

'Church Girl' Pastor: Drugs, God Bookends of My Life

The film *I'm in Love with a Church Girl* is inspired by the real-life story of a major drug dealer, Galley Molina, who calls his story a real life tale of surrender.

The former drug trafficker is now a pastor, worship leader and first-time filmmaker. Drug dealer and ministers are the "book ends" of his life, Molina told CBN News in a recent interview.

"Everything that happened in between wasn't roses, man," he said. "In fact, the moment that I decided to give my life to Christ is when all the trouble happened."

Molina wrote about that trouble in the years he was locked up in prison. He used an old typewriter in the jail's library to crank out many stories.

He thought it would at least be a good book, but he was soon inspired to make a movie.

"When God gives you a vision, He is going to give you the tools and resources to see that vision out, and He has done that in a mighty way with this film," he said.

Among those provisions is a partnership with celebrated worship leader Israel Houghton, who helped to score the film. Molina recalled hearing Houghton's music for the first time while he was still locked up.

"When I was away, I would listen to a station called Hallelujah FM and they play these songs, like another level, and they'd play these songs and I was like, 'This guy has an amazing voice,'" Molina said.

"I fell in love with his music really more so there. To be with him, that is a God thing," he said.

Molina and Houghton are now best friends and business partners. They've traveled the country on a bus tour to promote their first project together.

Houghton spoke with CBN News about why he has made the move from music to filmmaking.

"I love story-telling," Houghton said. "I am a songwriter already and I have always been fascinated with film."

"I lent my name and likeness and voice and stuff to the story because I believed in the story first of all. I love true stories," he said. "Like any good story, there is a lot of tension and release. And there is a lot of tension of just the consequence of previous decisions made bringing you to this place of decision."

There is also tension in the off-screen story with the decision to cast rapper JaRule in the leading role. The real-life rap star recently spent time in jail for illegal gun possession.

"That movie was shot before JaRule went to prison. He went to prison for two years," Houghton said. "Some people have said he is a felon playing in a faith-based film. Galley will tell you, 'I am a felon and I am the writer and producer of the film.'"

"To hear him say it because I am quoting his words. He said, 'Playing this role and then going to prison, really prepared me for prison. And it was God's way of bringing me aside and talking to me,'" Houghton continued, quoting the actor.

"And that guy has had some heavy conversations with Jesus," he said.

JaRule has a testimony of transformation. And Houghton and Molina are praying their film will inspire many more testimonies.