

CAST BIOGRAPHY

Cecillia French

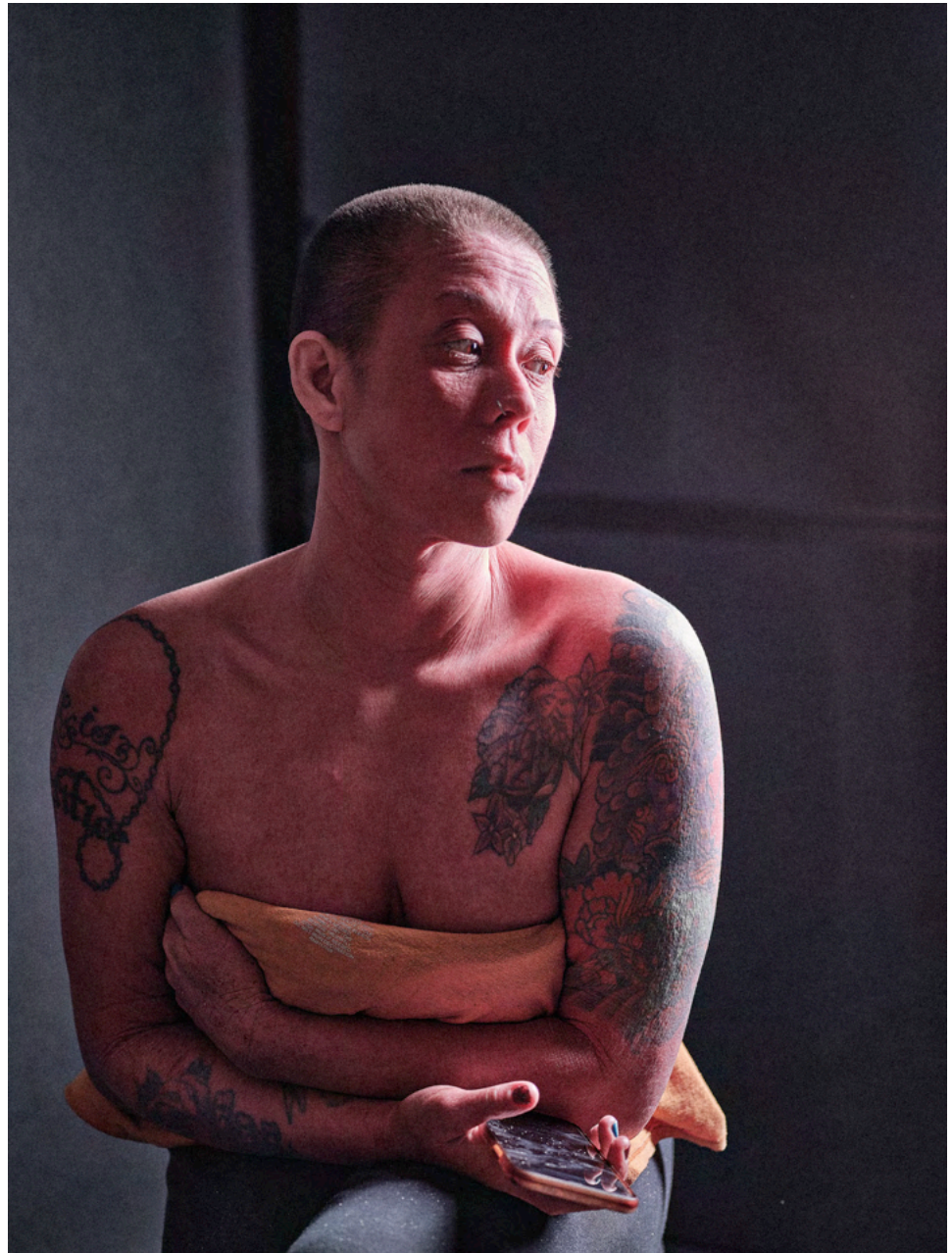
Cecillia French is 34 years old and grew up in San Francisco, California. She's a mother to a beautiful 10 year old daughter. She considers herself an artist. She loves to express herself through the art of modeling, writing, and painting. She also enjoys dance and singing although she wouldn't proclaim herself to be great at it. Cecillia truly sees life through colorful glasses. She says, "Beauty and art are all around me and I find peace in the little nuances of life. I believe everyone deserves respect and empathy and try to conduct myself as such".

Grayson Bunting

Ceci's supportive fiancé and best friend. Gray was born and raised in San Francisco and is studying to be an Architect.

Jasmynn Johnson

Also known as Jassy. Jassy is 10 years old and loves her friends and teachers at school. Her favorite thing to do in her spare time is play Roblox and Minecraft.





CREW

Carlos Torres

Director - Director of Photography - Writer
Editor - Audio Engineer - Colorist - Photographer

Carlos Torres is a San Francisco Bay Area Director, DOP, Editor, Writer, and CEO of CutFocus. In college, he made the purposeful choice of majoring in Communication with a minor in Digital Film. His mindset is if you can be a great communicator, you can be a great leader. If you're a great leader, it can contribute to being a strong Director. That role as a director began in 2017 after CutFocus was contracted to develop three pilot episodes for Sunday to Sunday. Two seasons later in 2020, Carlos won his first Emmy from the San Francisco/Northern California Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences as the Director for the series; and a year later, won a second Regional Emmy as an editor for a mental health PSA. In the past 5 years, he's had various documentaries, commercials, and a music video televised internationally. Carlos has now teamed up with Karen Torres, and the two become a directing duo. Currently, Carlos has been inspired to pursue education in Screenwriting and is taking courses with Berkeley Rep and the San Francisco Writers Grotto. His career goal is to write & direct a drama series.



Karen Torres

Director - Producer - Location Sound Mixer - Co-Writer
Assistant Editor - Assistant Sound Designer

Karen Torres is a San Francisco Bay Area Actor, Director, and Producer. Her role as a Director began in 2020 alongside Carlos Torres, her spouse, in their first micro-short, XIETY- winning over 20 awards. Her unique perspective as an actor, and eye for details, has brought a new approach to the projects she works on, and has even won her an award for “Inspiring Female Filmmaker”. Together with Carlos, they have become a directing duo working on multiple styles of work- commercial, documentary, and narrative work. In 2021, one of her most recognized accomplishments was a feature length documentary she Co-Directed, which was televised throughout the United States. In addition to directing, Karen’s organizational skills have naturally pushed her into a Producer role as well. She continues to grow in the field of filmmaking, learning as quickly as she can, and taking on whatever roles she can to add to her arsenal of skills. Eventually, she hopes to direct a comedy short, as well as a food series due to her love for cuisine.



Jake Slonecker

1st Assistant Camera

Jake is a Gimbal/Steadicam Operator and Director of Photography. Although these are his primary specialties, he also provides great skill in the Graphic Design Department for CutFocus. Since 2020, Jake has won two Emmys and various awards for his skills behind the camera. His ability to create movement with the camera is what has elevated CutFocus's ability of storytelling. Jake has a particular passion for music video production. He was the Director of Photography for a music video CutFocus produced for Amerie that currently has over half a million views. He's DP'd for artists like E40, MISTAH F.A.B., Nef The Pharaoh, Netta, and more. His career goal is to fine tune his craft and continue to get opportunities to work with more artists.

PRODUCTION COMPANY

CutFocus is an award winning video production company based in San Francisco, California. The company consists of three full-time creatives. Carlos Torres, Jake Slonecker, and Karen Torres. CutFocus has had various documentaries televised nationally and internationally. On top of documentary filmmaking, they also produce commercial, industrial, narrative, and music videos. Through their learnings of working with distributors, creative agencies, and more throughout the years, CutFocus looks to start 2022 by producing more CutFocus originals.

PREVIOUS PRAISE

For Feature Documentary Sunday to Sunday: On The Journey 2021 (CutFocus was responsible for the Directing, Full Production, and story crafting)

*CutFocus reportedly spent a year following the four subjects of the documentary. **Their humanitarian efforts are made all the more vivid by masterfully directed cinematography. Indeed the imagery is just as beautiful as the story** as they take viewers through California city streets and arid African landscapes.*

- J. P. Mauro, *Aleteia Film Critique*



MOST NOTABLE AWARDS

2021 Northern California Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences EMMY Award for Editor- Content

XIETY: ADAA (Anxiety and Depression Association of America) Mental Health Awareness
Carlos Torres, Editor

2021 Northern California Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences EMMY Nomination for Health/Medical-News

XIETY: ADAA (Anxiety and Depression Association of America) Mental Health Awareness

2020 Northern California Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences EMMY Award for Interview/Discussion-Program Special

“Sunday to Sunday: Father Chris Walsh”

2021 Silver Telly Award Winner in Health and Wellness

XIETY: ADAA (Anxiety and Depression Association of America) Mental Health Awareness

2019 Gabriel Award for Best Narrative TV Series and Storytelling

“Sunday to Sunday,” The Preaching Journey

2020 2nd Place Gabriel Award for Hot Topic: Human Dignity - English Television

Father Manuel De Jesus Rodriguez: Sunday to Sunday Series

2021 Art with Impact Short Film Competition Winner

XIETY: ADAA (Anxiety and Depression Association of America) Mental Health Awareness

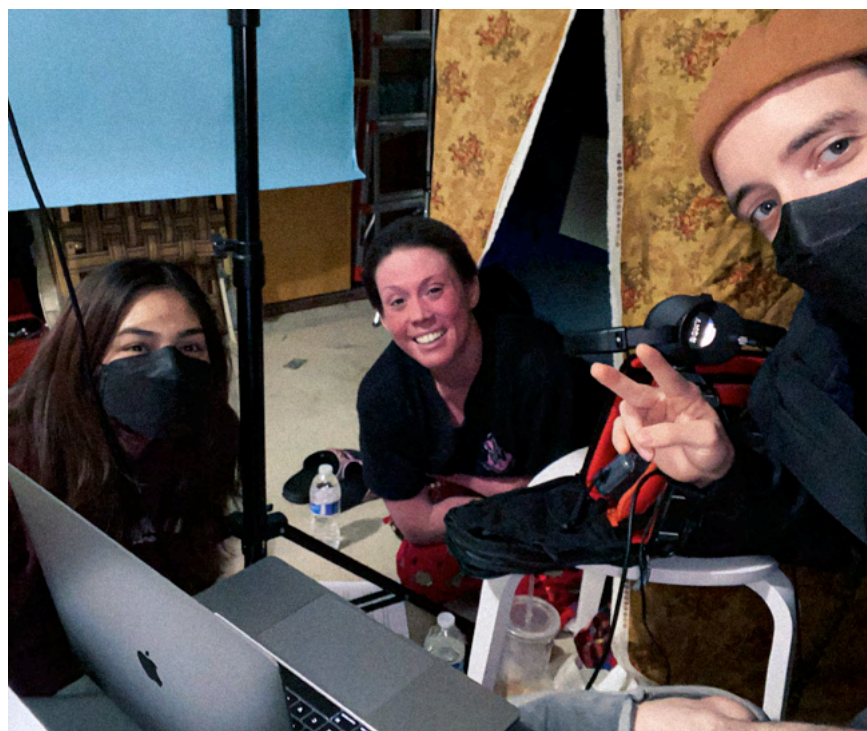
Since 2019, CutFocus has won 34 awards and has shown their work in over 40 film festivals.



BEHIND THE SCENES









TEN FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

If topical steroids were used to treat your eczema and you are going through so much pain without it, why not go back to using topical steroids?

The steroids would lose potency over time, which led me right back to the doctors' office and walking out with a more potent prescription. My body would adapt to the drug and I would get full blown flares while still on the steroids. It also seems with each higher potency steroid I was prescribed, the worse my body would flare later on. This was not how I wanted to live my life, especially after seeing photo evidence of people completely healing by removing the steroids completely. -Ceci

Are you open to using non-steroid type medication or do you plan on going all natural?

I plan on making more informed choices going forward. There have been several natural products that I am reactive to as well, so going natural isn't in its own right an answer to my problems. I personally would like to cautiously integrate medication as needed while still aiming for a more natural lifestyle. -Ceci

What do you hope to get out of this short film?

This film was produced to spark conversation and represent those out there who may endure this condition in silence. Creating a movement in raising awareness requires a community. Most importantly, it requires those within the community to feel confident to share their story. Cecillia's story is only one story out of potentially hundreds of thousands or more throughout the world that are going through Topical Steroid Withdrawal. The more stories that are shared, the stronger the community will become. It's a snowball effect and this is our effort to contribute to that movement. -Carlos

Why did you choose to tell this story?

Cecillia used to work at CutFocus as the Operations Manager and PA when we needed more hands on deck. In early 2021, we had a talk with Cecillia in regards to her health and her needing to take a step back to put her health first. Being that I've had my own health situations in my life, I knew the importance of taking the appropriate time to make a full recovery. As months went by, I realized the severity of her condition. Not only physically but on her mental health. It not only broke my heart but our entire team as well. I took personal time well before the inception of this film to learn about TSW and why Cecillia might be going through this. As a storyteller, I wanted to help her with the skills I know best- filmmaking. I've always believed that filmmaking has more power than telling a good story. It has the power of helping real people- changing lives and beyond for the better, whether it's through narrative filmmaking or telling true stories. This film was my calling at this point of time in my life. - Carlos





How much did the production cost?

Being that this is a CutFocus original, we were able to eat up the costs by donating our time and equipment to go through pre-production, post, and marketing. Costs related to travel, food, and stay were all out of personal pocket. Since the inception of CutFocus, our team has come to an agreement that we view our passion projects just as important as our client based work. At the end of the day, we are truly passionate about the craft of filmmaking. -Carlos

What was one of the biggest challenges in the making of this film?

I can confidently say that this is our most ambitious production yet. We had a three week window and I knew this was the time to bring light to Cecillia's condition. We pitched the idea to Ceci and she instantly jumped on board. Within four days, we interviewed Ceci, outlined, wrote the screenplay, created a shot list, and scouted the locations we wanted in the film. A day before we began production, our Steadicam Operator, Jake Slonecker caught covid. Our original crew of three now went down to the smallest crew we've ever had. Two. Myself and Karen Torres. We had to quickly determine whether we could continue the production or call it. I spent four hours adjusting the screenplay and made it so the story would work with a handheld approach rather than steadicam. We used a remote workflow for Jake to assist by using Frame IO's new camera to cloud. He was quickly able to review the footage and make sure we were hitting our marks on the shot list so we could move on to the next scene. We spent the following four days in production from 7:00am to past midnight. Karen and I wore every hat in production. Camera Op, Gaffer, Sound Mixer, PA, Focus Puller, Directors, and every other role you can imagine that's needed to make a film happen. Once completed, Karen and I edited, sound designed, mixed, mastered, and colored the film in seven days. -Carlos

Any fun facts about how the film was made?

Since we had a two person crew, it made it extremely challenging to capture all the location sound we originally planned for. 90% of the sounds heard in the film are actually foley sounds created in my own home, such as a lot of scratching sounds heard. Much of that is actually an audio recording of myself at my house replicating the movements of her scratching to the best of my ability. I even went into my own tub at my house and replicated all of Cecillia's tub movements. Even the sounds of Ceci breathing, turning on the light, taking off clothes, getting out of the tub, and looking at herself in the mirror, are all Karen replicating those exact movements and breaths in our own home. The whole process required us to watch the film with no sound and mimic what was on screen. -Carlos

The style of how Cecilia's story is shared is unique. What's the inspiration behind it?

We have a lot of experience in documentary filmmaking but we wanted to push our abilities as narrative filmmakers. We did some research and found that the majority of the content made related to TSW have been talking head style documentaries. Not that there's anything wrong with that, but we wanted to challenge ourselves to create something that used some documentary elements but consisted more of a narrative style. I guess you can let us know if we accomplished that! -Carlos

What are you working on next?

We love diversifying the content we produce. Our next major project is creating a pilot episode of a food show that revolves around a female host. That host would be our very own Karen Torres! We've been conceptualizing it for a while and we are confident that the structure and storytelling of the series is unlike anything that has been produced! -Carlos

Any advice for other filmmakers?

I get that seeing other filmmakers working on bigger projects, with more funding, and more crew can be intimidating. It might convince you that you can't achieve what others are creating because you lack the resources. Just keep in mind, no one picks up one book and says, "Yup, that was a good book... I'll never need to read another book again". Instead, they'll look for what the next best read is. Story is king, as they say, and there's plenty of audience out there to pick up the next best story regardless of the scale of production. Our team went through the same intimidation. We thought, can we uphold our filmmaking standards while having 10% of the crew we usually have? We reacted by saying... Let's find out! Now, here we are and at the very least, we made something! -Carlos

CONTACT INFORMATION

Info@cutfocus.com

www.cutfocus.com

INSTAGRAM HANDLES

Carlos Torres | @Carlostorres

Karen Torres | @carebearcarin

Jake Slonecker | @Jake_Slo

Cecillia French | @misscecifrench

CutFocus Production Company | @CutFocus

