

LOGLINE:

After years of masking and isolation, a neurodivergent woman's chance encounter with an eccentric stranger pulls her into a journey back to her inner child.

A WILLIAM O'BRYAN FILM

INNER LIGHT



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Inner Light comes from my lived experience as a neurodivergent person navigating a world that often rewards conformity over authenticity. For much of my life, I learned how to mask, how to perform competence, and how to move through environments that were not built for my mind. Over time, that constant adaptation led to burnout, disconnection, and a quiet loss of joy.

Adulthood often falls short of the freedom and wonder we experience as children. As we grow older, we are encouraged to abandon what is considered childish in order to survive, to be productive, or to be taken seriously. In that process, many of us lose touch with who we once were. For me, that loss felt less like growing up and more like forgetting.

At the heart of *Inner Light* is the belief that the inner child does not disappear with age. It simply becomes quieter. It is the place where curiosity, sensitivity, and imagination live, and where many of us first learned how to relate to the world. Healing, in this sense, is not about becoming someone new, but about learning how to listen to that part of ourselves again.

This film is an offering to anyone who has learned to shrink themselves in order to survive, especially the artists who were told to grow up too soon. At a time when the world feels increasingly loud, heavy, and divided, *Inner Light* is a reminder that passion and empathy are not naïve, and that we must reconnect with the childhood optimism that once illuminated our lives to find joy again.

SYNOPSIS

Joy, a neurodivergent dreamer lost in the chaos of New York City, has spent much of her adult life masking who she really is. Burnt out and disconnected, she moves through life on autopilot, her imagination buried beneath years of rejection and self-doubt.

Everything shifts when she meets Danny, an eccentric stranger whose playful, offbeat energy clashes with her guarded nature. Against her better judgment, Joy is drawn into his world. What begins as a chance encounter becomes an unexpected journey through a city glowing with holiday spectacle, where sensory overload dominates, but ordinary places begin to feel alive with wonder.

As Joy follows Danny, memories of her childhood resurface, moments when curiosity came easily, when magic felt possible, and when her inner child's voice was strong and clear. These fragments slowly chip away at the walls she has built around herself.

By the end of their time together, Joy reconnects with the part of herself she learned to silence. The wonder and curiosity of her childhood return, not as memories, but as something alive within her.



A scene from a coffee shop. On the left, a woman in a light-colored sweater and scarf is talking to a man in a blue checkered jacket who is smiling and pointing at a laptop screen. On the right, a man in a white shirt and green cap is holding a coffee cup. In the background, there is a menu board with various food items and prices. The text 'MAIN CHARACTERS' is overlaid in the center in a glowing yellow font.

MAIN CHARACTERS

EATS	
PASTRIES & COOKIES	
BUTTER CROSSANT	4.5
ALMOND CROSSANT	5
CHOCOLATE & SWISS CROSSANT	5
CHOCOLATE COOKIE	4
CHICKEN COOKIES	4
OVERNIGHT OATS	
OVERNIGHT OATS	5
BREAKFAST SANDWICHES	
BREAKFAST SANDWICH	10
BREAKFAST SANDWICH	10



JOY

PLAYED BY JAYANI JALESE/JANET HINES

Joy, once a beacon of creativity and warmth, now finds herself trapped in the monotony of corporate life. Her vibrant dreams of art and expression were set aside to fit into a world that demanded conformity.

Growing up under the shadow of a narcissistic mother who imposed relentless expectations, Joy's innate light and love have dimmed. Now, she has grown into a bitter and jaded adult, pushing others away to shield herself from the pain of unfulfilled dreams.

Beneath her hardened exterior, however, lies a deep-seated yearning for genuine connection and the rediscovery of the joyful, artistic soul she left behind.



DANNY

PLAYED BY DEVIN BONOMO

Danny is an eccentric free spirit, embodying the essence of a modern-day hippy philosopher. Unconcerned with societal norms or conventional adult expectations, he navigates life with a refreshing disregard for conformity. His mission is to spread light and inspire others to break free from the constraints of their own making.

With a boundless enthusiasm and a genuine belief in the goodness of people, Danny sees the latent spark within Joy. He is determined to help her rediscover her lost creativity and inner light, approaching her with an open heart and a persistent optimism that challenges her jaded perspective. His unconventional wisdom and infectious energy offer a glimmer of hope and liberation in a world that often feels confining.

WILLOW

PLAYED BY HILARY ERVIN

Willow is a deeply flawed mother whose own unresolved fears and failures cast a long shadow over her relationship with Joy. Her approach to parenting is marked by intense rage and overbearing control, driven by a profound sense of inadequacy and insecurity. Beneath her harsh exterior lies a wounded inner child who struggles to offer the love and support she so desperately wants to give. Despite her genuine attempts to care for Joy, Willow's inability to address her own emotional pain often leads to misguided and damaging expressions of affection. Her conflicting emotions and misguided actions create a tumultuous environment where her love, though earnest, frequently falls short of meeting Joy's needs.




GRANDMA NAOMI

PLAYED BY JILLIAN LINDSEY

Grandma was a beacon of warmth and kindness in Joy's early years, a constant source of love and encouragement. Her presence was a sanctuary of light and acceptance, offering unwavering support for Joy's artistic passions and encouraging her to embrace her true self. She saw the beauty in Joy's creativity and instilled in her a sense of confidence and self-worth. Tragically, Grandma's life was cut short when Joy was still young, leaving a void that has deeply impacted Joy. Her memory endures as a cherished reminder of unconditional love and the encouragement to remain authentic, even as Joy struggles to reconnect with the vibrant spirit her grandmother once nurtured.





MUSIC

A SOUND DESIGNED TO HEAL.

The film immerses viewers in a transformative audiovisual experience, utilizing gentle, grounding frequencies to create a soothing and ethereal soundscape. Lush pads, resonant strings, and delicate piano melodies shape a dreamlike atmosphere that supports the film's emotional core.

The original score by Lina Breining is a defining element of the film, demonstrating her exceptional talent. Her work is bittersweet and warm, enhancing the narrative while allowing space for the performances and visuals to breathe.

The score is complemented by two carefully placed needle-drop moments, where soundtrack songs underscore key emotional turning points and add a grounded, contemporary texture. Together, the original score and needle drops create a cohesive and memorable sonic identity that deepens the film's impact.





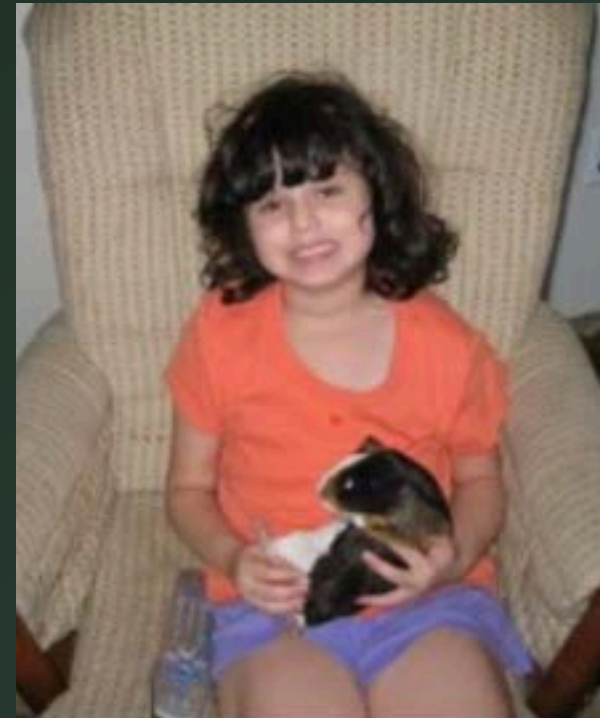


MEET THE TEAM



William
O'Bryan

DIRECTOR/EP &
WRITER



Sam
Daniels

WRITER/CO-
PRODUCER



Devin
Bonomo

WRITER/ACTOR/CO-
PRODUCER



Craig
Helfer

DIRECTOR OF
PHOTOGRAPHY



Lina
Breining

COMPOSER



WILLIAM O'BRYAN

I'm a former marketing professional turned passionate producer, director, and cinematographer. While pursuing a career in the business world, I realized that my inner child was calling me to a more colorful and joyful life. I followed my heart and took a leap of faith that led me to the story of Inner Light.

With my M.S. in Integrated Marketing Communication from Northwestern University, I seamlessly merge creative vision with business insight. Because of my motivation to use art to heal and connect, I am committed to creating work that makes people feel seen and valued. My approach to filmmaking is driven by a deep desire to tell stories that inspire change and foster a sense of peace in the world, while also entertaining the audience.



CRAIG HELFER

A Staten Island transplant living in New Jersey. For the past 6 years, He has worked as a cinematographer and editor for one of the most prominent advertising agencies. Gatorade, Nissan, Hilton, and Adidas are just a few brands he's had the privilege of working on. He also was part of a YouTube channel called Iron Horse Cinema where he produced, wrote and directed over 20 short films racking up over 46 million channel views. His love for film started at a young age when he realized his active imagination could be a career path. Craig is a filmmaker with the ability to channel the boundless creativity of childhood into relatable cinematic experiences.

All of these varied life experiences lead him to this project because of his passion for overcoming obstacles and helping others to do the same with his art.



LINA BREINING

Lina Breining is an NYC based composer for film, theatre and media from Austin, TX. Her music has been featured at Oscar-qualifying festivals such as AFI Fest and the Rhode Island International Film Festival, and venues like the Library for the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center. Lina recently scored her first feature film in collaboration with a team of independent filmmakers where she attended the film's premiere in Los Angeles. Her latest animated film, *Beyond the Journey* was created in collaboration with an animator currently interning at Pixar Animation Studios. The film was selected as a spotlight for the Rising Artist, a new series by PBS. For the past three years, Lina has worked for the music team on the Tony Awards. In addition to composing, Lina is a skilled orchestrator, arranger, music producer, sound designer, and video editor. Lina is a recent graduate of New York University (Screen Scoring M.M. '24).



SAM DANIELS

I joined the writers' room for Inner Light because inside, we all have a trapped hurt child locked away. Life has expectations. Go to school, go to college, get a job, and as you are looking for that job to jumpstart your life, it becomes a game of survival. That's why we all crave childhood, and it is revered as a special time in life. My intention was to encourage getting in touch with your inner child and help others keep that inner light with themselves, and their creativity, throughout your life.

Recent credits include: acting in film legend Lloyd Kaufman's final Movie (The Power Of Positive Murder,) associate producer on award winning play turned indie pilot (Observance) written by Elysse Nicole Trust, and producing several independent projects that I have written currently in pre-production.

In addition to film, I am award nominated music artist for my song "Someday" from the Hollywood Independent Music Awards and have worked with award winning music producers, and signed a partnership with indie music powerhouse Symphonic Distribution.



DEVIN BONOMO

When did my inner child become locked away? What does he truly want? I helped write and bring the character of Danny to life in Inner Light because I wanted to help myself find my inner child again and have him pass the gift of free authentic self to all watching.

My art work comes from love and curiosity. Wherever my soul wants to go. I follow with my heart. Other credits include: A very Good Girl (Sean) as seen on Netflix, Eleutheromania (Liam, Writer, Director) a piece about Roe V. Wade, Let 'Em Soak (Michael/Producer) a story about addiction and betrayal.



KEY FACTS

RUNTIME

- 24 Minutes

ASPECT RATIO

- Mix of 1.85:1 and 4:3

AUDIO FORMAT

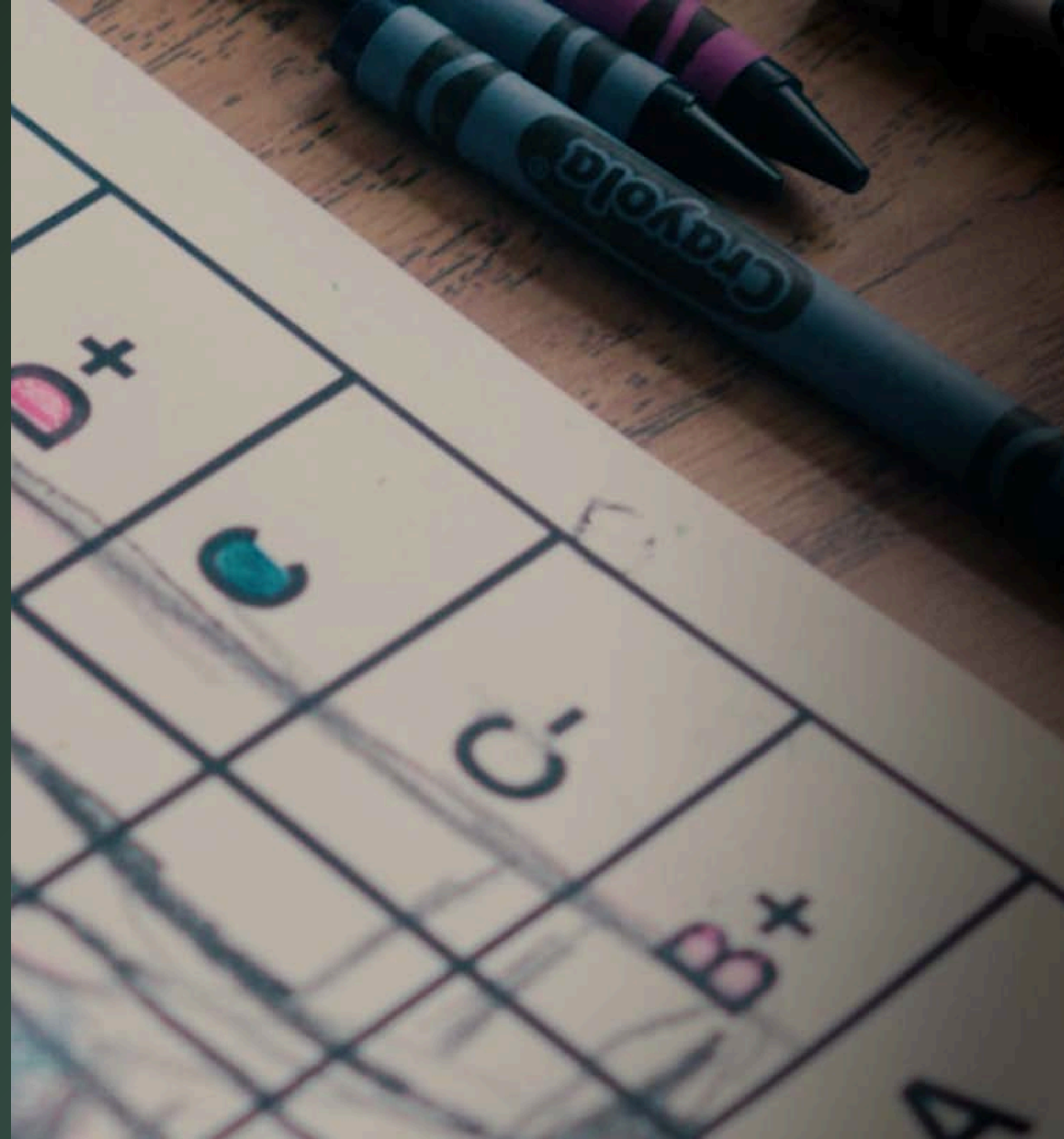
- 5.1 Surround

GENRE

- Comedy, Drama, Magical Realism

RESOLUTION

- 4K





STATUS/NEXT STEPS

- We are nearing completion of the film.
- There are ~5 VFX shots to complete before release, but we plan to submit to festivals before that
- Our audio engineer is working to mix and master everything in 5.1 so that we will have theater-worthy sound.
- We have completed an initial color grading pass, but our colorist is currently working on the final grade.

GET IN TOUCH

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