

# DOCU INTERVIEWS

*Netherlands & Norway*

October 2018

## THE HIDDEN STORY OF A CULT

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When a Los Angeles filmmaker begins documenting her dysfunctional family on the east coast she uncovers one of the world's largest untold, ongoing cult stories of corruption, conspiracy and abuse and reveals its enduring impact on an international community.



This documentary is investigating and exposing this hundred-year old abusive entity currently under international investigation for financial fraud. They have destroyed the lives of thousands of people through suppression, abuse and employing what one recent escapee described as 'modern day slavery.'

**Here are the most recent interview results.**

# Brunstad Christian Church (BCC)

1900 – Present



- Also known as Smith's Friends, Norwegian Brothers and Active Christianity, BCC is an international religious community originating in Norway in 1900.
- Today there are 'Fellowships' in 65+ countries around the world.

## A MONEY MACHINE



- BCC is often compared to Scientology. It is as large and wealthy, with similar structure and behavior.

- The Leaders are currently on the run from international investigation which is court-scheduled for Spring, 2019.

## Film Story Summary

My documentary tells the untold story of an international “Scientology of Christianity” cult known as Smiths Friends / Brunstad Christian Church (BCC). The film simultaneously charts my personal journey of coming to terms with hard truths, my own healing, and the understanding that it’s not up to me to save my family of ten: even as the eldest ‘second mother.’



I was homeschooled, dressed like a Puritan, and told The World was a separate, evil place. When I escaped – or rather was kicked out - I was still brainwashed but I began to ask myself: is it possible my ‘perfect’ past world was wrong after all?

I hired a professional cinematographer and embarked on a mission to explore the story of what was really happening behind this still-thriving, international cult’s closed doors.

Naively I thought family and friends I’d grown up with would support me. I thought that by exposing the truth and sharing what I learned along the way I could help and heal.



Instead I've learned that if people aren't ready for your truth they can attack and even try to destroy you for trying. But also in my search for truth and healing, friends came to my aid, believing I wasn't crazy when everyone else said I was, and helping me to record this journey of exposing buried truths.



Over four years of professionally filming 100+ hours I created an opposition movement, formed international reunions and interviewed 20 other former members around the world, all whom eerily share my story specifics, regardless of geography. I found others, just like me, who are fighting to expose this cult and, through them, gained access to a comprehensive archive of audio and footage documenting the cult's actions over the last 100 years.



I also began interviewing the journalists who have been investigating the stratospheric levels of corruption, conspiracy and abuse across sixty-five plus international 'Fellowships' that have been operating in plain sight. A top BCC financial operative recently defected with millions and was arrested: his current ongoing case in the Netherlands has resulted in the leaders being



investigated and summoned as suspects. None of these leaders have appeared in court, opting to instead forfeit their Norwegian citizenship. The head leader defected to then

abandoned a mansion in Connecticut ten minutes from the home [I grew up in as a member of the 'Fellowship' branch where my filming story begins.](#)

As BCC seeks to expand in the US it has become clear that this documentary is also a whistleblowing, investigative report that may have whole new levels of expose unveiled in the next few months as Norway and the



Netherlands' legal systems team up to investigate and bring once seemingly untouchable leaders to accountability.

Story can be stolen but giving a voice a microphone can take it back. A film that started as a lonely 'cult kid' story has expanded into an expose that allows audiences to understand not only the mechanisms of a cult but to identify with the struggles and courage of 'cult kids' – those born and raised in extremism - in a way that has not yet been seen on film.



## WE'VE BEEN TRACKING THEM

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“Why does a church need private accounts  
in Dubai, Cyprus and Bahamas?”

- Smith's friends are accused of millions tapping: <https://bit.ly/2S57uC4>
- From Brunstad to Cyprus, therefore we write about SF:  
<https://bit.ly/2JaP6Uv>
- How the leaders of SF enrich themselves: <https://bit.ly/2pfVSz3>
- Purchased luxury island for 18 million through tax havens:  
<https://bit.ly/2xWFpV0>
- This surpasses all I've seen: <https://bit.ly/2R6SW3M>

# *Giethoorn, Holland*

September 28-30, 2018

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## **A SECRET RECOVERY REUNION**

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No filming was allowed on the island: former members interviewed in a private boat.

- The men in red sweaters here were, like fifty other reunion attendees including me, all born and raised in BCC before escaping.
- It took great courage for the interviewees to tell their stories as we all continue to struggle with psychological and physical fear and threats at the hands of the cult and our loved ones who remain connected to it.
- Like other 'cult kids' – an underrecognized struggling population this documentary aims to bring awareness to – those born in cults struggle with complex PTSD, developmental issues, and survival challenges due to lack of education or real-world preparation.



## BORN THERE, LEFT 2 YEARS AGO

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“It was modern-day slavery.”

- I'd run from one of these money parties, crying, I could not handle it at all anymore. I could not do it anymore it was absolutely against everything that is Christian, human.
- ...my husband told me just straight into my face, if you leave the church, for me it's the same as leaving me, going away from the church is the same as ending the marriage. I was born there it was all I ever knew.
- So I was taken out, I was taken to a mental hospital, I stayed there for a month, and in that month I decided that if I want to have a bit of hope and future in my life, the first thing I should do is just put away everything that has to do with god, jesus, beliefs, because it's just making my mind completely sick. And when I made that decision then I could finally recover.

# Corine Ledder

Netherlands

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## MY BROTHER'S DEATH WAS USED

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“I want justice for him – twenty years later.”

- ...he was sent away and hit on the road. He died Sunday evening at 6:00. And that was very traumatic for us as a family. Our feeling was this happened because he was sent away and if he wasn't he would still be alive.
- We know today his death is still used as an example: look this happens if you leave the church. And they use it to give people fear. And I think that's very bad. And that's why I want to tell my story.
- I have talked with psychiatrists and psychologists about it and it is hard, and I can imagine if you have not experienced this yourself it is hard to explain it. And by talking about it with friends and family, that is the biggest healing process for me.

# Ellen Heijmerikx

Netherlands

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## AUTHOR, ACTIVIST, BCC SURVIVOR

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“It’s completely crazy, destructive madness.”



- As a child you are convinced that you are a chosen one. The preaching is the Bible and the elders from cover to cover and you have to live it in total.



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## **SOMEHOW, MY FAMILY ESCAPED**

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“My wife’s cancer was blamed on sin but we shared our last years with free minds.”

- “...when no one came to my son’s birthday party he was confused. Papa, he said: “where is everyone?” I did not know how to explain it was because we had chosen a different way and now, no relatives.”
- “When I visit my mother in law today, she is still in the church so she still stands in distance from me. And yet, I am the only one who visits her. Because her own children are too busy constantly working for the church.”

# Stephan

Netherlands



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## I LEFT BECAUSE I'M GAY

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“If you say something bad about the leader  
its like you insult God.”

- The Church is really religious, really fundamental, with conservative ideas but it's warm inside. You can trust anyone. But if you start to ask what you can believe you might learn your friends are not really your friends.
- I think it's really important that if you want to go out of the church because you're atheist or gay or transgender you can come out. It's really nice outside. You can think outside the box and you have a lot of freedom.
- Kare Smith is seen as god himself and that's really wrong. He's not god himself or a prophet ... And I don't think following KS or the bible is really about finding happiness, I think finding happiness is an ongoing process.

# *Lieneke Rengers*

Netherlands

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## **THE FEAR NEVER LEAVES**

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“I prayed but I never felt something from  
God.”

- “I always felt guilty by the things I did. It was not a nice childhood. My father punished us. Almost every evening we got hit with a belt, or wood. My younger brother with Downs Syndrome was also beaten with a stick. I never cried for myself. I cried for him.”
- Everything was wrong. Don’t look at a boy. Of course I had to wear only skirts. I am okay today but I am always scared ... you don’t still have that?
- When I tried to leave I was 50 kilos, and my mother would only say you need to go on your knees and pray. That was the only thing they could say.



## I WAS BRAINWASHED

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“One day I just stopped attending. Nobody asked. There was no contact.”

- I was born in Germany in a family in SF. My father was a leader. We moved to Norway. I have fourteen siblings. I was in SF for 30 years.
- Everyone is afraid to speak up. You lose your family once more if you tell your story. It's nice to be together here. We speak the same language. We know what each other is talking about.
- What I thought was difficult was when my daughter was going to meetings and hearing she was a bad person. If she didn't live up to the norm she would be left behind when Jesus comes. And I thought it was hard that a little child should hear this message.

# Hans Gasenbeek

Netherlands

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## THE LEADER. HE'S RATHER BORING.

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“When the church became a money machine  
it started with the reign of Kare Smith the  
king.”

- He's not very well-spoken. He's not very honest. The only person not having to be humble is the person at the top. He didn't even write his own book. He called it 'Prophet and Leader.'"
- I was put in a mental hospital and tried to kill myself at 21 years old.
- I know the older people don't want to go to the work parties. But if they try to worship now they get thrown out. [It happened in Switzerland.](#)"

# Norway – Interviews and Brunstad Center

October 02-12, 2018

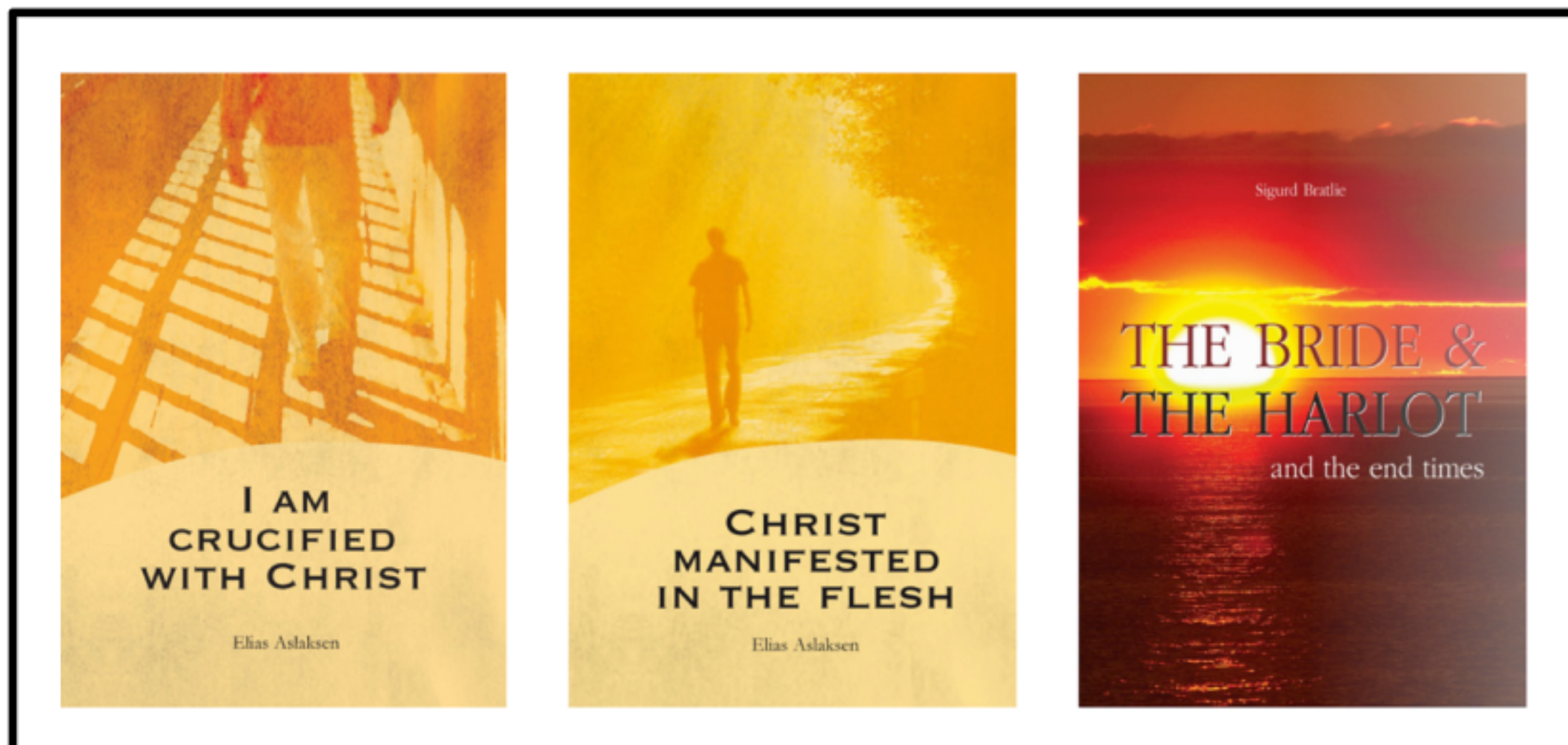
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## THE 7.5K ROOM \$1B. COMMUNE

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The kids call it 'VBS' – *Verden's Beste Sted* /  
*The World's Best Place*





## KICKED OUT AT TEN YEARS OLD

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“We were made fun of in The Church for only having 7 children and made fun of in The World for having so many.”

- “My husband and I found a chart. We didn’t know what feelings were allowed so we learned what was normal for everybody else from that. But now I’m teaching my daughter that it’s okay to feel today.”
- “I was brought up having two choices. Be happy and be grateful. Those are the two choices I had. No taking up space. Being angry, taking up space, showing feelings, that’s not allowed.”
- It was [pure abandonment](#) for being a human being.”



## MY STORY SPLIT THE CHURCH IN 1/2

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“The Leaders are Lying.”

- I can just tell my story. Believe it or not. It's your choice. I can say Kare Smith is a liar, and so it is up to you. You have to decide what you believe.
- It was how they invented the Revival and Opposers so Kare Smith could come to power. My mother and father, who was the leader, planned to go to Brunstad and they got a message: 'you can't.' 'Stay home.' Then came a list of five accusations. Four of them was not true. It was a lie. The one of them that was true, it was that my sisters had used pants. And cut a little of their hair. That was true. But they were 18 years old and 20.
- When I protested they had a spy come into my home. Smith said no I don't know so much about this case and we can uh, I will call for a meeting after this conference, we can speak together about it. But it never happened.

# Johan Velten

Norway

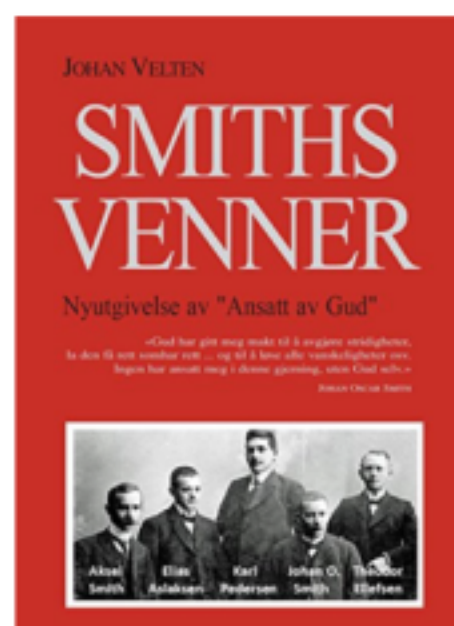
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## WELCOME TO THE BEST PLACE ON EARTH

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“In abbreviation they call it ‘BPE.’”



- The money-nagging surpasses everything we've previously seen in Norway. As a fraud, in my opinion it transcends Scientology's L. Ron Hubbard and other religious charlatans.



## **THEY CALL ME THE ANTICHRIST**

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“I think everyone should be allowed to tell  
their story.”

- Where are our limits and boundaries? We don't learn them in SF. Today our goal is to break cycles. We're not bitter, or troublemakers, like they say. We live good lives today. But we also want acknowledgement, so we can heal.
- We saw that inside the church in many families the spanking accelerated and developed into really bad abuse. And that's so sad. Because people's lives were ruined. And that's very hard to repair. I think if the church should apologize, that will help to heal a lot of the wounds. And that's what I made clear in the series on the pages as well. How an apology can result in healing in the families.