

BRISTOL FASHION

A film by Pierre Guillet

bristolfashionfilm.com
bristolfashionfilm@gmail.com



LOGLINE

“A young transgender woman escapes her troubled home to find solace in a dilapidated boatyard.”

SYNOPSIS

Christina is a young trans woman who's running—from her past and home. When she buys a broken-down boat for that purpose, she gets more than she bargained for in the boat's owner, Esteban—warm, funny and dying to take her to dinner. He gives her a place to stay on an abandoned barge and helps her fix up the boat. Slowly but surely, they find themselves quietly navigating the sometimes messy waters of a straight man falling for a trans woman.

As their connection grows, Christina makes a temporary but real home for herself on the docks and begins to rebuild her life as Esteban rebuilds her boat. Day by day, she begins to find something steady in a ramshackle barge, a barely-running boat, and stocking the aisles in a mundane grocery store. She slowly sheds the pieces of the life that haunts her, moving past the memory of an assault and people who never valued her.

But maybe it's not in romance that we find connections that matter—maybe it's in something deeper than that, something that looks a lot more like real, true friendship. That is what Christina and Esteban find in each other. We can't find home standing still; for some of us, home is in finding who we are, in raising the anchors and embracing freedom on the water.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

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When I set out to make *Bristol Fashion*, I knew that I wanted to tell the story of a trans woman who is wholly, deeply human. We so rarely get to see characters like this on screen—but I knew I didn't want Christina to be flat or a caricature. I wanted audiences to resonate with her as a human being. Our lead, Lea, was absolutely pivotal in creating this story, not only delivering a mind-blowing table read but adding depth to the character in her authentic performance and even consulting on the script. Having grown up in the film's boatyard myself, I knew exactly what world I wanted to tell her story in and how to do it. The character of Esteban was important as well— in how he reacts to finding out she's trans. He has his own baggage to handle surrounding it. This particular scene is complex, but ultimately, what we don't see is that damaging trope of a character going completely ballistic when the trans character comes out. Instead, we come to see acceptance. I'm passionate and proud to tell the story of a woman like Christina, who doesn't need a man or anyone to tell her who she is, who gets to forge a path and ride into the sunset on her own horse— or a beaten-up motorboat.

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CHARACTERS



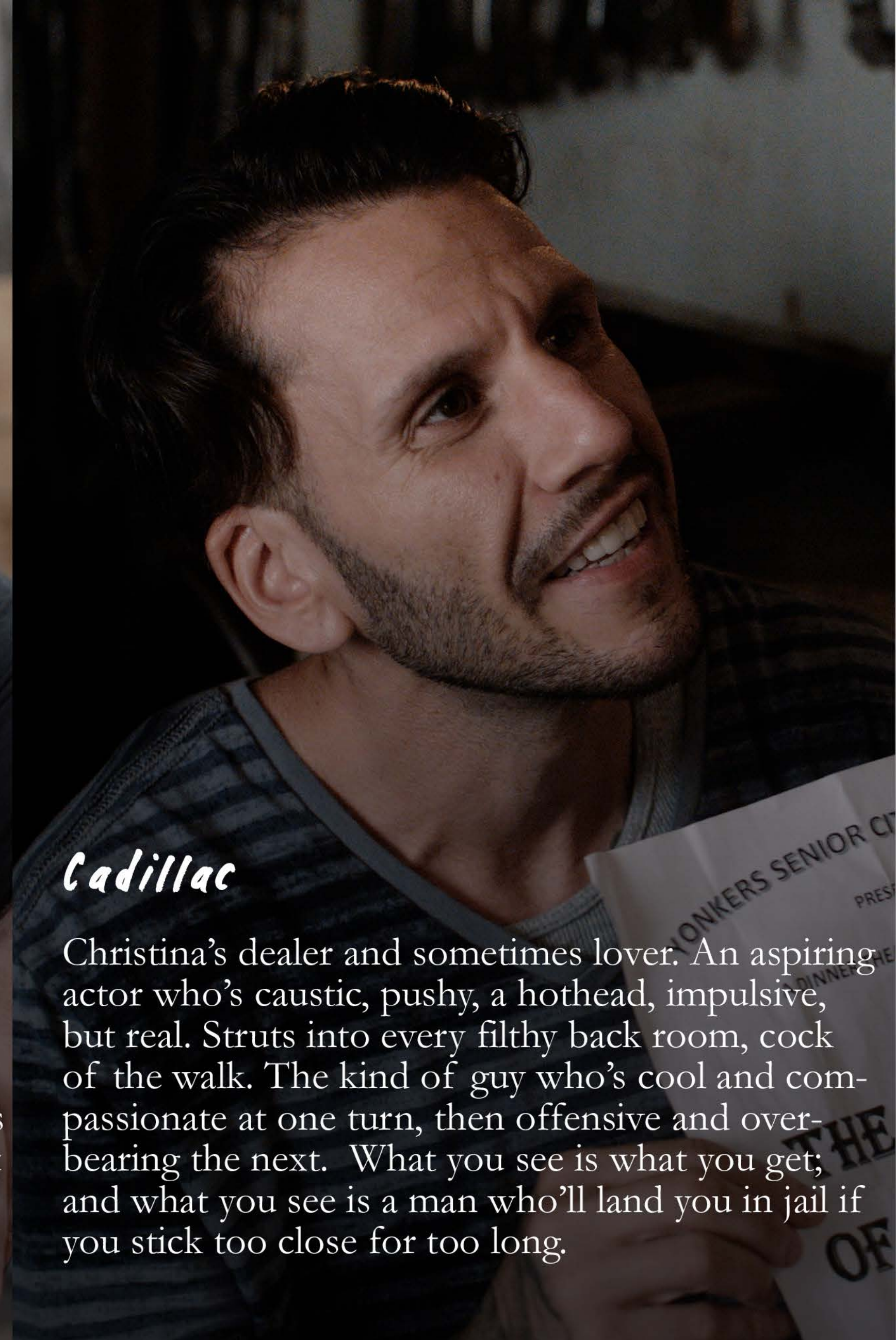
Christina

Soft-spoken and gentle, she lives her life with a shrug and a slow smile. She is low on money, safety, or any kind of real support system. She is sharply witty and used to keeping her head down, blending into the wallpaper if she can. What she really wants is freedom: with no one and nothing to tell her what she can't do or who she can't be.



Esteban

A chubby, rough-around-the-edges dock worker with a quick laugh and a penchant for bad jokes. A down-to-earth and truly kind, passionate guy. The kind of man who splurges on Barefoot wine. He is looking for companionship and meaning in the folks around him. Unfortunately, his insecurities bring out his temper.



Cadillac

Christina's dealer and sometimes lover. An aspiring actor who's caustic, pushy, a hothead, impulsive, but real. Struts into every filthy back room, cock of the walk. The kind of guy who's cool and compassionate at one turn, then offensive and overbearing the next. What you see is what you get; and what you see is a man who'll land you in jail if you stick too close for too long.



CHRISTINA AND MEN

written by *Kidah Farooqi*

Christina does not pursue a man's validation in order to be an independent woman. Popular depictions of trans women in narrative media tend to highlight the character's need to "conquer" and attain femininity by conquering men through sexuality. We do see her practice femininity in typical ways - using makeup and hair extensions as a form of gender-affirmation, but it is also a ritual that can be symbolically healing in the covering of bruises and a teary-eyed face. She wants to look and feel good for herself.

In her dynamics with men however, Christina doubles down in her autonomy and this in fact reaffirms her journey in womanhood. She conquers men in essence by using them short-term, not in an opportunistic and exploitative way, but rather a fair and transparent one. She's not emotionally invested in her male relationships because she doesn't need to settle and has yet to meet a man who could take care of her better than herself.

She is clear from the beginning that the extent to which she needs a man only goes as far as what her immediate survival needs are: basic housing, a temp job, a working boat, some weed, and occasional sex. Once she has the bare necessities she will figure the rest out, as she always has.

PRODUCTION DESIGN AND ATMOSPHERE

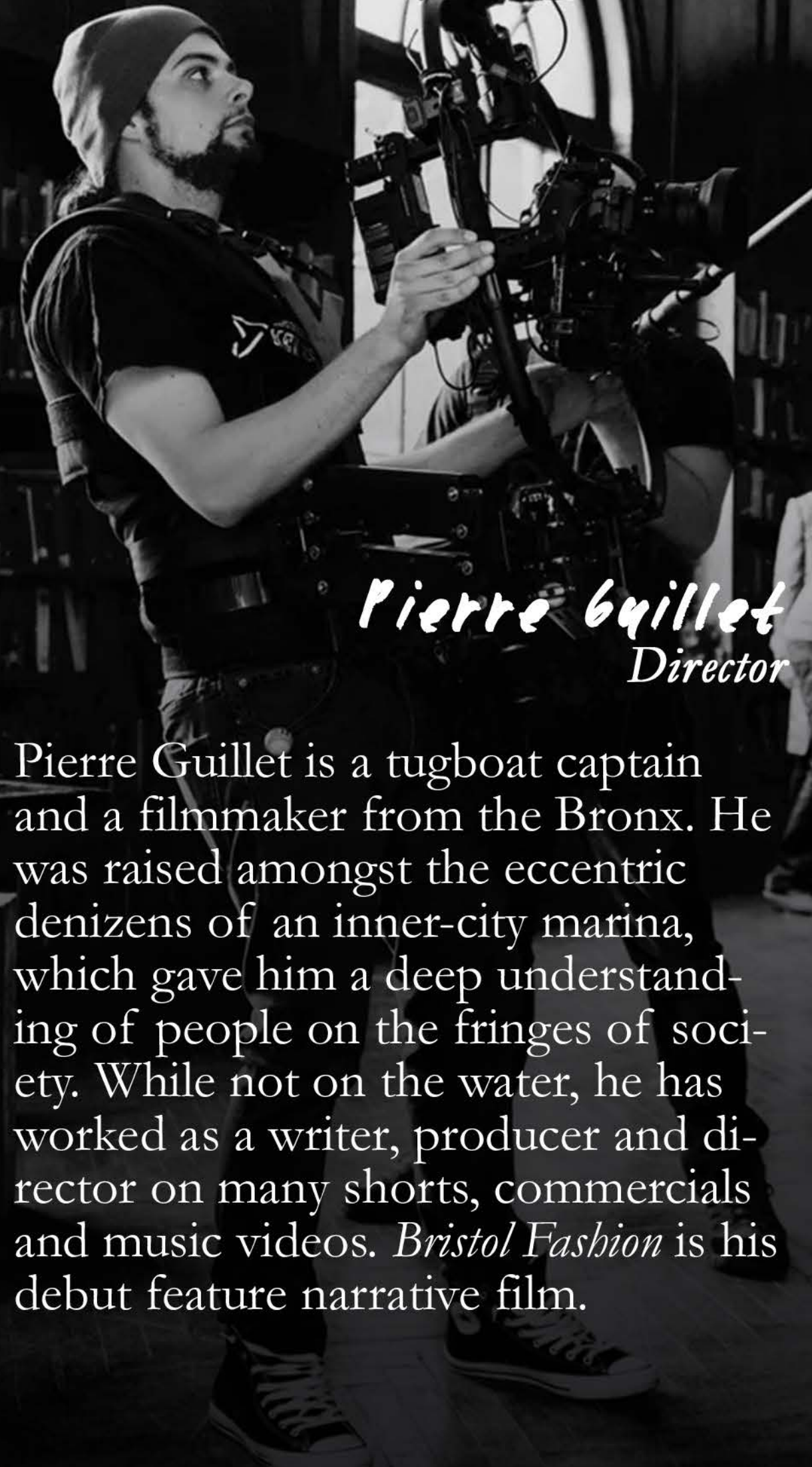
The boatyard is featured heavily as it is the main location used for filming, and most of the design is authentic, down to the abandoned barge which required minimal decorating. Shortly into the film it becomes the protagonist's makeshift home, and though it had been left behind and neglected by its owner full of cluttered junk inside and out, the barge is yet another recipient of her care. She meticulously cleans, sweeps and wipes down the interior because, as she says, she is "used to making the most out of a shit situation." Christina doesn't give up on her plan and we don't want to give up on her.

The typically-male setting also highlights the ideological differences between the men working there and Christina. Her leaving that space can also be seen as symbolic of not only leaving her abusive past, but also leaving behind environments where toxic masculinity thrives. The unusual cast of characters, much like the dilapidated boatyard itself, are imperfect. It is easy to forget that problematic behavior like misogyny stems from a lack of understanding and an abundance of insecurity, combined with vastly different upbringings and social conditioning. Ultimately, this setting is a stomping ground for marginalized people who are all seeking acceptance, validation and love in some way.



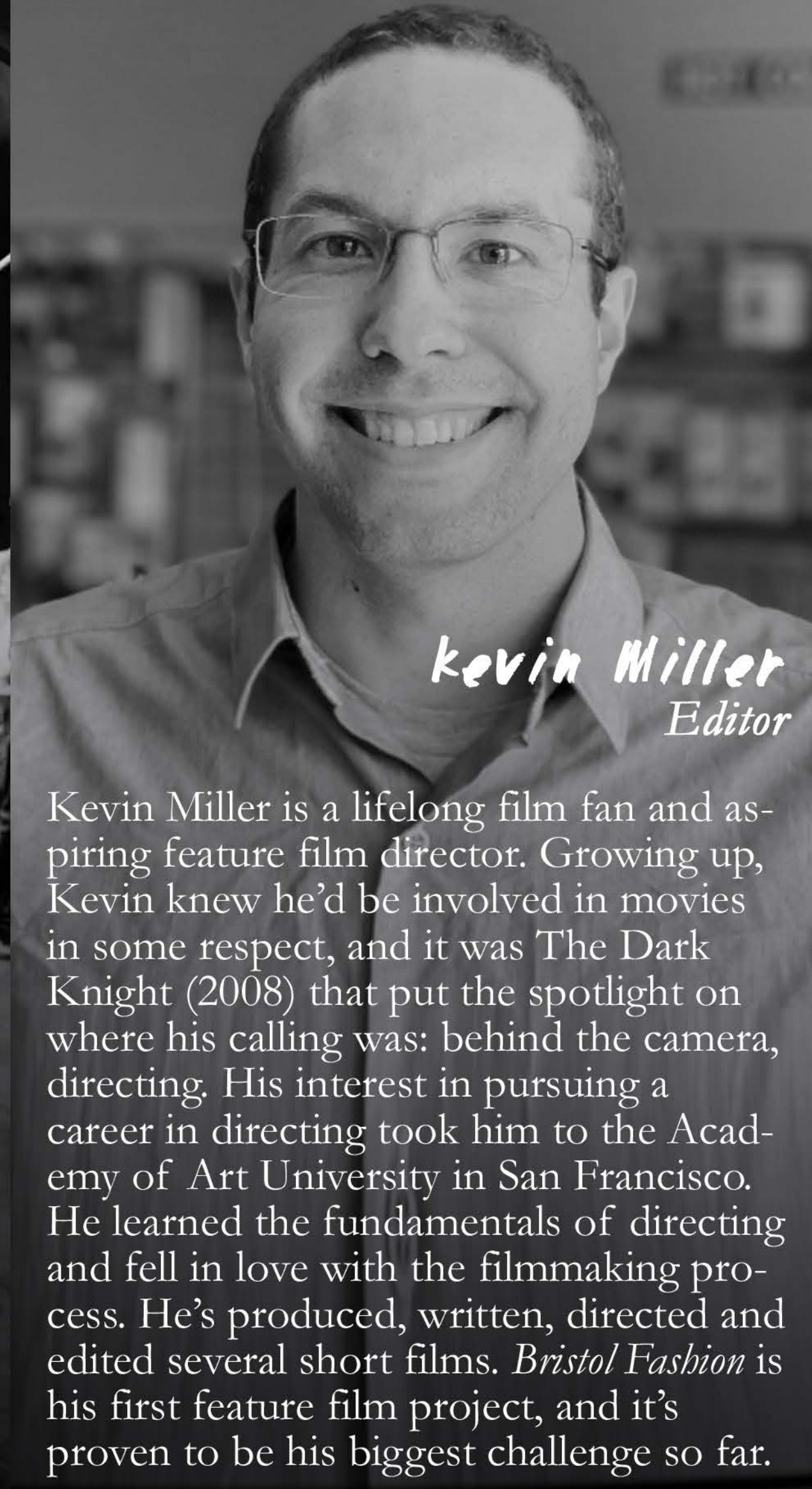


PRODUCTION TEAM



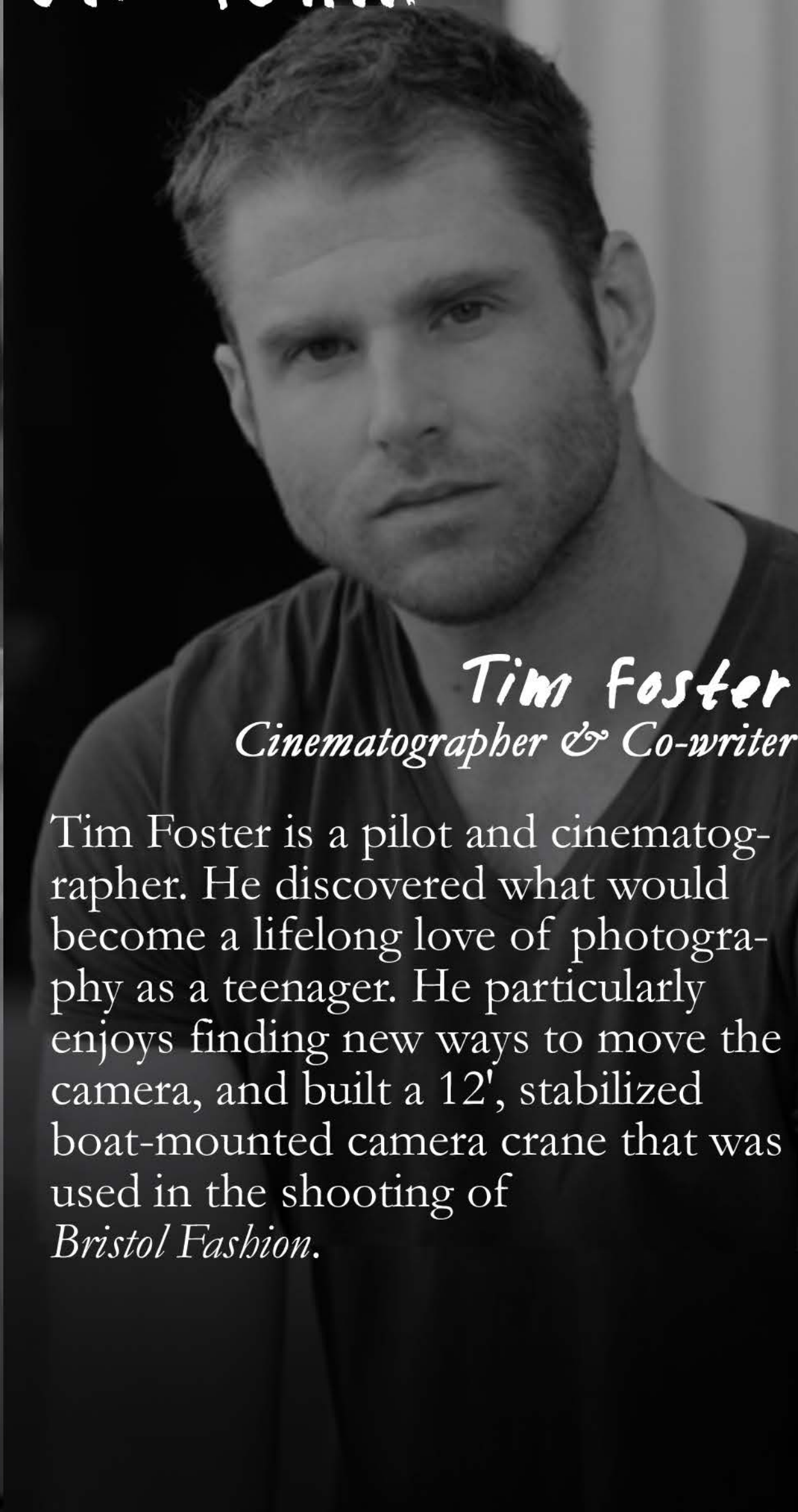
Pierre Guillet
Director

Pierre Guillet is a tugboat captain and a filmmaker from the Bronx. He was raised amongst the eccentric denizens of an inner-city marina, which gave him a deep understanding of people on the fringes of society. While not on the water, he has worked as a writer, producer and director on many shorts, commercials and music videos. *Bristol Fashion* is his debut feature narrative film.



Kevin Miller
Editor

Kevin Miller is a lifelong film fan and aspiring feature film director. Growing up, Kevin knew he'd be involved in movies in some respect, and it was *The Dark Knight* (2008) that put the spotlight on where his calling was: behind the camera, directing. His interest in pursuing a career in directing took him to the Academy of Art University in San Francisco. He learned the fundamentals of directing and fell in love with the filmmaking process. He's produced, written, directed and edited several short films. *Bristol Fashion* is his first feature film project, and it's proven to be his biggest challenge so far.



Tim Foster
Cinematographer & Co-writer

Tim Foster is a pilot and cinematographer. He discovered what would become a lifelong love of photography as a teenager. He particularly enjoys finding new ways to move the camera, and built a 12', stabilized boat-mounted camera crane that was used in the shooting of *Bristol Fashion*.



Sami El-Enany
Music

Sami El-Enany is a British Egyptian composer based in London. Alongside his own projects, he works closely with film directors, writers and artists to create bespoke scores and sound for film, TV, games, radio, theatre and installations. His work seeks to engage with the world in progressive ways, often negotiating the fringes of instrumental, electronic and field recording. He is also a pianist and improviser, performing solo and in ensembles across the world.

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+1 718-877-7326

