



# LET ME HAVE MY SON

A DAVID YATES PRODUCTION  
A CRISTÓBAL KRUSEN FILM

A Strategic Partnership Proposal

Autumn 2020

*“Let Me Have My Son* is the  
**fulfillment of a promise**  
to tell my son Daniel’s story.

It is a ‘thank you’ to all who serve the  
mentally ill and is dedicated to those

whose stories are hidden

**from all but the eyes of God.”**

— Cristóbal Krusen, Writer and Director



Nathan Barlow as Benny Jr. in *Let Me Have My Son*



# Film Backdrop – Suffering in Silence

Many families know the pain of seeing a loved one struggle with mental illness. The statistics are beyond alarming. Over this past decade, the number of people worldwide suffering from mental illness has risen dramatically with up to 20 percent of the global population affected. In the United States alone, 45 million souls suffer from some type of mental health disorder with millions of that number receiving inadequate or ineffective treatment. As a result, individuals and families facing mental illness are often left to suffer in silence and shame, feeling their loved ones have been lost to time and eternity.

*The time is now to raise awareness about the seriousness of mental health conditions around the world and offer encouragement and hope to those suffering in silence. Desperate parents and caregivers searching for answers can attest that medicine alone cannot be counted on to solve the problem of mental illness. Indeed, if we are looking for doors of healing and understanding to open in this life only, we are setting ourselves up for disappointment beyond words.*

## Film Goal

Written and directed by Cristóbal Krusen, *Let Me Have My Son* is the semi-autobiographical story of his own longtime struggle to come to terms with his firstborn son's heartrending mental illness. As the founder of Messenger Films, Krusen is internationally known for his ability to create compelling, feature-length films across cultures.



Together with Producer David Yates of the *Dolphin Tale* franchise and the former CEO of the Ironman Triathlon Company, whose mother suffered from severe schizophrenia, the team is set to produce a landmark motion picture. Society's outlook on mental illness has changed dramatically in recent years as even prominent celebrities now openly promote mental health awareness.

The goal of *Let Me Have My Son* is to move viewers toward empathy and to promote care and dignity for those suffering from serious mental illness while pointing them toward hope, specifically the hope of the resurrection.

# Film Synopsis

*Let Me Have My Son* is a riveting, feature-length film depicting a father's desperate search for his mentally ill son — creating empathy, promoting dignity, and giving hope to those impacted by severe mental health conditions.

But it is a story with a twist ...

In this semi-autobiographical film, writer and director Cristóbal Krusen weaves his personal story into that of “Ben Whitmore, Sr.,” a retired history teacher who is recovering at home from a heart attack. Early one morning Ben receives a phone call from Middlemouth Security Hospital where his son, Benny, has been institutionalized with schizophrenia. Hospital staff inform him that Benny is ready for discharge.

Giddy with excitement Ben makes the long drive to the hospital where he is escorted back to Benny's room. Benny, however, is not there, prompting Ben to make an increasingly desperate search through the labyrinth hospital complex. Along the way Ben meets, and grows to love, other patients suffering from mental illness, many of them Benny's friends. Ultimately, however, Ben comes to the realization that he cannot rescue his son.

Back at Ben's house, we discover that Ben's “trip” to the psychiatric hospital has taken place in his imagination. Though Benny's mental illness is real, we learn that the family has not heard from him in several years. He may be living on the streets or has, perhaps, even died. As Ben experiences a second heart attack, the “real” world around him meshes with the “imaginary” world of the asylum, leading to an emotion-packed reunion between father and son somewhere between this world and the next.



Cris Krusen with his son Daniel at the San Juan de Dios psychiatric hospital in Mexico

# A Unique Opportunity

Due to the impact of COVID-19 on the movie industry, there is a coming void of content for the film industry, and producers who can get to market quickly have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for greater than normal distribution and impact for their film. This historic opportunity, coupled with a rising awareness of mental health issues across all strata of society, makes this the time to produce and release *Let Me Have My Son*.

## Meet the Team



**Cristóbal Krusen | Writer and Director**

As the founder of Messenger Films, his movies have an estimated viewing audience of approximately a billion people worldwide via creative distribution methods designed to maximize viewership. Krusen has won numerous awards at international film festivals.

**David Yates | Executive Producer**

The former CEO of the Ironman Triathlon Company and Clearwater Marine Aquarium, he served as Producer of the *Dolphin Tale series* and has won three Emmy Awards for his work with NBC Sports.



**Greg Silker | Marketing Director**

As the founder of Silker Studios, he seeks to shape culture through media, business, and non-profit startups and strategic partnerships.

**Chris Bueno | Distribution Director**

The CEO of Ocean Avenue Entertainment, he optimizes release platforms to find the widest possible audience for film and television programming that offers hope to audiences looking for inspirational entertainment.



# Summary of Need

Key scenes have been filmed in Mexico with the remaining scenes slated for early 2021 in Minnesota. Post-production is scheduled for completion by October 2021 with a release date soon thereafter. A total of \$900,000 is needed to complete and market the film. Distribution income will pay producer fees as well as fund Messenger Films operations and future films.

PRE-PRODUCTION	\$50,000
<i>Research, story treatment, script writing, location scouting, casting</i>	
PRODUCTION	\$500,000
<i>Principal photography</i>	
POST-PRODUCTION	\$200,000
<i>Editing, sound and music, special effects and graphics, credits</i>	
MARKETING	<u>\$250,000</u>
<i>Collateral material, press releases, social media</i>	
<b>BUDGET TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,000,000</b>
DONATIONS SECURED	<u>\$100,000</u>
<b>TOTAL NEED</b>	<b>\$900,000</b>

# Opportunity for Partnership

Your partnership makes it possible to raise awareness about mental health conditions and offer hope and dignity to those who suffer. In order to release *Let Me Have My Son* in 2021, our need is to raise \$900,000.

Messenger Films respectfully asks you to consider a generous donation to help share *Let Me Have My Son* with the world — raising awareness of mental illness and bringing hope to millions.

With your partnership we can share *Let Me Have My Son* at this pivotal time in history when people are opening up about issues of mental health and want to help those facing the stigma associated with mental health conditions. Families are hurting and in need of encouragement. Your support will make all the difference!

# Endorsements and Impact

Here are just a few examples of how your partnership with Messenger Films helps provide films that share beauty and hope around the globe.

“I strongly recommend *Ropa Nueva para Felipe* as an evangelistic film and as a challenge to Christians who view it to ‘go and make disciples of all nations.’”

— Dr. Bill Bright, Founder of Cru

“I am a great admirer of the film work of Cristóbal Krusen. He is a ‘world Christian’ with the eye of an artist and the heart of an evangelist. His films consistently demonstrate a deep compassion for others as well as a great passion to bring them the good news through film.”

— Josh D. McDowell, Author and Speaker

“I was moved and inspired by Cris Krusen’s movie, *Final Solution*. His ability as a writer and director is rare, and I have no doubt the Lord has many more fruitful years ahead of him. When a filmmaker can engage viewers the way Cris does, lives will be changed.”

— Alex Kendrick, Writer, Director, and Actor

## About Messenger Films

Messenger Films was founded as a 501(c)(3) in 1988 by Cristóbal Krusen for the purpose of creating gospel-themed films contextualized for specific cultures and people groups around the world. More than thirty years later, it is estimated that approximately one billion people have seen a Messenger Films production, with millions having professed a decision to follow Jesus. The films produced have been most widely viewed across Latin America, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia.

Previous films include the Spanish-language classics *Ropa Nueva para Felipe* (*New Clothes for Felipe*) and *¿Con Quién Te Vas?* (*With Whom Will You Go?*). Other influential films produced by Messenger Films include *Final Solution*, *More Than Dreams*, *Undaunted* and *Sabina K*.

Over the next fifteen years, Messenger Films plans to produce seven feature-length films intended to reach 500 million spiritual seekers primarily in the Americas, Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. *Let Me Have My Son* is the first of those productions currently underway.

Each Messenger Films production uses the language of cinema to engage seekers in a non-judgmental way, pointing them to God’s truth by means of that most enduring and effective of teachers — the poignant and well-crafted story.





**Dolphin  
Tell  
Productions**



## CONTACT

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Films of beauty. **Stories of hope.**