

TMI PROJECT PRESENTS

# One Story at a Time

Celeste Lecesne



DOCUMENTARY SHORT | 10:06 | USA | ENGLISH

DIRECTED BY: Eva Tenuto, Natalia Iyudin

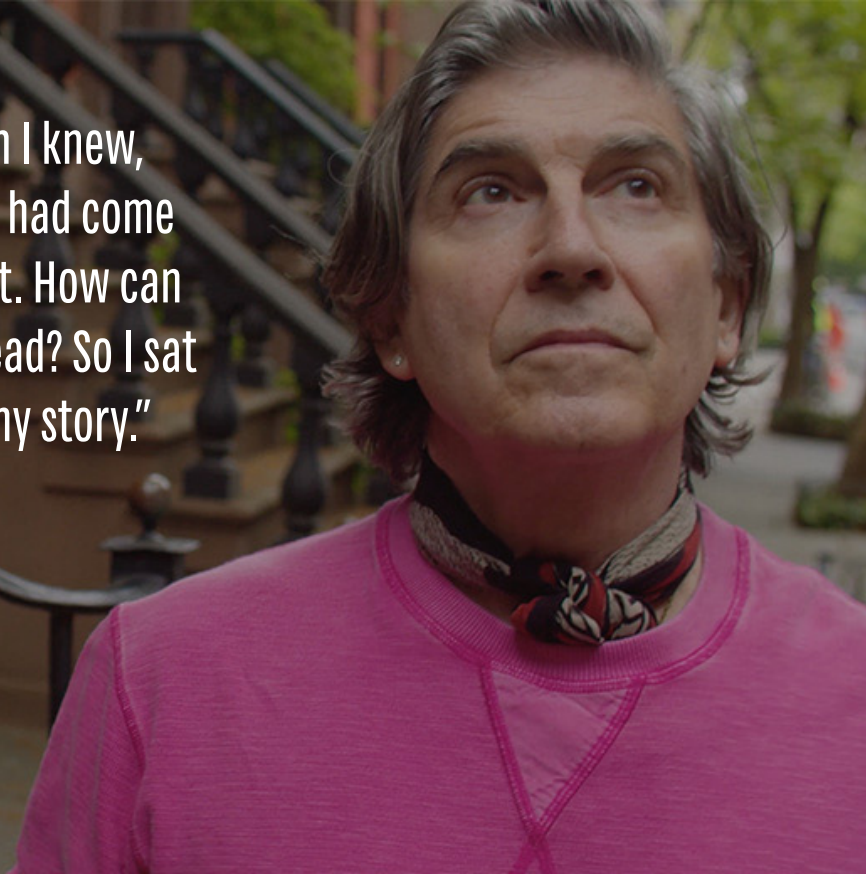


NORTHGUILD  
PRODUCTION

*Editist*

“I interviewed every gay and lesbian I knew, and what I found was that everybody had come to a point where they were like, I can’t. How can you live into a world that wants you dead? So I sat down and I wrote a story. Trevor is my story.”

— CELESTE LECESNE (HE/THEY)



## SYNOPSIS

In the docu-short *One Story at a Time*, Celeste Lecesne candidly shares how he not only escaped the confines of homophobia but combatted it by finding the courage to share his truth with the world. In a seemingly fateful chain of events, an off-broadway solo-show becomes an Academy Award-winning film that ultimately inspires The Trevor Project, the largest suicide prevention lifeline for LGBTQIA+ youth. Now, 25 years later, countless lives have been saved, and Celeste stays the course, inspiring the next generation to have the bravery to claim their truth and continue to change the world, one story at a time.



## FILMMAKER'S STATEMENT

I believe true stories are an untapped resource for global transformation. It may be a bold statement, but I see it happen every day with my work at TMI Project where we make an equally bold claim – to change the world, one story at a time, by crafting and amplifying true stories that set us free. Since I co-founded the organization in 2010, I have watched thousands of people discover the courage it takes to share a story they were most afraid to tell and witnessed them bloom and expand beyond their wildest dreams.

There are rare instances when the change is so epic that the power of true storytelling is undeniable. Celeste Lecesne's story is truly a hero's journey; and his lifetime commitment to transforming pain into power for himself and his community is remarkable. Celeste grew up in a homophobic household and culture. Like so many, he was closeted and spent much of his youth dealing with suicidal ideation. As he says so powerfully in the film, "How can you live into a world that wants you dead?" Luckily, he discovered his chosen family in the theater community and was able to start tapping into his own inner fabulousness.

For Celeste, the real catalyst for change happened when he had the horrific realization that his beloved LGBTQIA+ community was vanishing before his eyes; his generation from AIDS and the younger generation from suicide. That glimpse into the dire future sparked his courage to tell his story and claim his rightful place in the world, taking up space and standing in the spotlight. As a result of sharing his story, The Trevor Project was born, and over the last 25 years, countless lives have been saved. Young people approach him all the time and tell him, "I wouldn't be here if it hadn't been for you."

I am so honored to capture a fraction of his legacy. I envision "One Story at a Time" as a cornerstone of LGBTQIA+ history, a tool for suicide prevention, and a guide for educators and parents on supporting LGBTQIA+ youth. May it serve as a beacon of hope, encouraging individuals of all ages to share their own stories and usher in a future filled with possibility.

EVA TENUTO, FEBRUARY 2024



**EVA TENUTO**  
**DIRECTOR**

Eva is the co-founder and executive director of TMI Project. Since 2010, Eva has brought the true storytelling organization from her living room to the United Nations, and many places in between. TMI Project stories are now being listened to worldwide on the award-winning podcast, *The TMI Project Story Hour*. Eva is the editor and director of multiple solo shows, one of which was awarded Best Comedic Script in the United Solo Festival. Her award-winning docu-short, *Vicarious Resilience*, celebrated its world premiere at The Woodstock Film Festival. Her second docu-short, *Locker Room Talk*, debuts in 2024. Her essays have appeared in assorted anthologies and at [longreads.com](https://www.longreads.com).

## CAST



**CELESTE LECESNE** wrote the short film *Trevor*, which won an Academy Award for Best Live Action Short, and he is co-founder of *The Trevor Project*, the largest suicide prevention and crisis intervention Lifeline for LGBT and Questioning youth. He is also the co-founder of The Future Perfect, a national arts initiative dedicated to amplifying the voices of LGBTQ+ youth. He created *THE ROAD HOME Stories of Children of War*, which was presented at the International Peace Initiative at The Hague, and he is the executive producer of *After The Storm*, a documentary film that tells the story of 12 young people living in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

His TV writing credits include Armistead Maupin’s *Further Tales of The City* for Showtime and *Will & Grace*. He has written three novels for young adults and created *The Letter Q*, a collection of letters by queer writers to their younger selves.

As an actor, Celeste has appeared on TV in *Sex & The City*, on Broadway in *The Best Man*, and Off Broadway in plays such as *The Boys in The Band* and *Cloud 9*. His solo shows including, *One Man Band*, *Word of Mouth* (Drama Desk Award), and *The Absolute Brightness of Leonard Pelkey* (Outer Critics Circle Award) have all premiered Off Broadway and toured the country. *The New York Times* has ranked him “among the most talented solo performers of his (or any) generation.” He is also the recipient of a 2023 Guggenheim Fellowship Award.

For more information, visit [celestelecesne.com](http://celestelecesne.com).

## CREW



### **JULIE NOVAK INTERVIEWER**

Julie is a multi-talented performer, writer, and musician who enjoys making people laugh, feel loved, and consider their role in making the world a better place. Aside from co-founding TMI Project, Julie is a media producer and facilitator with [The Future Perfect Project](#), a queer-led organization that offers free arts programming to LGBTQIA+ youth across the globe. She has performed all over the United States, including a tour of her one-person show America's Next Top, which had a successful run in the NYC Fringe Festival. Currently, Julie is the host of [No One Like You](#) (broadcast on TMI Project media partner Radio Kingston/WKNY), a weekly program where she interviews everyday heroes who share uplifting stories about turning their kryptonite into their superpower. Learn more: [julienovak.com](http://julienovak.com)



### **NATALIA IYUDIN EDITOR/CO-DIRECTOR**

Natalia had her start in the industry as a TV editor for MTV, BET and PBS. She then worked in development on "Girly" with Rashida Jones, Refinery29 and the UN Foundation, and "Ladies First: A Story of Women in Hip Hop" for Netflix. She directed for mental health campaigns around teen suicide and opioid crises, and on several projects for Toyota. She co-created and directed "We Got You" -- an award-winning digital series featuring Tarik "Black Thought" Trotter of The Roots. Natalia's directing work streamed on Direct TV and DUST and screened festivals worldwide, before she made her TV debut with two episodes of a horror anthology for Stage 13, "Two Sentence Horror Stories"; currently on Netflix.



### **KASHKA GLOWACKA PRODUCER**

Kashka is a producer with eleven years of professional experience in film and video production, graphic design and original marketing content. Her clients and collaborations include Ulster County Economic Development, Zen Mountain Monastery, Lockheed Martin, Columbia University, AHRC NYC, and Community Healthcare Network NYC. She is a co-founder and a producer at an award-winning film and video production company, Espresso Pictures, where she is responsible for the development of scripts and production of original documentary and fiction work, TV ads, web videos, training videos, and product presentations. This is Kashka's third documentary film with TMI Project, having served as a long-time media partner through Northguild Productions.

## PHOTOS AND POSTERS



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FILM POSTERS

# PRODUCTION CREDITS

**TMI Project** presents:

## **EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS**

Eva Tenuto, Julie Novak

## **PRODUCER**

Kashka Glowacka

## **CINEMATOGRAPHY**

Chris Rahm, Devin Pickering

## **DIRECTORS**

Eva Tenuto, Natalia Iyudin

## **STARRING**

Celeste Leecesne

## **EDITOR**

Natalia Iyudin

## **PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS**

Ethan Quinto, Lila McGuckin

## **MUSIC**

Young Collective, Judah Earl,  
Waes Hael, Jordan Critz

## **INTERVIEW**

Julie Novak

## **SPECIAL THANKS**

Jeff Stone  
V (formerly Eve Ensler)  
NoVo Foundation  
The Palette Foundation  
Windrider Institute  
The Trevor Project  
The Future Perfect Project



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