

**JAC 91**

**Section:** Disaster News

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## **Interview of the Month**

### **The Mont Saint Odile Crash**

#### **Jim McSherry, producer and director of the film “*La Vérité du Ciel*”**

*He was in Strasbourg during the National Assembly for members of the ECHO association. To screen his film “La Vérité du Ciel/The Plane Truth” produced to give voice to the families of victims of catastrophes of such as that for Mont Saint Odile.*

Jim McSherry presents himself as “entrepreneur, inventor, founder of two corporations and world traveler.” Director of the film “*La Vérité du Ciel/The Plane Truth*” he interviewed the loved ones of the victims from the Mont Saint Odile crash, he says to “leave a trace of this tragedy.”

Holding an MBA from Suffolk University in Boston, he has also studied international business at the IESE of Barcelona and received his bachelor's degree in architecture from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, participating in a study abroad program at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts de Versailles. This resume, however, is only one facet of his personality, as discreet as it is friendly.

#### **Directing this type of film must be a true adventure for you?**

“I have to say that this was an experience for me. First, this wasn't not at all within my sphere of work at the start. In fact I learned all throughout this challenge that I had set for myself. I prepared the participants with memos explaining what I was expecting from the them several months before the interviews. I also had telephone conversations with the interviewees before arriving in France. Of course, I also asked them to speak in French so their testimony would be honest. I had translators beside me during filming and editing. I also spent 20 minutes with them away from team before filming.

#### **How did you go about meeting the families?**

I met Alvaro Rendon and several other members of ECHO some months before with documents in French that were sent to association members, inviting them to participate. Seven of them accepted. You have to understand my approach. I lost a brother, Paul, married with three children, in the crash of Flight 427 from Chicago to Pittsburgh, September 8, 1994. That plane had 132 people on board and crashed during its approach to the Pittsburgh airport, about six miles from the runway. That's why it was important for me to be able to share this feeling with others. It's moreover what happened.

#### **Where did you shoot?**

I filmed the families I met in Paris, Strasbourg, Quaix en Chartreuse and Aulnoy. Most of the testimony brought me back to the drama that my family and I lived through in 1994.

**Did you have technical difficulties in creating this film?**

Non. I had two cameras filming. One focused on the people interviewed, the other filmed me during the interviews. I wanted to film my journey making this film. Sometimes I cried during these interviews because I found such similarities with what our family experienced. Other times I was the film's director, therefore more in the "technique." And sometimes I was surprised by the frankness of certain participants in the film. But the film did not revolve around my brother, the film is about their stories.

**Where are you planning to broadcast the film?**

I hope that the film will be broadcasted on television stations in France. I have also presented it in several festivals, including "Documenta" Madrid where a McDonnell Douglas MD-82 (JAC 87) plane crashed August 20, 2008. And when the film is ready for sale, there is my site [www.jrmfilms.com](http://www.jrmfilms.com). It will also be available for purchase via the Internet site [www.createspace.com](http://www.createspace.com) for \$14.95US.