

FLYABOUT

RATING 3

(Director: Monika Petrillo, Not Rated, 74 min)
(Our first screening - South By Southwest 2006)

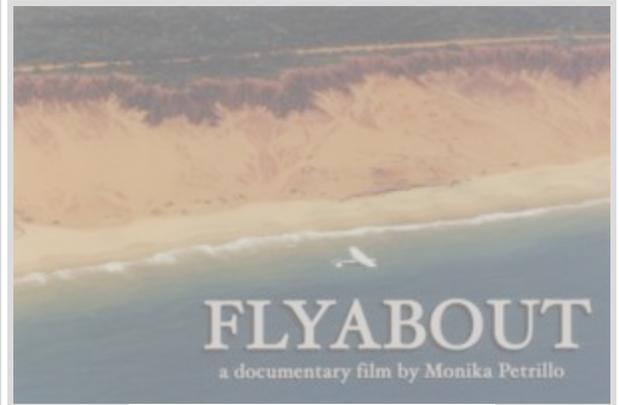
As a novice pilot, Monika Petrillo and her even less-experienced-pilot father set out on a flying adventure to circumnavigate Australia. They embark on a flying excursion with a group of eleven other people in small Cessna planes; all of the other pilots have considerable more experience than Monika and her dad. The flying group consists of Freddie and Pat Cuthbert, Jerry and Melba Kooyman, Elliott and Maxine Schiffman, Uwe (her dad) and Jacqueline von Manteuffel, Wolf (her brother), and Mal Shipton.

She set out with the thought that this could be a magical experience to bond with her dad, what she didn't count on was the tension that would arise due to their lack of experience and the elements that they had to overcome to safely fly from point to point (wind, rain storms, zero visibility, mechanical malfunctions and unforgiving dirt runways).

Monika was intrigued by the concept of the Aboriginal walkabout and was looking for the parallels in her own spiritual quest – the freedom of being in the air and looking at the amazing landscapes should be the perfect setting for serenity, but the gravity of being responsible for the lives of her passengers (all family members) interrupted that a bit.

The film has some amazing footage – you can see why they would want to tour Australia this way – fly over incredible vistas; get to do some sightseeing on the ground with wonderful folks and venture into some very remote places. The scenes are breathtaking; if this film had no other merit (but it does) the images themselves are worth the time investment to watch the journey.

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Movie Chick Cherryl:

"Just like her trip, this documentary probably isn't the same one that Monika envisioned when she set out on this journey, but when life throws you curveballs, you put it on film. It makes for an honest family portrait with some astonishing footage – 3."

Movie Chick Leigh Ann:

"I wonder if her dad tried to teach her to drive on the Autobahn if he experienced the same level of angst? - 3"