

TWO LIFE CHANGING CRASHES. ONE UNBREAKABLE DESIRE TO WIN.

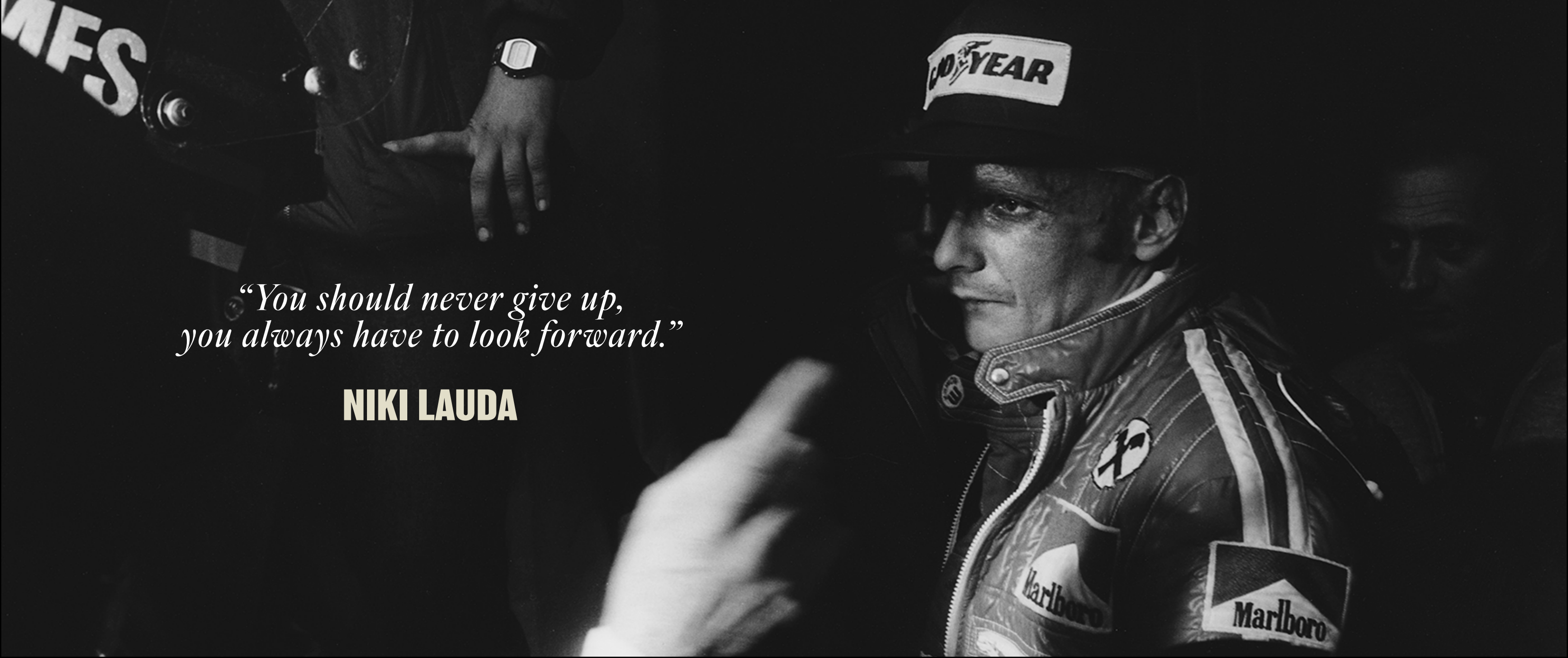


FROM THE PRODUCERS OF 14 PEAKS: NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE

# OUT OF THE FLAMES







*“You should never give up,  
you always have to look forward.”*

**NIKI LAUDA**



# LOGLINE & SIZZLE

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**A death-defying blast on the F1 track. A plane going down in the jungle. Niki Lauda's life went up in flames not once, but twice. Both times he fought like his life depended on it. This documentary unravels the astonishing life story of a global icon who had to enter the fire to truly discover the person that would come **Out of The Flames.****



# INTRODUCTION

**Out of the Flames** is more than a film about a global sports icon; it's an immersion into an adrenaline fuelled story defined by fire. A cautionary tale of calculated risk and recklessness, fused together by a fascinating character on an unrelenting quest for the truth. At its core, it's about the tragic loss of Lauda Flight 004, a crash that shattered 223 lives and thrust Niki into an epic battle against one of the most powerful corporations in the world.

Niki Lauda was a man both inspiring and impossible, brilliant, fearless and at times reckless. He was deemed 'The Human Computer' for his emotional detachment and legendary bluntness, but beneath that surface lay contradictions that are at the heart of his story. Niki walked back into a Formula 1 paddock just weeks after nearly dying in a fireball, but then walked away on the final race of the season with the Championship on the line. He said the risk was too great. But, what was he risking? What truly mattered to him? He left Ferarri when they refused to say the Nurburgring crash wasn't his fault. Emotion had to play a part in that decision.

Decades later, he faced the devastation of the Lauda Air crash, once again refusing to back down until he had answers. The circumstances leading up to both crashes, and the fiery fallout that followed, remarkably mirror one another. And, both times the stakes weren't just about his life; they were about how far he was willing to push himself in pursuit of his own destiny.







What is truly intriguing is Niki's quest for vindication - for himself and others. After his 1976 Nürburgring crash, Ferrari nearly replaced him while he was still recovering, and that wound never really healed. In many ways, the Lauda Air disaster was history repeating itself, another moment where he had to prove that he wouldn't be blamed. But this time, Niki wasn't just fighting for himself, he was fighting for the truth, for the families of the victims, and for his legacy.

A figure of power and perseverance, the film reveals a Herculean character, someone who is forged in the flames of seemingly insurmountable trials. Niki Lauda's entire life was built on a series of high-stakes gambles, each one pushing him harder. He was relentless in his pursuits, always willing to put everything on the line, relying on nothing but his own extraordinary willpower to survive. Someone struggling against destiny.

**For all his flaws, Niki was emboldened in the face of adversity and he embodied the enduring spirit of humanity.  
Something we all need in today's trying times.**





# OVER 100 HOURS OF UNSEEN ARCHIVE





# EXECUTION

The film will unfold through two high stakes, parallel timelines. The first, set in 1991, drives the narrative as Niki battles for answers in the wake of the Lauda Air crash. The second timeline serves as a trapdoor into the key moments of Niki's F1 career and family life that shaped him. These past moments are woven into the story, revealing how the events and decisions of Niki's life led him to this defining battle.

**Out of the Flames** will combine powerful unseen archive, unheard audio, and cinematic reconstruction to tell Niki Lauda's story like never before. With access to incredible broadcast footage and exclusive F1 team vaults, we will weave rare, intimate moments from Niki's career and personal life into a gripping, visual narrative.

Cinematic reconstructions will bring the intensity of the 1991 Lauda Air crash and the 1976 Nürburgring disaster to life, giving audiences a visceral experience of these pivotal events. Premium graphics will be used to clearly explain the technicalities behind both crashes, seamlessly blending with the archive footage to enhance the storytelling and keep viewers engaged.

## THE UNSEEN

- Unprecedented access to the ORF's 60-year Lauda archive.
- For the first time, access to the Lauda family archive.
- Access to Ferrari's Maranello vault; a notoriously difficult archive to penetrate, holding some of the most exclusive footage of Niki's time at Ferrari.
- Access to over 1,000 hours from McLaren's archive,
  - Access to Mercedes F1 social archives.

## THE UNHEARD

- 1-hour unheard interview with Mike Doodson: A candid conversation covering F1, the Air crash, and family,
  - Exclusive unheard interview with Maurice Hamilton.
- Additional audio recordings: We are tracking down further sources of interviews and candid conversations that offer a deeper, more personal side of Niki's life and battles.



# STRUCTURE

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## ACT 1 - THE CRASH

A Boeing 767 belonging to Niki Lauda's airline drops out of the sky, killing everyone on board. By this point, Niki is considered the most famous Austrian since Mozart, a three-time F1 world champion and airline mogul - but he suddenly has big questions to answer. When Boeing blame the pilot, Niki heads to a Thai jungle searching for the answers deep among the plane wreckage.



## ACT 2 - THE FIGHT FOR TRUTH

As Niki's investigation leads him on the search for the black box to find out what really happened, he is reminded of a near fatal crash during his Formula One career. One that Ferrari blamed on Niki himself. Niki's F1 success was built on a series of high-stakes gambles. But after seeing the tears fall as he attends passengers' funerals, he takes his biggest punt yet ... taking on Boeing.



## ACT 3 - VINDICATION AND LEGACY

The pressure is on not just for the future of Lauda Air, but the future safety of aviation. More than that, it's the denouement of another extraordinary quest for vindication. Will Niki succeed in forcing accountability, unlike all of those years prior in F1?





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# ACT 1

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May, 1991

## Falling Silence

The film opens in the stillness of the Thai jungle. We hear the cockpit recording of Lauda Air Flight 004. An ominous beeping noise is followed by frantic pilot exchange.

**An explosion...then nothing but static.**



## The Weight Of A Name

News footage tells us that Lauda Air, a project carrying the name of three time world champion Niki Lauda, has crashed. It's the worst air plane crash Thailand has ever seen. Hundreds have died.

Their corpses lie smouldering in the jungle. The questions immediately begin.

**What caused it? Who is at fault?**



## The Hunt For The Black Box

Niki is one of the first on the ground in Thailand. Following his sizzling F1 career, Niki saw Lauda Air as a means of being on top of the world again - but at what cost? Niki has pillaged so much time and money into the business, that his marriage is in tatters. Found culpable for this crash, and it will be end game for the business he has sacrificed everything for. He heads to Thailand, determined to find the black box that could hold the answers.

**He has to find that box.**







## Early Years

1972. It wouldn't be the first time Niki's dogged pursuit came in the way of his family. In chasing his F1 dream, he cuts himself off from his wealthy family. They want respectability; he wants speed. To prove them wrong, he gambles everything—self-financing a seat with March. But he needs success with bankruptcy looming.

**He contemplates suicide, but giving up is not in his blood.**

## Betting It All on Ferrari

1974. After success with BRM, Niki signs with Ferrari, a prestigious team struggling to regain its former glory. Niki is underestimated. But Niki catalyses an upturn in fortunes, as he helps Ferrari build a car capable of winning. **He doesn't just push the car; he deconstructs every part of it, understands its intricacies, elevating his performances, race by race.**

## Championship #1

1975. Niki secures the 'Prancing Horse' their first World Championship in over a decade. Archive and interviews with former teammates and technicians show the genius of Niki's technique. The same year he meets Marlene. A man who sacrificed his relationship for his family for F1 has found love again.

**Niki is at the top of his game. Nothing can bring him down.**

HOOK TO ACT TWO

## The Black Box

From the ashes, the plane's Black Box is recovered. It's incinerated. Niki is immediately looking forward. Interviews with Thai investigators, Lauda Air executives and those who accompanied him in the jungle reveal Niki's determination and his refusal to quit.

**This is Niki Lauda; never look back, never give in.**



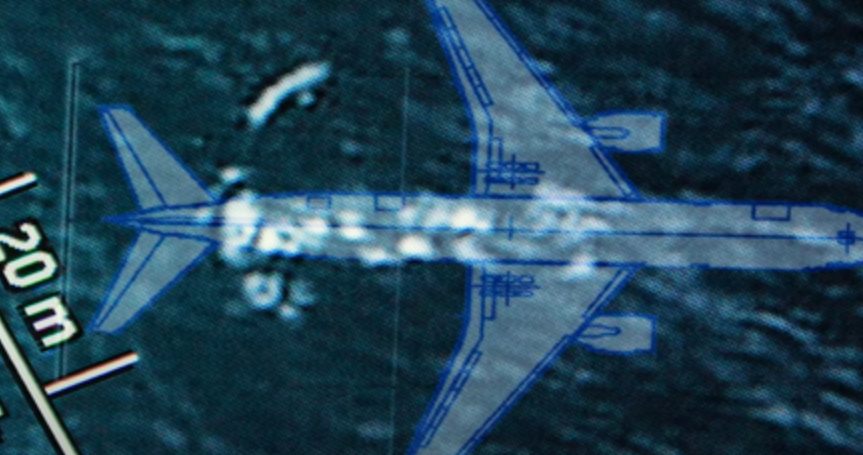




# ACT 2







## A Theory Ignited

With the black box offering no answers, global news outlets begin to speculate - a terror plot? Mechanical failure? Pilot error? Boeing say the latter and hold Lauda Air at fault. But just like he did during his F1 days, Niki got to know his machines intimately. He know there's another answer...

**And he's is going to prove it.**



## Whispers of Blame

223 lost souls. Families want answers. A Lauda Air colleague claims that he would never let his own children fly on the service as Niki personally ignored safety warnings in his desperate attempts to keep the company growing and out of the red. Did Niki's relentless "foot to the floor" approach to everything—racing, business, life - play a part in this disaster? "If it's our fault, I will shut down the airline". Even during his F1 days, Lauda had never tried to take on a rival as big as Boeing.

**His legacy is on the line.**



## Nürburgring: Fire and Fallout

**1976.** Niki has spent all week arguing for the race at the sport's most notoriously dangerous track to be cancelled. He loses the driver's vote by one. He is emotional and angry. The next day, Niki speeds around the Nurburgring course. Suddenly, his Ferrari violently crashes, trapping him inside. Fellow drivers pull him from the burning wreckage, saving his life. His lungs are scorched. His face is severely burned. At the hospital, Niki is read his last rites. News footage foreshadows the rumours we have just seen in 1991. Niki has been here before. History is cruelly repeating itself.

**It's another battle, played out fifteen years before Lauda Air.**







## Financial Freefall

The plane crash sends shockwaves through Lauda Air's finances. With one of his 767's in ruins, he is forced to ground the second. Bookings plummet overnight. This small airline, built meticulously by Niki with the same precision he brought to his racing, faces an existential crisis. Every day that passes without answers puts Lauda Air closer to bankruptcy.

**Time is running out.**



## Personal Strain

The crash puts Niki's entire life under immense pressure, and that pressure finds its way home. The intensity with which Niki approaches the investigation leaves little room for anything else, and interviews with his family reveal how they don't see him for months.

**The crash is more than a tragedy, it's a threat to everything, even Niki's very sense of being.**



## Miracle At Monza

**1976.** Niki Lauda walks back into the paddock, just four weeks after he nearly burned to death in his racecar. He's pulled himself out of the most perilous situations before, and here's proof. His face is still bleeding, he's missing an ear. And yet here he is. It is the most miraculous comeback in sporting history.

Two weeks later. The Championship is Lauda's to lose. Yet the torrential rain and near-zero visibility is treacherous. Niki, a master of calculated risks, retires after two laps. It's too dangerous. To the world, it looks like he gave up, but for Niki, survival outweighs any reward.

**Winning isn't worth his life.**







## The Fragility of Greatness

1977. Niki wins the World Championship - yet walks away from Ferrari days after. He knows while he was fighting for his life in hospital Ferrari was already looking ahead, lining up a replacement before he was even certain to survive. It's a brutal lesson: even as a world champion, someone who rebuilt the entire brand, you can be replaced in an instant. As he drifts towards mediocrity at Bernie Ecclestone's inferior Brabham, some wonder whether he regrets these principles.

**Not Niki, he'll never forget how Ferrari made him feel.**



## Exit Strategy

1978. Niki quits F1, "fed up with driving around in circles". Shortly after, he loses his father - a successful businessman - and becomes a father himself. Niki attempts to eclipse his dad's legacy by establishing Lauda Air.

**A man who has spent the last decade only worrying about his own safety, suddenly has a lot more responsibility on his hands.**



## HOOK TO ACT THREE

## A Reckoning of Loss

Niki travels to Thailand to attend the mass burial for the 23 victims whose bodies could not be identified. As he stands among grieving families, he feels the weight of the tragedy like never before, thinking to his wife and two sons back in Austria. This is far beyond the individual risks he took in Formula 1. The stakes now involve hundreds of lives, over 223 families shattered by loss, and he has to give them answers.

**He will not abandon them like Ferrari once abandoned him.**





A close-up, low-angle shot of a person's face, focusing on their right eye which is replaced by a blue, prosthetic eye. The person is looking out of a window, with a blurred landscape of hills and a small white building visible in the background. The lighting is soft and natural, suggesting an overcast day. The text "ACT 3" is centered on the image, flanked by two horizontal red lines.

**ACT 3**





## Showdown In Seattle

Fresh from the funerals, Niki carries the grief of the families with him and sets his sights on Boeing. He heads to Seattle, demanding access to their simulator. Fifteen tests, recreating Flight 004, all end the same: recovery is impossible. It wasn't pilot error; it wasn't Lauda Air. It was the aircraft. Niki's suspicions are confirmed, but Boeing stays silent. Disgusted, Niki realises he must think of a new tactic.

**He's not giving up the fight.**



## The Comeback of a Champion

1982. Niki Lauda is running out of money and under pressure. Lauda Air, his new venture, is struggling against Austria Airlines, and he needs cash. People had told him he was foolish for moving into Aviation, that he would be out of his depth. He can't let them be proved right. Niki makes a bold move, he returns to Formula 1. The cars are now so much more advanced, but somehow Niki adapts; he always does. Banking that his experience can win out over speed, he takes calculated risks, outthinking younger rivals. By the final race of 1984, Niki's strategy pays off, he edges out Alain Prost to claim his third World Championship, proving he's still the smartest driver on the grid.

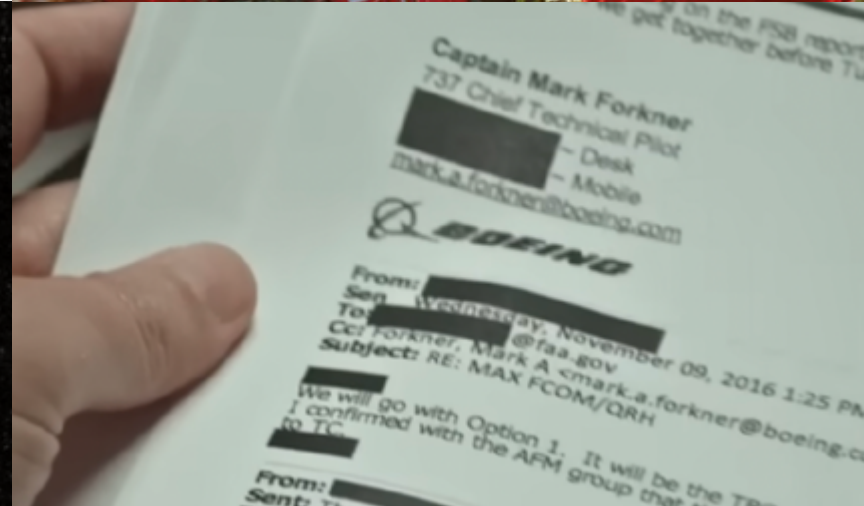
**Niki always finds a way.**



## High-Stakes Ultimatum

Just as he outsmarted rivals at McLaren, Niki uses that same strategy and intellect to take on Boeing. When they refuse to admit fault, Niki goes all in on one final gamble, threatening to put a plane in the air to recreate the crash conditions and offering to be on board the plane himself, once again putting his life on the line in pursuit of victory. Backed into a corner, Boeing cave, finally admitting a critical flaw in the thrust reverser.

**Niki has once again overcome impossible odds.**





## BEYOND THE FLAMES

With Boeing finally conceding, they commit to modifications across over 1,600 aircraft. For Niki, this is about far more than safety, it is about vindication. At the Nürburgring, he had been blamed, doubted, and replaced. But this time, he refused to be a scapegoat. Niki stood for the families, for the 223 lives lost, pushing against powerful forces to get the truth. He wasn't just fighting for accountability, he was fighting to reclaim the respect and justice that had eluded him in his darkest moment.

**This victory is the culmination of everything we've learned about Niki Lauda: his relentless pursuit of perfection, his stubborn defiance in the face of adversity, and his complex mix of obsession, calculated gambles and unparalleled resilience. Niki's life was filled with battles; on the track, in business, and against public perception but this battle resulted in the most personal and defining moments of his extraordinary life.**





# POSTSCRIPT



By 2018, Niki Lauda had evolved. No longer a lone wolf, he embraced the ethos of teamwork. Air Lauda had been disbanded, and Formula 1 once again became his true passion, giving him purpose.



Now remarried, Niki remained bold and direct but grew into a more present father, nurturing his new family and strengthening his bond with Marlene. He understood the importance of connecting with people, not just machines.



Niki's legacy was more than safety advancements, it became a blueprint for modern sport. He was a human computer before sports data existed, with relentless determination and courage, he embodied the qualities every athlete needs to succeed.



**Niki Lauda lived without compromise, facing challenges head-on. His story was about winning the right way, blending brilliance with the pursuit for perfection. His legacy is a testament to what it takes to truly be the best.**





# CONTRIBUTORS

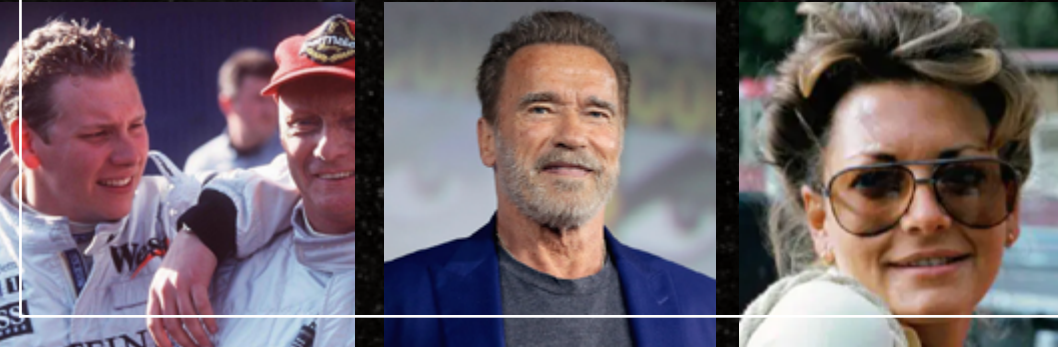
With the support of the Lauda estate and their incredible connections, we will bring together a diverse range of contributors and voices from every chapter of Niki's life—offering an authentic, intimate, and multifaceted view of the man behind the legend.

## FAMILY & FRIENDS

**Lukas Lauda & Mathias Lauda:** Niki's sons, provide deeply personal perspectives on the impact of having an often-absent father who was always focused on the future. They share intimate stories of family life and the lessons learned from a man driven by relentless ambition.

**Arnold Schwarzenegger** - A lifelong friend will share unique insights into Niki's unwavering determination, strength, and character. Having delivered a heartfelt eulogy at Niki's funeral, Arnold offers a deeply personal perspective on their friendship and the man behind the public persona.

**Other:** Marlene Lauda (ex-wife) and Florian Lauda (brother)



## PLANE CRASH

**Otmar Lenz:** Lauda Air's CEO. Niki's right hand man, Lenz was in the eye of the storm in the aftermath of the Lauda Air crash. He takes us inside the operation at Lauda Air in the wake of the disaster, recounting the intense pressure, chaos and media frenzy that erupted and engulfed the airline and its employees.

**Bob MacIntosh:** Former U.S. Air Crash Investigator. Bob played a critical role in the technical analysis and investigation of the Lauda Air Flight 004 disaster. With decades of experience, he offers detailed insight into the investigation.

**Other:** Regina Thurner (widow of first officer of Lauda Flight 004)



## FORMULA 1

**Lewis Hamilton:** F1 World Champion and mentee of Niki Lauda. More than just a mentor, Niki became a father figure to Hamilton, shaping his journey both on and off the track. Hamilton will share how Niki's guidance, tough love, and belief in him helped mold him into the champion he is today.

**Toto Wolff:** Longtime friends turned business partners, Wolff will share how Niki's arrival at Mercedes not only strengthened their bond but also transformed the team into a dominant force in Formula 1.

**Other:** Gunter Steiner (former partner at Jaguar)

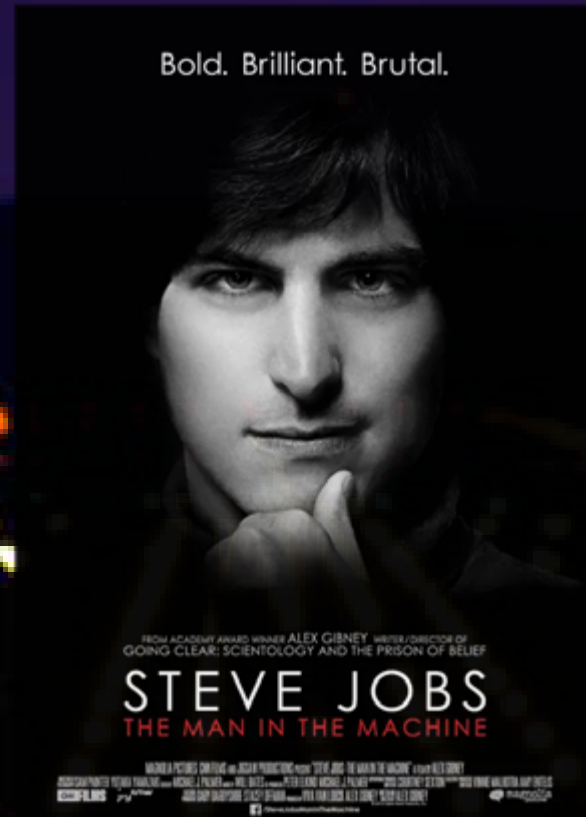






# COMPARABLE FILMS

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# NMG FILMS



Noah Media Group is the award-winning production and distribution company behind many critically-acclaimed feature documentaries and series. We boast an industry-leading in-house production team and graphics team recognised by BAFTA, the Royal Television Society (RTS), the Sports Journalists' Association (SJA), Grierson & the Cannes Film Festival. Our titles include:



sky original  
**HATTON**

**HATTON**  
SKY DOCS



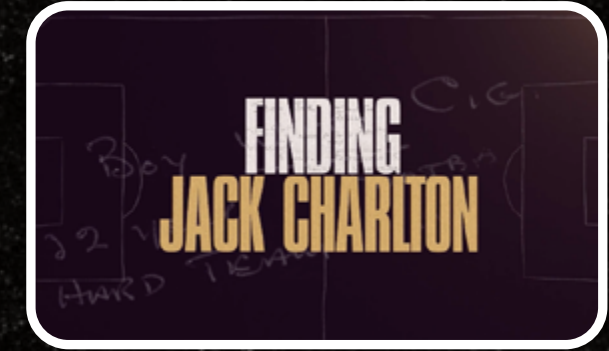
sky original  
**VILLENEUVE PIRONI**  
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**14 PEAKS**  
NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE

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NETFLIX



**FINDING  
JACK CHARLTON**

**FINDING JACK CHARLTON**



★★★★★  
JOHN CROSS - THE BARRON  
★★★★★  
AMY LAWRENCE - THE ATHLETE  
**ARSENÉ WENGER**  
**INVINCIBLE**

**ARSENÉ WENGER**  
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**SOUTH  
OF THE  
RIVER**

**SOUTH OF THE RIVER**  
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**THE EDGE**

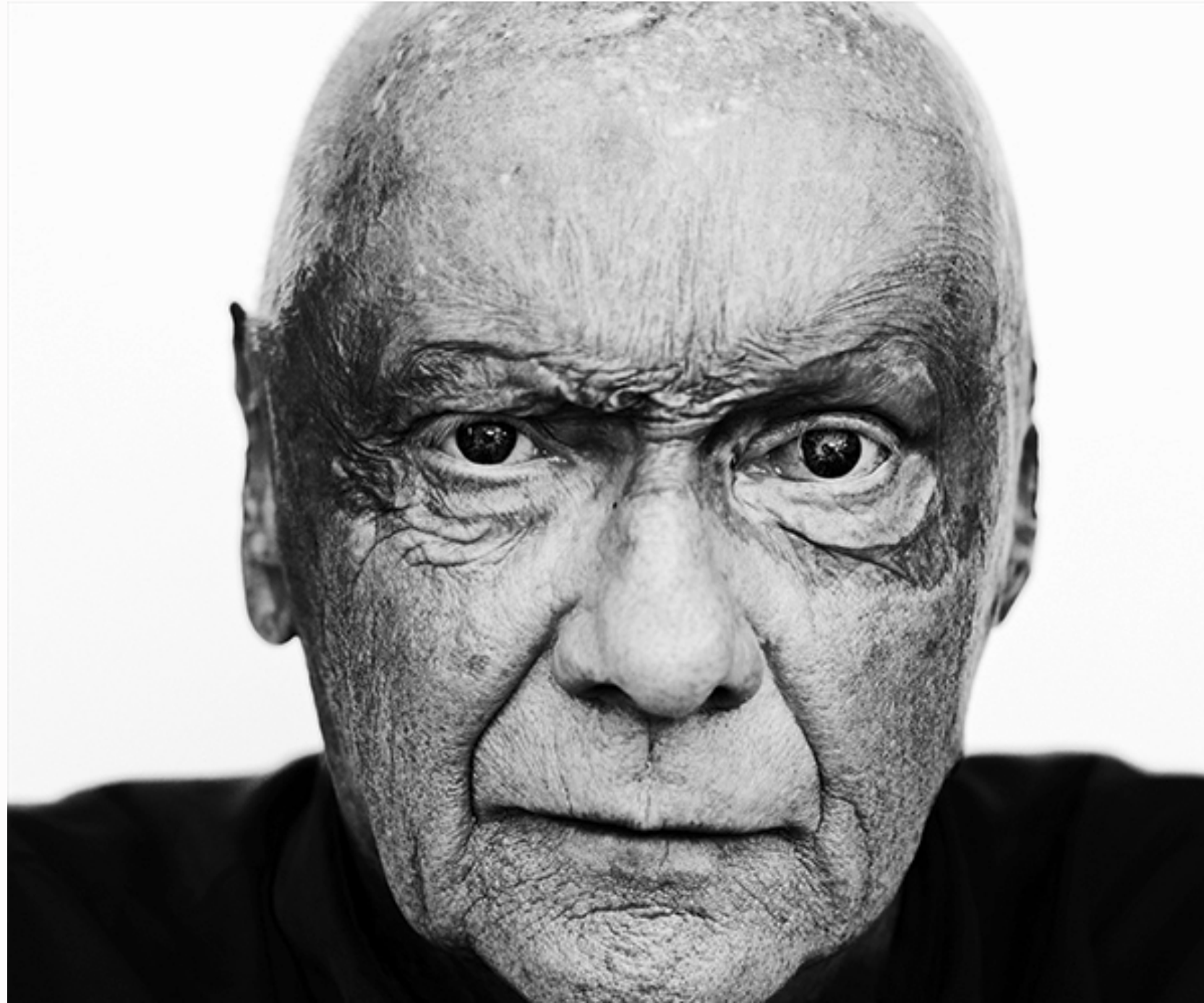
**THE EDGE**  
AMAZON



**BOBBY  
ROBSON**  
MORE THAN A MANAGER

**BOBBY ROBSON**  
NETFLIX





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