

I, Caleb Seward, Director of Golden Wings, I think the moment that I realized that this was more than just a documentary about aviation and my mother's career was when I had so much trouble figuring out the ending to the film. I couldn't decide on how to basically complete the circle. It ended with a positive note with my mother talking about perhaps keeping her crew growing until she's 87. It's a wonderful note to end the film on, but it felt to me like it was missing something and I just thought and thought and thought and I realized that a huge part of this film is a character in my deceased father that is never really addressed that aspect that that's the shocking reveal that passed away when my mother was on duty in Frankfurt, Germany. And I realized that I had to address it head on and I thought perhaps the best way to do that was through an apology of some sort and I realized that it needed to be me addressing him directly. So I decided to do it in form of an open letter and it brought the whole peaceful circle. I feel like it's a different piece now with that addition and it makes it into something more than just documentary about aviation or my mother's career. So that makes it more than a documentary just about my mother's life and career and aviation itself. It's more of a reflection on love and legacy and how we remember those who've come before us and how we reconcile with them even after they're gone. And I know that this film I changed while I was making it so I also felt like I had to address that as well. It deepened to who I am as an artist. I hope that when someone watches it they get the feeling that maybe looking back they can reevaluate some things, some aspects of perhaps their relationships with a loved one who's passed. Find a piece, find some sort of piece. How did I deal with shooting on a smartphone? Well I got as much footage as I possibly could and in the interview I made sure to get lots of interview time with my mother. I didn't prepare any of the questions firsthand. Yes, to keep it authentic what I did was I made sure that my mother did not know what I was going to ask her before I asked the questions. I also made sure to take breaks, give her time, help her warm up to the camera and just make her comfortable as I possibly could during the whole process of shooting. And also I decided that a good thing to do would be to watch her in action so it wasn't just a sort of, and you can't film on an airplane that's against the law. So what I settled for the next thing which is the American Airlines Museum, the Sierra Smith Museum in Fort Worth, Texas, right near the FW airport. So that's what I did. I took her to that museum and just took some candid shots of her looking around at the different memorabilia and mementos there and it sort of became a sort of coming home moment, I guess, sort of this living monument to American Airlines history, going there herself, taking a look around and I think I captured some of the magic of that moment. Making this film I mentioned this earlier has sort of, more than any other project that I've done. So I think that's what I think about the project changes you, every project, you come out, hopefully a better artist. This one on the other end I came out as almost a, almost a different person. Through the process of editing and creating and making this film, I realized that there was a lot of unprocessed grief that I hadn't dealt with and this was a different sort of, different sort of approach that I had to take than I have with any other project that I had to take to the time when you're shooting a documentary and your subjects, of course you perhaps grow and attach to them in some sort of way. But when it's your family, it's completely different, especially when you're dealing with deceased loved ones. So I had that sort of a dual channel of grief coming out. One of my grandfather has passed away and I was a huge part of the documentary about him and then of course my father has passed away and there's a huge part of the documentary that's about him. So I spent some time with both of them and learning new things about them and learning new things about myself and crying a lot in front of my computer at certain scenes that I would be editing. And so I realized this was a different sort of game that I was playing. I want to say that. This was a different sort of beast. And I had to take breaks. I would feel entirely guilty about it because I'm just one person working on this essentially. I've gotten somehow now with our production coordinator, Jonah, but before that there was no one. So five months of this, more than five months, it was just me. And so I had to learn to take breaks because if I didn't, I would have become sort of encapsulated by the grief. And I had to learn how to step away and take time and make sure that I was taking care of myself. So it was a completely different sort of process, entirely worthwhile. Like I said, I think it not only changed me as an artist, but as a person as well. So hopefully that comes through with the words that I've got. Thank you.