

A close-up profile of an astronaut wearing a white space helmet with a clear visor. The astronaut is looking out towards the Earth, which is visible in the background as a blue and white curved horizon against a dark, star-filled space. The text "DOWN TO EARTH" is overlaid in large, white, bold, sans-serif font on the left side of the image.

DOWN TO EARTH

It's Alive

A close-up shot of an astronaut's hands inside a spacecraft. The astronaut is holding a bright red chili pepper. The background shows the interior of the spacecraft with various panels and equipment.

1
00:00:00,506 --> 00:00:19,286
[Music]

2
00:00:19,786 --> 00:00:23,416
>> I had looked at pictures
on social media and pictures

3
00:00:23,416 --> 00:00:26,466
in NASA archives of the earth so
many times, I actually started

4
00:00:26,466 --> 00:00:27,746
to get worried, what
if I get up there

5
00:00:27,746 --> 00:00:29,036
and it's just like the pictures?

6
00:00:29,036 --> 00:00:31,696
I mean, oh, that's going to
be weird if that's the thing

7
00:00:31,696 --> 00:00:32,996
where I'm like oh, looks
just like the pictures,

8
00:00:32,996 --> 00:00:33,686
I'm ready to go home now.

9
00:00:33,796 --> 00:00:36,356
And then on the Soyuz,
my launch vehicle,

10
00:00:36,356 --> 00:00:37,606
launched with the Russians.

11
00:00:37,606 --> 00:00:40,296
And on my Soyuz, when I
first got a chance to look

12

00:00:40,296 --> 00:00:42,956
out my little window, which was
about right here, at the earth,

13

00:00:43,506 --> 00:00:45,806
there's something about
looking out a round window

14

00:00:45,806 --> 00:00:47,356
at the curvature of the earth

15

00:00:47,356 --> 00:00:49,106
that makes it just
more pronounced and --

16

00:00:49,106 --> 00:00:50,976
and really makes it
have a huge impact.

17

00:00:51,516 --> 00:00:55,646
[Music]

18

00:00:56,146 --> 00:01:00,836
I just had this feeling like
I was way up high looking down

19

00:01:00,836 --> 00:01:04,016
and we were over the ocean and
the blues that I saw, it was --

20

00:01:04,566 --> 00:01:05,956
I mean it was ridiculous.

21

00:01:06,036 --> 00:01:08,346
I -- I'd never imagined
in my entire life getting

22

00:01:08,346 --> 00:01:09,396

to see something that beautiful.

23

00:01:09,396 --> 00:01:11,796

It was so foreign for the
human mind to look at that,

24

00:01:12,026 --> 00:01:13,816

to see the total black of space,

25

00:01:14,716 --> 00:01:16,756

to see the earth
highlighted that way.

26

00:01:16,756 --> 00:01:18,406

And then I got to see a sunset.

27

00:01:18,406 --> 00:01:20,746

I had one piece of paper, it
had a picture of my kids on it

28

00:01:20,746 --> 00:01:24,356

and a few of my flight data file
burn times on it, but I wrote --

29

00:01:24,356 --> 00:01:27,836

I just took a pencil I
drew like 15 curved lines

30

00:01:27,836 --> 00:01:31,506

and I just wrote, light blue,
darker blue, pink, purple,

31

00:01:31,576 --> 00:01:34,646

dark purple, dark, dark purple,
all the way down to the surface

32

00:01:34,646 --> 00:01:38,066

of the earth at sunset
because the scale of looking

33

00:01:38,066 --> 00:01:40,816

at a sun refracting through
the atmosphere, it blew me away

34

00:01:40,816 --> 00:01:42,026

and no picture capturing it.

35

00:01:42,026 --> 00:01:44,206

There's no high enough
dynamic range of a photo

36

00:01:44,206 --> 00:01:46,346

to capture what the
human can see.

37

00:01:46,346 --> 00:01:49,796

So, that first look outside
completely sidelined me.

38

00:01:49,796 --> 00:01:52,396

I had a GoPro and I made
a recording to my brother

39

00:01:52,396 --> 00:01:55,256

of no matter how much it costs
in the future, come do this,

40

00:01:55,316 --> 00:01:56,926

you have to come do this,
I mean it's amazing.

41

00:01:57,516 --> 00:02:04,196

[Music]

42

00:02:04,696 --> 00:02:06,886

Over my 6 months in
space, getting to look

43

00:02:06,886 --> 00:02:08,146

at the earth every single day,

44

00:02:08,366 --> 00:02:09,486

it shows you something
different.

45

00:02:09,606 --> 00:02:11,236

Every day, it shows
you that it's alive,

46

00:02:11,236 --> 00:02:12,546

it's a being just like we are.

47

00:02:12,826 --> 00:02:16,936

We're guests on this planet
and it is -- it's our mother,

48

00:02:16,936 --> 00:02:20,196

it's our father, it's our
starship cruising around the sun

49

00:02:20,196 --> 00:02:21,336

in the middle of
the solar system.

50

00:02:21,526 --> 00:02:23,106

There was never a moment
that I looked out the window

51

00:02:23,106 --> 00:02:24,986

and didn't immediately grab
a camera to take a picture

52

00:02:24,986 --> 00:02:26,916

of something that
our planet was doing,

53

00:02:26,916 --> 00:02:28,426

it always surprises,
[inaudible].

54

00:02:29,516 --> 00:02:33,546

[Music]

55

00:02:34,046 --> 00:02:37,006

I'm a pilot, I'm
not a scientist,

56

00:02:37,006 --> 00:02:40,976

I'm not a psychiatrist, I'm
not a poet, but certainly,

57

00:02:41,296 --> 00:02:45,376

when you're in low-earth orbit
looking down at the earth,

58

00:02:45,686 --> 00:02:48,606

it doesn't matter if you're
a physicist, a schoolteacher,

59

00:02:48,836 --> 00:02:52,486

a stay-at-home parent, or
maybe you just backpack

60

00:02:52,486 --> 00:02:54,576

for your whole life, if
you look out, you're going