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MANDY WALKER: When you're making a movie, the way that you move the camera can tell as much to the audience as the dialogue that the characters are saying. You're creating an atmosphere and purveying an emotion of what's going on with the character's story.

For example, on *Australia*, when I was working with Baz Luhrmann, we had a dance sequence where Nicole Kidman and Bryan Brown were having a very intimate private discussion in a very public space. And Baz said he wanted to be in close and tight with them as they were dancing. And how are we going to shoot that and make it feel very intimate? So in pre-production, he posed the question to me and our technical team-- our groups and electrics-- of how to shoot this and be close to the actors.

So what we did was we-- the groups invented what we called a "dancing machine," which was a dolly that the actors could sit on, and the groups would push it round. And what they did in pre-production was, with the choreographer, they learnt the dance that the actors were doing. And so as they pushed the dolly around with the music, they were recreating the moves. And so the two actors were sitting in the middle being pushed by two groups who were actually doing the dance, and that seamlessly worked with the wide shots where they were doing the actual dance moves.

Emotionally, what it allowed us to do is to be very intimate and private with them without being-- and be able to do the moves with them without having the camera back, and the dance is moving around within the shot. When I'm working with the director in pre-production, we work out what the story of the film is and have discussions about how we can portray the emotional journey of the characters to an audience. And we go through scene-by-scene to work out with camera moves and

lighting how we tell that story and express it to an audience.

So when you're working out how to shoot your movie, you have to understand that the way that you move the camera, the lenses that you use, where do you decide whether you're very close to a character, or where you're observing something from very far away, whether your handheld's shaky, whether you're wide lenses or tight lenses, whether the camera's gliding or swooping on a big crane, it's telling the audience the experience and the emotional journey of the character and what's going on with the story at that time. I'm Mandy Walker, and I'm a cinematographer.

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