### Some things for everyone to do

- Time to work out how your work affects an audience. Present your piece to someone you trust and who will be honest with you (preferably someone who you haven't discussed/worked on this piece with) to get a fresh perspective. Ask the following questions:
  - Are you familiar with the Shakespearean story it was based on?
  - What do you think this piece is trying to say?
  - How does the piece make you think/feel?
  - Are there any elements that don't seem authentic?
- Focus on the parts that you feel need improvement. As fun as it is to keep working on your strengths, those parts are already great and there's less room for growth.
- Keep reviewing how your piece comes across via video. Make sure you cater to the medium in terms of sound, picture and framing.
- Ensure your piece fits in the time limits for your category!

#### Monologues - (1-3 mins)

- Make sure the tension arc is developed, clear and purposeful. Does our climax of tension match the text?
- Is there a moment of change? If so, how can you maximize the effectiveness? Try pushing shifts in volume, movement, pace, intonation etc. even more until you find the sweet spot.
- Monologues (and especially Shakespearean monologues) are often very rich in ideas and feelings. It's often more effective to strip back movement and actions in monologues and let the text and verbalisation do most of the work. See if stripping back the movement enhances it even more.
- How do you enter the stage? Your piece begins as you enter the stage and the way you walk to your starting point before talking can tell a whole story in itself, so really start to think about how you enter and leave the scene.

#### Duologues - (3-5 mins)

- Are you both in the same world? Ensure energies and performance styles match.
- Duologues are most often all about a struggle for power. Is it clear to the audience who has the power in each beat and how are you making clear power shifts?
- Eye contact is the most intimate and interesting element of a duologue, so make sure when you're talking to each other you really look at each other. Moments where you look away will then have a much larger weight to them, so be specific in those decisions.
- Check your 'KISS OR KILL' Zone. Take care to not get right in each other's faces for an extended period. When actors are really close to each other, it means their

characters are about to start a fight, or kiss each other. If you aren't building tension in one of these areas, consider taking a step back.

### **Scenes - (3-6 mins)**

- Are you all acting in the same world? Ensure energies and performance styles match.
- Is it clear to the audience who has the power in each beat and how are you making clear power shifts? How do you focus the scene with multiple actors?
- Eye contact is the most intimate and interesting element of acting, so make sure when you're talking to each other you really look at each other. Moments where you look away will then have a much larger weight to them, so be specific in those decisions.
- Check your 'KISS OR KILL' Zone. Take care to not get right in each other's faces for an extended period. When actors are really close to each other, it means their characters are about to start a fight, or kiss each other. If you aren't building tension in one of these areas, consider taking a step back.

### **Music (3-5 mins)**

- If your song focuses on a Shakespearean story (rather than a moment or feeling from Shakespeare) make sure you're not trying to squeeze in too much plot. The stories are famous, so audiences will be much more interested in the emotional interpretation rather than a plot recap.
- Ensure your instrumentation matches the energy of the piece/moment you're trying to convey.
- Are you confident in what you are performing? Practice it until you can perform with full confidence!

### **Dance (3-5 mins)**

- Keep your face alive.
- Take a lot of time to get the best video you can. Filming will be extremely critical in this category as a great dance can be ruined by ineffective filming. Really ensure that framing and lighting are up to scratch before the day of filming.
- Keep finding connections to the text. When a dance has been repurposed for this festival without adding plot points it can fall short on the storytelling aspect. If you have done this, just make sure your audience can tell what story you're trying to tell.
- In group pieces with different characters/groups, really invest in physicalising the differences that are appropriate to the character.

### **Film - (Short Form – under 1 min, Longer Form – 3-5 mins)**

- Sound! Sound balance and mixing extremely important. Poor framing can look like a choice. Poor sound is harder to disguise in this way.
- The first part of directing is when you're on set, the other half is in the editing room. Keep playing with edits to really get the cut you're happy with and if in doubt, CUT IT!
- Have you shown a version to a friend or relative who has no idea about the play? Check their understanding after viewing before submitting to see if it had the desired effect.

**Costume Design (minimum 4 designs)**

- Have you taken the time to embellish on the details of the design, such as fabric choice, movement of the fabric while in costume etc.
- Have you written down moments where the costume design speaks to the qualities of the character wearing it, or their place in the characters journey in the play?
- Take the time to take photos of the full design pieces as well as the details, so nothing is missed by the Shake Fest team!
- Make sure you have rendered (coloured) your designs!

**Photography (4-8 Photographs)**

- Check the reading of your photographs to someone that knows nothing about the play you are studying and what you are trying to achieve – what story do they tell when looking at your photos?
- Editing your photos can help add details that you couldn't control during the shoot – have a look at the different edits you can make (contrast, white balance, saturation etc) and what they change about the photos.