A film screening and conversation with Ben Proudfoot

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**Marc Freedman**

Hi, I'm Marc Freedman. I'm the founder and CO CEO of CoGenerate. We're an organization that's focused on bringing older and younger people together to forge bonds, bridge divides and CO create a better future for all generations. And I'm so happy to be kicking off the third in our webinar series for the project music across generations, which is focused on the power of music to bring older and younger people together in partnership and in connection. And I'm so happy to be doing it at the end of what I know for most of us has been a very stressful week. It's great to have this community and to focus on an enormously hopeful, insightful, wise and powerful film, really, for me, something that shows the way music can be connecting force between people across age and and other difference it. This series is sponsored by the Eisner Foundation. The first in the series was a portrait of the heart of LA's intergenerational chorus big band and orchestra, and I am also deeply honored and so excited to be talking today with the filmmaker Ben Proudfoot, a two time Academy Award winner who won the Academy Award this year for the last repair shop about his film, my favorite music documentary with generational themes of all time, a concerto is a conversation. This is the 12th time I've seen a concerto is a conversation. And I'm moved deeply by it every time. Moved deeply by the chance to talk about it with Ben Proudfoot, the director, along with Kris Bowers. About six months ago, I got an email from Sherry Lansing, the former head of Paramount Pictures, who was a long time board member at CoGenerate and she was writing to introduce me to Ben. She didn't know that that week, I had written an article saying that for all the attention the holdovers was getting, I think AARP designated it as the best intergenerational film that was up for an Oscar this year, that the best intergenerational film was actually the last repair show, and that I was already a fan of Ben's work, but I hadn't seen a concerto as a conversation before and and that ended up being a revelation for me, along with so many of your other films, Ben, including, That's My Jazz and The Queen of Basketball. Thank you so much for spending time with us today.

**Ben Proudfoot**

An honor to be here. And thank you. Thanks for shedding a light on on concerto and this and this story, which I haven't actually seen the film in a long time. And it was just amazing. Kris. Kris is looks a lot younger. And, yeah, it was just, it was a, it's a sweet memory thinking about making a film

**Marc Freedman**

when you see it now, after, after the hiatus, do you think, Oh, I wish I had done this differently, or, oh, yeah,

**Ben Proudfoot**

that was a ham handed transition, but, you know. But you also, at the same time, you think, Oh, that was actually pretty good. It goes a good idea, you know. But you also remember, you know how tough it was to you know which lenses we chose and why, you know all the background information of why we, you know, chose different things. So there's a lot it always brings a lot of memories up to watch a film that I haven't seen in a while. Well,

**Marc Freedman**

I want to ask you about even the lenses, but, but first, the New York Times used to have a five question feature that they did with authors when, when a book came out. And the question I always loved and went to first was, how, how did this book turn out to be different than the one you set out to run? And I want to ask you that about this film. Yeah,

**Ben Proudfoot**

well, very much. So this project started as calling Kris and seeing if he would do a two minute profile about the concerto that he was writing for the Walt Disney Concert Hall. It was a basic behind the scenes. You know, Kris laboring away at the piano figuring out how to write this concerto. I had read that he was putting this on, and I thought it would be a good short thing. We were working with the LA Phil, and I thought this would be great. So I called him, and he said, Yeah, come on over and we'll talk about it. And when I went over to his house, he that morning, he happened to be wearing a full suit and tie. And I asked him why, and he said he had just come from a dedication ceremony for his grandfather, who the city had named the this entire block, the Bowers square in in South LA. And I said, Oh, what's that story? And he told me and how his grandfather hitch hiked across the country, etc, etc. And I said, that's the movie. That's a much better, you know? And Kris said, Yeah, I've always wanted to. And then from there, it became very immediately, it was like, Okay, we could do a double, what we call a double and terratron, which is that eye contact method of looking at each other and having eye contact, which you see in the movie. And it was just that's where the collaboration began. So it started out as something very small, and it became more or less a tribute to Kris grandfather that we made

**Marc Freedman**

and to the relationship. I keep thinking that the well I was, I was choked up so many times, but I his Horace seniors comment at the end, I hope I had a little something to do with it. Yeah. Why would you that the scene that that grabs me every time is is Horace's glasses fogging up? Yeah? What tell us about that and what? What does that see mean to you?

**Ben Proudfoot**

Well, we were there. We were there in that space, which is such a lived in space that that dry cleaning factory on premises, and and we were there, and he was showing us how the, you know, steamer works with sort of this bag that fills with hot air, and this big, you know, blast of air came out and fogged his glasses. And they started laughing. And I just thought, Man, that there is something really beautiful about that moment, and it just struck me as you know, I all four of my grandparents are gone, and it struck me as the kind of moment that you remember, that you share with a with a parent or a grandparent, that's a simple moment that strikes you as delightful, that tickles you in some way, and that's what it reminded me of, is like, that's the kind of moment that you'll remember forever about your relationship. And so we tried to capture it in the movie, and I think it worked.

**Marc Freedman**

Yeah, absolutely. And it did make me think of the kind of unconditional love that exist between grandparents and grandchildren. You know, it's, it's blind. But I, yeah, I

**Ben Proudfoot**

mean, I think, I think there is that, that layer there, yeah, for sure.

**Marc Freedman**

The the other scene that I, I always think about and love seeing again, is the steamer and the Steinway, the petals, yeah, where Horace match cut, yeah, yeah.

**Ben Proudfoot**

It just occurred to me, I think, you know, yeah, you go there, and Horace is like, you know, this is what I did for X many years, and I'm examining it visually, and he's showing what he's doing very, you know, you could tell that he was a master at this, this machine. And it just struck me, the similarity between the two machines, right? Is his, he's there doing this, and there's a pedal. And I it just struck me, wow. These are very similar, you know, and very different machines and that, you know, as a filmmaker, you're always looking for the images and sort of symbols that speak to the greater story. And with this story, it's all about, you know, the journey, basically that, like the journey from the steamer to the piano in the concert hall, like, how did it get from this to this and and that image just says so much about that, about the stark difference between those two machines, but also the stunning similarities between them. And that's why that moment is just magic. That cut just sums up the movie in that one moment. And you're always looking for that magic as a filmmaker. It

**Marc Freedman**

ties so much into the title of the concerto For A Younger Self, which is such a bridge between time that felt like something you can't make up, the fact

**Ben Proudfoot**

yeah, and he that all he made, those were all decisions he that he had made before we ever even talked about. I mean, the concerto itself was mostly written by the time I called Kris and it, and the parts that are in the movie are beautiful, but it's a much, you know, it's now released, and I encourage everybody, if they're interested in Kris music, to. Go and seek out For A Younger Self. It's a brilliant concerto, and super virtuosic. I mean, it's an amazing piece of music,

**Marc Freedman**

and it made me think about how all of the paths that Horace had traveled had made it possible for sort of this version of his younger self, in a way, Kris to to have the opportunities that that he had, and and the way the generations are intertwined and interwoven and interdependent, yeah,

**Ben Proudfoot**

and how one little thing 50 years ago, you know, can have this enormous ripple effect into the future that was, that was very sort of present. Like, what if he hadn't, what if he had gone to a different city or, or, what if a different dry cleaner had called him back and he hadn't met Kris grandmother or, or, like, there's just so many things like that that I thought, Man, that's amazing.

**Marc Freedman**

How long did it well, how do you get all of that into 13 minutes without it seeming rushed or or hurried or crammed?

**Ben Proudfoot**

Well, you I mean very carefully. I mean it all. It all happens in the head. Obviously, there's many hours of of work that we that we couldn't include. And so you're looking for highly layered scenes, scenes that have dimension to them and are elegant representations of multiple things that create a complex idea you are, you know, relying on images and sound and music to very quickly and efficiently relay complex ideas. You are depending on pre existing notions and expectations of the audience that you can use and play off of in order to not have to explain or establish those things in the film itself. So as a short documentarian, you are kind of peddling and all kinds of stuff that's external to the movie. And you're also really, really looking for images, moments, scenes, pauses, pieces of music, et cetera, that are loaded with a lot of information so that we can get a full we can use your full brain and bandwidth during those 13 minutes. So you just feel like you've lived a lifetime with the Bowers family by the end of it,

**Marc Freedman**

why did you decide to make short documentaries? Did you think you were going to make long documentaries when you started?

**Ben Proudfoot**

Actually, no, I had no interest in documentary film at all. I wanted to make scripted narrative features, you know, Steven Spielberg and George Lucas. And you know, then that led me to film school, and I studied Frank Capra and John Ford, and you know, so many filmmakers that inspired me. But really, it was, you know, I get asked this question a lot, because people why short documentaries? Don't you want to make a real movie? And you know, I think, I think the thing that really draws me to the short documentary is that it is the most democratic form of cinema, right? I don't have to ask anyone's permission to go make a short documentary. I don't have to raise millions of dollars. I don't have to waste 10 years of my life, pitching it around town to get it done. You know, I'm built to tell stories and make movies, and in absence of winning the lottery, you know, the short documentary is just something that's like, within a scope and scale that, you know, we at our company can can do, and so I can make, you know, 1015, 20 movies a year about all kinds of subjects. And I don't have to, you know, get the approval of of a major studio, which is very difficult. There's not the same kind of fiduciary duty. And very importantly, I can, I can use the internet to distribute these films, and a lot more people get to be engaged by by the work. And also, you know, times are changing in terms of what people are interested in. The last repair shop has enormous viewership, more than most feature documentaries that were produced last year this year. So there's something that's changing in our society. And if you kind of boil it down as a filmmaker, of like, I want to tell fantastic stories that wouldn't otherwise get told through the medium of cinema to millions of people. Nowhere in there. Does it say that the thing has to be two hours? That's a vestige of the past. Let

**Marc Freedman**

me. Let me ask you another question. After I saw last repair shop, I then went and rum and watched a concerto I saw that's my jazz. And then I watched the queen of basketball, another film that you won an Academy Award for. And I know you have your Breakwater has a new film that just got. At released this week, motorcycle Mary. So many of these films feature elders who are pioneering. Mary McGee, pioneering in the motorcycle racing arena. Horace Bowers, his entrepreneurship. Lucy Harris and and in many ways, you've got them looking these elders looking back at their younger self, for a younger self. How am I just seeing that because I'm inclined in that, or has that become a theme in a lot of your movie making?

**Ben Proudfoot**

You know, I see it now that you say it. I mean, I don't know. I think a lot of times, as a storyteller, like, I don't examine that about myself or the films that I make. But clearly, I mean, yeah, there's, there's a thread there. Why I think I'm just kind of, like, thirsty for context. You know, I grew up in, you know, my my dad was a lawyer, my mom is a sociology professor, and both very curious people and just trying to, you know, figure out. I've just been trying to figure out how the world is the way it is since I could first formulate an idea. And I think the best way that I've found to do that is to talk to people who were in the room you know, or who were around then and and I'm also not much of a reader, so the most impactful moments of my life have been often watching movies or conversations I've had with people. And I think a lot of these films are kind of like taking taking a conversation that I've had with somebody really interesting who has a great story, and turning it into a film that replicates that conversation to the audience. And for me, that is how I've come to understand how the world works and my position in it, and what I can do, and all those things. So I think, I think that's, to me, the the great value, and I think we, we miss out on on that a lot in our society, and we discard incredibly valuable information and insight from from past generations and generations that have more experience than us. You know, probably because we're, you know, young people are apt to sort of throw everything in the trash and start over again. There's something, there's something exciting about that. I don't know what it is, but it's a mistake. And so I like, I like making movies that says, Well, you know, actually, maybe the essential information we need is right under our notes. That's, I think, a very compelling idea to me.

**Marc Freedman**

Are you still thinking about making a film about your father?

**Ben Proudfoot**

You know, I maybe every film I make is about my father. I don't know. I mean, i i It's hard to escape who you are, right? So I don't know. Well, we'll see. I mean, I kind of follow my nose on on different things, but there's a lot of stuff that is definitely unfinished business, I think, in the story of our relationship that seems to find its way into the films.

**Marc Freedman**

I'm gonna turn to some of the questions from the audience, but even before I do that, I'll just read you the last repair shop is so moving and incredible. I've told everybody about it, and they are so grateful. We have dozens of comments along those lines. And we'll, we'll send you these afterwards, but the here's, here's one that's just come in. How is winning an Oscar impacted your ability to raise funds or find partners, collaborators for your other docs?

**Ben Proudfoot**

Yeah. I mean, I think in some ways it has it. In some ways it hasn't, you know, as of today, the short documentary as an industry is still nascent, right? It's a market that we've been working on building, and there's not that many other people who are, you know, helping us. There are some but it's not a very big group of people. It makes sense to me that there needs to be a bigger market. So the people who are financially supporting us are mostly believers in that grander vision and that that the short documentary is ascendant, as if as a form of storytelling, or they truly, deeply believe in that the story has to be told. And there's an element of philanthropy to to the support of the films. And so if you think about, you know, either one of those things that what, what the Oscar is really is more, more of a of a way to reach a. Huge audience with a short documentary is that, you know, if you can get an Oscar nomination, you know, forget about the win. If you can get an Oscar donation, a lot of people will will watch your movie, just by virtue of that. And that's our greatest struggle, is, how do we get a whole bunch of people to see this important story? That's why we're so interested in that path. And so I think having one, you know, a couple of times in this category, probably gives greater confidence that you know, that the movie will be good, yes, but also that people will see it, which is kind of the Great question, is like, okay, we can make a move, isn't, you know, tree falls in the forest and nobody's there, which is often a struggle in the in the short documentary world about, how do you make sure people are paying attention? Would you spend a lot of time trying, you know, to figure out and solve

**Marc Freedman**

one of the people I was scrolling through the comments, and they raised the line of when Horace is asking Kris about, where did he go to school? And he says, Julliard, and he says "whatever!"

**Ben Proudfoot**

yeah. And he's like, oh, yeah, yeah, whatever it is, New York, yeah.

**Marc Freedman**

What tell you know, I know. I propose that last question. Didn't the LA Times shut down there, that division that funded the last repair shop even before it won the Oscar. Am I getting that right?

**Ben Proudfoot**

So, so we independently financed the last repair shop. Hmm, the arrangements we made with distribution was oriented around distribution, marketing and distribution, they're largely non financial. So that was the big, you know, contribution that we needed, that we couldn't do ourselves. We could make a movie, but how are we going to get it out to everybody else? So search, light pictures and the LA Times were essential to that. And, yeah, surprisingly, many of the folks that we, you know, worked with there. I think it was the day, the day the film got nominated, they they were laid off. And, you know, I think it's, I think it's partly a sign of the times in terms of in terms of journalism, but I also think there are ways to to to that we have not explored yet at the intersection of filmmaking and journalism that are totally profitable, that have just not been explored. And I'm actually very interested in that, and curious about it. And, you know, hoping that, you know, I'll get the chance to explore that in my career.

**Marc Freedman**

What? What can you? Can you tell us a little bit about that and what? What ideas?

**Ben Proudfoot**

Well, I think, you know, at least for me, I think it's, it's the role of of journalism and and reporting to to put to put pressure on people in power. And it's also the role of journalism to you know, remind us of who we are as a society, good and bad, room for improvement, and absolutely wonderful things. None of those things are necessarily tied to, you know, a an article in a format that we would imagine in a newspaper, certainly not tied for print. We've, we've realized that now that it doesn't necessarily need to be a paper that's delivered to our front, front door. And so my question is, well, why can't that same spirit be translated into documentary film? Why can't that documentary film be, you know, on your phone? Why can't it be in a vertical format? Why? You know, there's all these, you know, rules that we have in place that are pretty silly. And, you know, it's actually an interesting thing, because it does become a cross generational issue, where you have a lot of people my age and younger who really understand how to use, you know, video and filmmaking, but don't have the same ability in terms of, how do you, you know, what's a hook? How do you tell a story? You know, an understanding of story structure and reporting and fact checking and you know the way things are. So in theory, there should be a fantastic you know, one plus one equals three between you know, trained journalists and young filmmakers who can bring the the rigor and the storytelling excellence that they have to a wider audience through through new medium that our generation understands in theory that should be happening all over the place, but it's not. Right? And I think, I think it's largely because the younger generation doesn't understand or respect what they do, and they're probably scared of this, and think that this is a dumb, down version of what what they do. And so instead of collaborating as much as as those two groups could and should, they stay separate to their own peril. And so that's my two cents on that subject.

**Marc Freedman**

I want to go back to the questions, because this one relates a little bit to what you were talking about. Do you think your films, any films, can help us repair the division in our society?

**Ben Proudfoot**

Yes.

**Marc Freedman**

Say more.

**Ben Proudfoot**

You know, I beneath the skin of all the ways in which we disagree with each other is, you know, I believe, like I think most people believe that we all have more in common than we have different in difference. And films can remind people of that. And I think I, to be honest, I'm really tired of rhetoric that says that you know, because you voted a you're on the opposite side of of the aisle of what I believe politically, you're a worthless human being. I don't want anything to do with you. I shun you socially. I think you're a bad person, etc, etc, etc. That gets us exactly nowhere. It doesn't teach anybody a lesson. It doesn't change anybody's mind. It might feel good at the time, but it's like pretty basic elementary school lesson that that's no way to behave. And so I think what films can do is it can remind us of our common humanity and help us empathize and understand and try to build ties with people that you might disagree with on things that are really important to you and not but not have that undermine your basic relationship with that person, that you don't have to have your political beliefs in common to be a friend of someone, or to love them or to understand them, and that that is an idea that we seem to have forgotten, that I think films can help us restore

**Marc Freedman**

when we were talking before the conversation, you said that you're increasingly drawn, including in the context of the events of the past week, to lofty, audacious ideas.

**Ben Proudfoot**

Yeah.

**Marc Freedman**

What are some of those ideas that are on your mind these days, that that are drawing you?

**Ben Proudfoot**

Well, it's interesting. I mean, I, you know me personally, I had a really strong reaction to Elon Musk's engagement in the Trump campaign. And in particular, just remembering, you know, however many years ago, before Elon Musk became a political figure, you know, just watching the entrepreneurial endeavors that he was involved with, and as a young guy, being very excited by those right, the idea of, you know, space travel and electric vehicles and self driving cars, and really audacious, you know, scientific advancements and picking up where, you know, the Kennedy administration left off, and all of these things that were so exciting. And, you know, I believe in those things, right? Like, I believe in big, audacious, ambitious ideas that we could do together, all of us together as a society, optimistic ideas about, you know, a vision for the future that we can all share and that we want to engage in. And I am so upset that somehow those things, ambition, optimism, innovation, have become wrapped up with a lot of other ideas that I don't agree with. And it's like, well, if you you can't be excited by those things and not agree with these other things, which is simply not true. And so what I'm interested in is, how can, how can you know the folks who believe in progressive ideals like myself, be more audacious in the ideas that we present in the moon shots that we get excited about, and not just incremental stuff of you know, something that you know would be nice if we could do or that seems doable. People. But really that excites people, you know, and you know, I'll stop short of picking one and saying, you know, we should, we should, you know, hell with Mars. We need to go to Jupiter, you know, or whatever, but, but it's something that, it's ideas that sort of make you, make you say, Well, that would be pretty amazing. I haven't dared to dream that that would even be possible. And I think, I think we have gotten really engaged with, you know, getting people angry about not going a certain direction. And again, basic psychology that's not as exciting not doing something is not as exciting as doing something. And I don't know exactly what those initiatives are, per se, I think that's kind of where I'm at right now. Is like, well, what would those be? Ben, you know, if this is what you're thinking about and but I know what it feels like when I hear those ideas, and I feel like I'm, I'm, I'm seeking those, and I'm and I'm searching for those, and I'm hoping that we can come together around it, because if you have an idea that's interesting and audacious enough, it doesn't matter what Some other opposition is thinking about. That's irrelevant. Our idea is better and more interesting. Doesn't this excite you more and, and I also think that's super American, you know, I'm Canadian. I'm a Canadian person who moved to the United States. But like, that's, that's a great part of the American spirit is big, audacious ideas that everybody says, Oh, come on, that seems crazy. And then you guys do it, and then we're all, we all go, wow, I didn't know humanity could do that, that that is, that's a very inspiring part of what this country can be. And I think, I think there's, there's that spirit can come alive again with the right attention.

**Marc Freedman**

You know, I started this organization 25 years ago with a guy who was 49 years older than me. He was the person who implemented Medicare in 1965 over the opposition of the American Medical Association. He started the first campaign finance reform organization, and when he was battling for metal care, his name is John Gardner, he had a quote. He said, America today faces breathtaking opportunities disguised as unsolvable problems. And I was thinking about that as you were, as you were talking, you know, the a lot of us on the on the webinar today are focused on this breathtaking opportunity that is often disguised as an unsolvable problem, which is age diversity in society. A quarter of our population, in the US today is under 20, quarters over 60. We hear all the time about generational conflict, kids versus canes, but we think that there's a breathtaking opportunity in there. And when I see your movies, when I see your films, I see that breathtaking opportunity when I see the the stars of the last repair shop and what they're doing for younger generations, or even Horace and Kris playing together. At the end of that film, I see this pure, distilled essence of that. I'm going back to the questions, though, because a bunch of folks wanted to ask you something, and I know we only have about 10 minutes left. The first is kind of going from these audacious ideas to the more personal can you? Can you say more about your father as a lawyer and unpack how much your parents impacted you? Yeah,

**Ben Proudfoot**

you know, I think, I think probably, like most people, it becomes more and more clear how my parents impacted me every day. But, you know, yeah, my dad was a, was a lawyer. He passed away in 2020, and he passed away. You know, within a year of retiring, he retired, and within a year he was he was gone and and was a, he was a workaholic. I mean, he just worked all the time. It was his purpose. It was his love. He loved being a lawyer. He loved, you know, defending people and getting people justice that they deserved. But, you know, kind of immediately, without that opportunity, his body started to fall apart, and he was, he was, you know, battling with cancer and MS and a number of different things. But it really made me, and it was actually a conversation with Sherry that I was having about how, you know, why? Why do we, you know, take, take a person's purpose away, you know, what is? What is the purpose of that? Um. And, and I, I really think, I think that he, if he hadn't retired, you know, he may have squeezed out a few more years. I believe that maybe many more years. And so that that has really had me, me thinking, and I, you know, as as a entrepreneur, as someone who, you know, kind of has an affection for things that disrupt the order the status quo. It, it? It was very apparent to me immediately that, you know that idea is totally accurate, which is like, why are we why are we discarding people who have an entire lifetime worth of experiences and expertise that makes no sense, that is not wise. And also, you know, the end, look, there's lots of people that I'm sure would be totally happy to, you know, retire at any age and and move on to a different way of life, but there's so many people who are just, you know, built, built differently, and and want to keep contributing and keep leading. And how do we, how do we change the narrative where you go to the top and then you turn off? Why can't there be, you know, a separate narrative that happens after a certain moment where you know you can, you can still contribute at a level that you're comfortable with, and help society and and make sure your expertise is is heard that aligns with, you know, how you want to live your life. At that moment, it really sort of struck me personally that that this is a it's a problem in the story of a life, of how a life should go and and also, just because you've been doing it for 50 years doesn't mean you need to be the leader either. You know, that's another tough truth that I think is is hard. It's kind of like, well, I either have to be the boss or I'm going to be retired. And it's like, well, why? Why does that need to be the case? You know, isn't there? Aren't there other ways to engage and advise and have roles and projects and things that aren't that and so I'm curious about how storytelling can play into that.

**Marc Freedman**

When we were talking earlier, we were talking about your conversation with Kris Bowers, about concerto is a conversation, and the role of the hero's journey in that film Joseph Campbell's idea, and Horace goes on on his literal journey event there

**Ben Proudfoot**

Sure does, yeah,

**Marc Freedman**

but Joseph Campbell, you know, who came up with the hero's journey idea, had a wonderful quote, which is, midlife is when you get to the top of the ladder and discover it's leaning against the wrong wall that relates to to what you were just saying, you know. And apropos also of your comment, Sherry has been the chair since the beginning of a project we started called the purpose prize. We were giving people over the age of 60, $100,000 each for doing what essentially is their greatest work, in place of the gold watch. And during a period, the 10 year period where we ran the purpose prize, there were 10,000 nominations. It was, it was a great story contest. And, you know, and we, we saw 1000s of stories that we would have never been able to find on our own. But I wanted to to switch to a more pragmatic question with this, you know, just wave of gratitude and kudos. There's over and over again a question that's coming up, which is, how do we support your work? Does Ben have a nonprofit, or is there a way to support what he's doing?

**Ben Proudfoot**

Yeah, absolutely so. So there's two big ways that you can support my work if you're interested, if the last repair shop is something that touches your heart, if providing free and freely repaired instruments to public school kids is something that gets you excited, you can go to the last repair shop.com. Kris and I have launched a $15 million capital campaign to both upgrade the capital facilities at the repair shop that you see in the movie, and very importantly, to create a training program for the next generation of repair people. So we are actively raising money for that through the Los Angeles Unified School District Education Foundation. And then I've just started a new foundation this year called the Vita brevis foundation, foundation, a lot Life is short, and it's dedicated to the art form of the short documentary and gathering people who are short documentarians, you know, establishing conventions, etc, so that one doesn't have a website yet, but if you want to email me, Ben. At Breakwater studios.com. If that that's something that's interesting to you, that's that's the other way that you could support our work through through nonprofit.

**Marc Freedman**

And if people go to Breakwater, they can see all the films that absolutely have made, maybe just before we close. I wanted to ask you a little bit about motorcycle Mary. Was just released, and is where can people see that? And can you tell us a little bit about that film? I know your executive producer on that.

**Ben Proudfoot**

I am, yeah, very honored to be with f1 racer. Lewis Hamilton is my fellow executive producer. So it's a beautiful film by Haley Watson, the director and Rachel Greenwald producer, two folks we've worked with here at Breakwater. And it's a story of Mary McGee, who, in the 1960s and 70s, was kind of the pioneer in the first female motorcycle racer in the United States. And she was the first person, not the first woman, but the first person to complete the Baja 500 that's a 500 mile off road motorcycle and car race solo on a motorcycle. She's the first person to accomplish that, and she kind of never got her due. And Haley made this wonderful film about her life, about her philosophy, and theirs is a beautiful intergenerational relationship, too. I mean, that might be a really interesting conversation for you folks to have, but it's out now on ESPN plus, and it's coming to Disney plus and to YouTube as well in the next month or so.

**Marc Freedman**

Thank you, Ben, so wonderful to talk to you. Really, really appreciate it. We hope we can keep working with you and in any way. And I've been wander the streets of San Francisco with concerto as a conversation sandwich board, accosting anybody who will talk to me the we've got one more in this webinar series of music across generations that will be on December 3 with Tom casciato, who does long documentaries. He just did two American families, which the New York Times described as a knockout documentary. There's a wonderful interview with Tom on fresh air from last month. Tom is also the person for the PBS NewsHour who does their music pieces, and he's my collaborator, along with our board member Craig Hunegs, on a documentary project about the relationship between Johnny Cash and Rick Rubin, who were Johnny Cash was 61 and Rick Rubin 28 when they came together, and this year, Rick Rubin is 61 about the ways generations can come together through music to to do great work and also to forge deep bonds. So please keep on the lookout for information about next month's webinar, but thank you again, Ben, and we'll send you all the love that's come through the chat about a concert, always a conversation and your work more broadly.

**Ben Proudfoot**

Well, thank you very much for having me, Marc. It's been an honor, and thanks to everybody for your great questions. And hope everybody has a has a good weekend.

**Marc Freedman**

Thanks. And before people sign off, there's a question in the that everybody's probably seeing in their screen asking you, after this session, are you inspired to include more older and younger people in your life? Thanks. Ben,

**Ben Proudfoot**

thank you. Marc, bye, bye,

**Marc Freedman**

bye.