

The Wandering Creatives Podcast

S1E34: Sign the Show with Cat Brewer

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[00:00:11] **Allie:** Hello and welcome to the wandering creatives podcast. I'm your host, Allie Coutts. And joining me for today's episode is documentary filmmaker Cat Brewer. Thank you so much for joining me.

[00:00:24] **Cat:** Thank you for having me. I'm super excited. Super excited to talk to you.

[00:00:28] **Allie:** Likewise, I am so pumped out here on the podcast, and it's funny because I like every single person that I've been talking with here in Wilson, North Carolina was like, oh, Cat Brewer, do you know, Cat you have to have her on the podcast. And I'm like, who is this person? What are they doing? Like, you know, I got figured out, and we were friendly. We kind of like bumped into each other.

[00:00:56] **Cat:** Yeah.

[00:01:01] **Allie:** And I was like, this is the person everyone has been telling me to me.

[00:01:14] **Cat:** I was I, you know, is ecstatic to be able to connect and have no, I know why I've been boneless saying, I don't know. People here in Wilson are so nice. Like, and I, I feel like sometimes they pumped me up way more than they should to people. Cause I'm like, ah, like, you know, like with. Like see the movie, and they're like, oh my God, it was like the best you got to like, watch it. And then you go, and you're like, really? Like, that's what you told me.

[00:01:37] **Cat:** So I was like,

[00:01:38] **Allie:** I don't, I like, I

[00:01:40] **Cat:** wish people wouldn't talk about me like that, but it's very, it's very kind.

[00:01:46] **Allie:** It's, you've done something pretty amazing, especially for. Like the Wilson area, I guess. Right. It's you've been on like national television. You've been in like big publications. I mean, it's, it's a pretty big deal. You're a big deal just in your perception.

[00:02:08] **Allie:** So to, to kind of let our listeners know Cat, you, you have a really fantastic story. And this experience that you've had over the last, like seven-plus years of filming and making the documentary, since the show which focuses on deaf culture, access, and entertainment. And I am really excited to learn more about filmmaking experience because I'm sure like seven and a half years is a long time to be like out on the road, interviewing people.

[00:02:41] Really immersing yourself in deaf culture, which had to be an amazing experience to have. So I just can't wait. And like I watched the trailer on your website, and it gave me like goosebumps right now, just talking about it. It's a really inspiring story that you are Kering and telling. So it's, I can't wait to just learn more and then also to be able to stream the documentary when it

[00:03:14] **Cat:** yeah.

[00:03:15] You and me both.

[00:03:16] **Allie:** So, to get started, would share with us a little bit about what sign the show is?

[00:03:24] **Cat:** So the film is about the challenges and barriers that the deaf and hard of hearing community face when trying to access or get access to live entertainment.

[00:03:36] And I focused live entertainment on comedy, music, and theater. And I, I do that in a way that's hopefully educational, it's hopefully lighthearted. And you know, may make you laugh, may make you cry. But my whole goal really is to educate with my film and to hopefully make access to live entertainment easier for this very much underserved population.

[00:04:04] **Allie:** I think only in the last couple of years is. We've maybe seen a little bit more of the interpreters and things like that at concerts, but this is just thinking about it. I really was looking back, and I'm like, yeah, that's not really something that like you hear a lot about or see a lot of.

[00:04:23] So it was really interesting to come across and to learn more about Sign the Show. And like I said, I'm, I'm honestly like really excited to, to see it

when it's available because I think it's a really important story and aspect of, I want to say like concert and going, but that's not the right thing, but like just having access to entertainment.

[00:04:49] **Cat:** You know, for years I worried about, I'm not, I'm not finishing this fast enough. I'm not doing this fast enough. It's not going to get out fast enough. And I really had to just kind of be like, okay, my girlfriend, Stephanie, always says to me in God's time, right. I have other friends who say aligned timing or divine timing.

[00:05:12] So I really had to kind of like step back and let that go. Especially because I really didn't know anything about the filmmaking process. And I think my film is coming out at a perfect time, especially with Coda winning at the Sundance film festival everybody's dreaming and winning an Oscar and especially having Troy Kotzur.

[00:05:39] For best supporting actor. It's amazing. It's only the second time a deaf person has ever won an Oscar, with Marlee Matlin being the first. So while that movie has brought attention to the deaf community, as you know, a family unit and some of the challenges that that family went through, I think might film obviously takes a much broader perspective. It's, it's a real-life in the sense that it's a documentary as opposed to, you know, I don't know, a big-budget film.

[00:06:17] Right. And so I just, I feel like my friends say the timing is right. It's going to happen. And I just have to keep having faith in sometimes, my faith wavers a little bit, but I just keep moving forward. Just keep moving.

[00:06:35] **Allie:** Yeah. And I, I didn't, I didn't think it, yeah, like the timing. Cause again, in the last couple of years, you've seen movies like what the quiet place what was the, and so there's been like a little bit of an increase in kind of visibility of, of her hearing folks and deaf culture and deaf people.

[00:06:53] So yeah, I think your show or assigned to show kind of be like the the cherry on top, because I think people forget like, you know, hearing people or deaf people still enjoy the things that everyone else enjoys, which includes music and comedy and just entertainment in general. But I don't think that's anything that's really bad. Explored or talked about before. So I think your documentary, like you said, it's coming along like at the right time. There's the uptick and kind of visibility. So

[00:07:29] **Cat:** I'm, I'm excited to see

[00:07:30] **Allie:** like I'm I'm yeah. I'm going to be watching it. Just take off because I fully believe that our

[00:07:36] **Cat:** level from your lips to the universes ears,

[00:07:40] **Allie:** and I put it out there, put it out in the universe.

[00:07:42] It's I'm kinda curious, like, what was it that inspired you to start this journey seven-plus years ago? Was there a, a moment or an incident that just like spoke to you and you had to do something

[00:07:57] **Cat:** about it? Yeah. So I'm, I'm going to be 51. By the time this airs, I will be 51 years old, and I've been attending concerts since I was about eight years old.

[00:08:11] Maybe even a little bit younger. I've always loved music. And throughout my entire life, music and comedy have always gotten me through life, like the joyous times and also the really tough times. And in 2014, I went to a concert. It was Gavin de Gras. And just like, Aw, I love him. Love him, love his music.

[00:08:41] And for the very first time, I saw a sign language interpreter interpreting the concert, signing the show. And I was my, I think like most hearing people, who've never seen a sign language, interpreter D out of live performance, my mind, and my heart exploded. I was like, oh my gosh, what is going on? I mean, I knew what was going on, but I was like, I wanna know.

[00:09:08] I wanna know what she's, what she's. I mean, obviously, she was signing the music, but I wanted to understand that better. And I was completely ignorant. I didn't realize that deaf people enjoyed music. I think like my only experience with that was seeing Mr. Holland's Opus years ago. But I didn't realize that people enjoyed music, let alone enjoyed going to live performances.

[00:09:37] So after I started talking to the interpreter and then started communicating with the deaf people there through the interpreter, cause I didn't know any sign language. I learned of all of these challenges and barriers that people in this community face when trying to access live entertainment. And I was heartbroken, and my eyes were opened at the same time to.

[00:10:06] My hearing privileged, right? I've never had to request access at a comedy show, a music concert, or a play. And for me, I've been a teacher for 22 years. I've taught communication courses, mostly public speaking, some

interpersonal communication. And I was like, I'm going to write an article about this because it is another form of communication that I really didn't give any thought to.

[00:10:41] And just about like barriers, I talk a lot about barriers to communication in my classes, especially intercultural barriers, which could be ethnicity. It could be religion, it could be socioeconomic status. It could also be, you know, sexual orientation or identity. And so I. I really wanted to shed some light on this subject matter.

[00:11:07] So I called a friend at the Oakland Tribune and I was like, Hey, if I, I wrote an article for the school newspaper for Laney college, will you publish it in the Oakland Tribune? He was like, yeah, this sounds great. So I was then telling another friend, my roommate at the time about what I was going to do.

[00:11:24] And he's like, you should make a documentary. And I like paused for like a minute. And I was like, Oscar, like I have, you know, that like I have no background whatsoever. It's filmmaking. And he's like, yeah, but this is a story that needs to be told. And I was going through a really difficult time in my life.

[00:11:44] I was going through a separation after like 15 years of marriage and I was just like, Sure why don't, why don't I like, well, I'm going to make a documentary. And I had seen a movie years ago. It was about this young guy who wanted to go on a date with drew Barrymore. And he I can't think of it. I think it's like my date with drew or something like that.

[00:12:09] And he literally, I remember this because it stuck in my head. He went and he bought a camera and he was like, I'm going to save the receipt because I'm going to return it. And that's what I did. Like, I went down to best buy, like talk the guy's ear off for like two hours, but I had no idea what I needed.

[00:12:27] And then in my head, I was like, I can't afford an \$800 camera. I'm gonna save the receipt and return it in 30 days. Eight years later, I still have that camera. I was really naive that I create a film in 30 days that did not happen with seven and a half years. From the time I got the idea and bought my camera to completing it July 30th, 2021.

[00:12:58] yeah, it's been the highest of highs and the lowest of lows. And sometimes in the exact same day,

[00:13:07] literally, and I would not change it for the world. It's been a tremendous adventure, tremendous learning experience. And it has, it has filled me with joy not every day, all day, but most days.

[00:13:23] **Allie:** I mean, what an amazing experience, like, I can't even imagine it in my head, like what it was like, and also just like to have the guts to be like, yeah, you know what?

[00:13:36] I'm going to do that. I am going to make a documentary it's going to happen. And to just into do it, like a lot of people will say that they're going to do something and they might buy the equipment and like do a little bit of it. But to say you going to do it, commit to it and then seven and do it for seven and a half years and you stuck with it.

[00:13:57] And now you have this just amazing documentary. That is, I mean, something I'm really interested in seeing is how the conversation changed throughout those seven years, because I'm sure like when you first started. It was, you know, probably something, not a lot of people thought about, but then like maybe throughout the years, those opinions have changed and people maybe became a little more familiar with it.

[00:14:20] So I'm excited to see

[00:14:22] **Cat:** the journey through the film. Yeah. I think the one thing that did not change still is these challenges and barriers and the fact that deaf people have known this their entire life. Right. And so it, one of the people in the film, my friend, Julie, she's deaf, and she says like, how do we get more people to, to have this aha moment to realize that they have this hearing privilege?

[00:14:52] And then how do we make things. More accessible for everyone. And that's part of the journey of the film is, is discussing that from different points of view, not only from deaf and hard of hearing folks, but also from sign language interpreters, and then the artists that these people are trying to see the, the, the spinners, the musicians, the theater, actors, and comedians.

[00:15:20] So I, what I lacked in knowledge about filmmaking, I definitely made up for, I think, with my knack for communicating and hustling. Like I love like, yeah, I always talk about hustling with gratitude and love for every experience that you have. Good and bad. Like there is some. Way to find gratitude for the experience, whether it was a good thing and you learn from it or whether it was a bad thing and you learned for it learned from it.

[00:15:58] So,

[00:16:01] **Allie:** yeah.

[00:16:02] **Cat:** My film really focuses on, and this is interesting. I had a discussion with a woman the other day, who is the executive director of a hearing and communications.

[00:16:13] And she was like, I love your film. She's like, I've been involved in this community for 37 years. And I, I learned new things from your film, which was fantastic for me to hear, but I also learned, because she said, you know, your film really focuses on fine language interpreting and access through interpreters.

[00:16:34] She's like, but not every deaf and hard of hearing person signs. And I was like, well, yes, I know that. And she's like, I would have loved to have heard a little bit more about, you know, live captioning or even just regular captions. And I was like, ah, you know, like, can I go, I'd love to go back and make another cut of my film.

[00:16:58] Oh yeah. Part two. Right. It's funny. There've been, there've been folks who I haven't been able to interview. For various reasons timing or just didn't work out. And one of my girlfriends Rukia always says to me, rookie and Stephanie, both part two, this is PR 2.0, sign the show 2.0, you know, I've said that I have no desire to make another film because I think had I known then back in 2014, what I know now about it, I probably would have never, I would've never said I was convinced, but I mean, like I said, I wouldn't change anything about it, but it's definitely been challenging.

[00:17:43] There have been a lot of challenges as a filmmaker and, you know, I think some of them might have been easier had I had background and experience, but I think some of them would have been just the same regardless if I had experienced or not. I mean maybe if I had a, like a team of people to help me as opposed to.

[00:18:03] Just being myself,

[00:18:09] **Allie:** right? Like, you

[00:18:10] **Cat:** know, someone to I'd get people all the time, like, oh, you should interview lady Gaga, you should interview pink. And I'm like, yes, I should. Do you have their number?

[00:18:23] Yeah. I was like, you know, like I had to hustle for every single interview that I got. And some of that was like, don't get me wrong. Like IDM lady Gaga, idea pink. I tweeted these people, but that's how I got a lot of my interviews was messaging on Instagram. Messaging on Twitter. You know, these people didn't know who I was sneaking backstage at concerts.

[00:18:52] And for me, that was like where I lived at the time in the bay area, it was fertile with music and comedy. There's an amazing comedy scene in San Francisco. Great music scene in Oakland and the bay area. And so, you know, like I went where I could, where I can easily drive, you know, 40 minutes or whatever, wait back, you know, wait outside of a comedy club and try to ask someone, Hey, can I get 30 seconds of your time?

[00:19:22] Here's my elevator pitch. Will you do this? You know, so, but if I had like a whole team that was like, you know, I don't know. Dreaming that there's like this database out there that like all the Illuminati

[00:19:38] **Allie:** Illuminati. Right?

[00:19:40] **Cat:** Exactly. Like, oh yeah. You want to talk to them that they just took off my phone, you know?

[00:19:44] But I didn't, I didn't have that. So I got who I could get, which was not lady Gaga. I got DL hugely. I got Andre 3000 and Chuck D Chuck D was like a whole two years of back and forth on Twitter. Like literally DM-ing each other for two years before I got that interview with him.

[00:20:10] **Allie:** And it just lined up. It just happened. It's persistency. You like embodied. I personally like two years just going back and forth with someone on, I mean, that's, I think it's truly like a Testament to your passion and devotion to the topics and be able to.

[00:20:25] To do that. Like you said, hustle hard for like seven and a half years and got, I mean, you've really got some amazing interviews. Like I'm just looking at everyone that is included in the documentary and I'm like, holy shit.

[00:20:43] **Cat:** I like it. It's funny because there's, there's two people in the film. One of them is she's an interpreter.

[00:20:50] Her name is Holly, Manny, ADI. And I mean, you go anywhere on the internet and you see her interpreting, like she's interpreted for public enemy for Paul McCartney. Like, I, I think Paul McCartney, I mean, literally

everybody and I didn't know her and I kept trying to reach out, trying to reach out and then just like, wouldn't reply, wouldn't reply.

[00:21:13] Wouldn't reply. And finally, I was like, I don't know how it happened, but I finally convinced her. She was like, do you want to do FaceTime? We'll do a FaceTime call. So I could, you know, And in her kitchen, we, I remember this. She was like, okay, like I get it. Like, I get what you're doing. I'll give you the interview.

[00:21:34] Like I had to work hard to get my interview with her. And I had to work just as hard to get my interview with Matt maxi. Who's now my, one of my executive producers. And, you know, I stalked him on social media for two years and he's deaf. And so I was like, how do I communicate with them?

[00:21:56] We were like, Snapchat, Facebook. I mean, yeah. And I think I'm almost most proud of my interview with him and the friendship and partnership that we have created with each other. These lasts, like, I think it's been four. I met him for the first time in 2017. Yeah. So five years. Yeah. He's been with me on this journey.

[00:22:22] I think we've been, we always say that we are floating on parallel paths. He's floating much higher than I am. He's amazing. And I adore him. He knows, I, I love him with all my heart but I'm really proud of that interview. And I've learned so much from him about the deaf community and just about his own hustle.

[00:22:44] And with his, with his company called definitely dope. DEA, definitely dope. And his journey to also break down barriers and build bridges between the deaf and hearing communities.

[00:22:59] **Allie:** I have to say personally, I was very excited to see that you got an interview with Nile who was on America's next top model, because I remember watching that season and I was just in love with them. I thought it was just so amazing. I remember there's an episode where I think they had to pose to music or something, or there was a whole conversation around like being able to feel the vibrations in the music.

[00:23:25] And I remember that being a moment for me, where I was like, oh my like, cause I was, I think maybe the first time I witnessed or heard a conversation around music and deafness and yeah, it was like a whole moment for me. And also I was like, He's really good looking too.

[00:23:47] **Cat:** Yes. and is just as good looking at person as he is on television.

[00:23:53] And I actually interviewed him down in LA before they even announced the winner of America's top model. So he was still in that process, like still going through it and couldn't talk about it at all. But I snagged that interview with him pretty early on, pretty early on in the, in the filmmaking process.

[00:24:16] Yeah.

[00:24:17] **Allie:** I mean, what a wild ride, like I said earlier, I mean, you have been able to interview some amazing folks, but then you yourself have been interviewed on like you were, you were featured, this was with Kelly Clarkson, Kelly Clarkson. I ever featured in the news, I think which, so that was okay. Just like

[00:24:39] **Cat:** that one.

[00:24:40] Interview me, I will say that was crazy. So again, with Kelly, it was almost, I had asked her to be in the film. I checked backstage, gotten a meet and greet line. My, my friend Akilah will say that I did not sneak backstage, but I kind of did I do it. Do what I gotta do. I approached her, I'd read, been reaching out to her management for like three months and they kept telling me no, no, no, no, no.

[00:25:06] So then I was like, just can get to her face to face and ask. And I did. And she was like, yes, contact my management company. And I was like, but I have for the last three months and they've told me no. And she was like, no, you tell them that. I said so. And I was like, oh my God. Okay. So I like almost a year later, I went, flew to Nash.

[00:25:27] They called. And they were like, Hey, like we could do this interview. Or she could do this interview in like three days. And I was like, okay. I'm like, I'm in North Carolina, I'll fly home to Oakland, get my camera and then fly to Nashville which I did. And so after we filmed the interview, I like asked to take a selfie with her.

[00:25:47] And I, like, I posted it on my social media, just thanking her for like honoring her word, like keeping her word to me. You know, a whole year. So she went through her pregnancy. And so somehow I don't know how, but somehow when I posted that picture, like all these news outlets caught wind of

it. And it was like the very first picture of her since she'd had her baby, like, that's what it was about.

[00:26:17] It was

[00:26:21] **Allie:** on there. And

[00:26:21] **Cat:** they had clearly, like, I think they had, they really, they basically copied and pasted my posts, thanking her and put it on. And I like, one of my former students had like messaged me and she's like, oh my God. You're like on Yahoo home page. And I was like, what are you talking about? And then other people that I was like laying out at a pool, I had no idea.

[00:26:44] Like I pick up my phone and I looked and I was like, oh shit. And then like, I started crying cause I was like, oh my God, This is amazing, you know, that lasted all of about 15 minutes, you know, and then it was back to the grind of, you know, trying to get more interviews and get more funding and finishing the film.

[00:27:06] Yeah. Yeah.

[00:27:08] **Allie:** T to talk a little bit about your filmmaking journey, because this was your first everything like, did you do like the, you obviously, you did the, the filming yourself, looking at yourself. Did you also have like when it comes to like the editing? So I laugh because

[00:27:27] **Cat:** I really had no clue. So I said, yeah, I, so I did, I did almost all of the filming I did.

[00:27:37] There was maybe like 6% of the filming that I didn't do. Like one time I couldn't make it to south by Southwest festival where Matt and Holly were presenting on a panel. So. Hired one of Matt's friends to film it. I hired one of my former students to film cause I know he was in filmmaking Malique.

[00:27:57] And he couldn't do it. So he referred two of his friends. But yeah, I filmed everything and you can it's gritty. We like to say some of the footage is gritty. You could tell the very first interview that I did with Michael Frante compared to the last interview I did. I was like, oh yeah, I finally figured out how to work a camera.

[00:28:18] Right. Or lighting or sound. And it's funny when I first hired and like social media, I know people complain about it and it definitely has it dark

corners, but for me, social media has been an amazing resource for this film. So there was, can I, if this story gets. Allie, please feel free to edit it out.

[00:28:44] But I think that this is it's either a story of the power of social media and how the universe connects people. So I had no idea where to start looking for an editor. This was in 2019. And thanks to the guy who ghosted me in 2019 after dating me for a year. Cause that was kind of, no, it's all good.

[00:29:06] Everything works out for the best we're friends now, but he goes to me and it lit a match. It lit the fire to be like, okay next. Okay. Anyway, I digress. So I had no idea where to go for editing. When back in the day there used to be a TV show called Undateable produced by bill Lawrence who produced scrubs and Cougar town.

[00:29:29] And I was infatuated with this TV show. It was basically like comedians. It was like Brent Morin, Ron Funches Chris D'Elia. Bianca, I can't, I never can pronounce her last name, but anyway, it's just an amazing cast. Rick Glassman, they're all comedians. So they kind of like impromptu like improv off of one another.

[00:29:52] So I would go down and watch tapings of this show because it brought me so much joy and I just, I loved the cast and the producers, all of them were amazing. Bill Lawrence now does Ted lasso. So yeah, he kept Kroger to these guys were amazing. So I would go down and just, you know, be looking at them.

[00:30:13] And so somehow like be friended them on Facebook. So when I was looking for another, I was like, I have no idea where to start. And I was like, well, I know bill Lawrence on Facebook. So I'm going to like look through his people who looked through his friends and see who's an editor because I have no idea.

[00:30:32] And I found this guy. Yeah. I found this guy named Damon Gordon. Who's no longer here. He passed away December, 2020, but I found his profile. We connected on Facebook messenger. And I was like, I don't know what to do. Can you help me? Can I hire you? Like what? I had no money, but can I hire you? And he was like, I'm going to send you five reels.

[00:31:02] And you tell me who you like the best as far as editing. And I was like, okay. So he sends me these five reels and I click one. And then he made this introduction to this young kid. He was a young kid at the time. I think he

was like 23 or 24. Maybe his name is Kai. PI Keith and Kyle was like, great. I'm in, let's do this.

[00:31:28] We have like a whole, we have like a team meeting and he's like, do you have like a, not a storyboard, but I forgot. I don't even know what the name of it is. Like, you know, baby basically. Do you have like a. Screenplay or what not as screenplay

[00:31:45] or like, do you have, I don't want to use the word outline because he didn't ask for an outline, but he wanted like, do you have an idea of a storyboard? We'll just use that word, a storyboard of the film. And I was like, no, but I'll get you one. So no idea what this is. I Googled it. And I was like, I can't do this.

[00:32:04] I don't. So what I basically did was I used an outline format for a persuasive speech by is called Monroe's motivated sequence. All of my student, my speech students out there, I used Monroe's motivated sequence to put together a rough draft outline, like in two days to send it to my editor. And then I sent him 55 hours of footage on a hard drive.

[00:32:30] And that was it. And I was like, here you go, Kai.

[00:32:37] Like, I'll take a look at this and, you know, get you a string cut or, you know, rough cuts, whatever. And I was like, okay. And I tell him this all the time. He knows, I say this about him. He literally was my angel because he sent me back a cup and the first cup was like, maybe two hours long. And I just started crying.

[00:32:58] Like I was like, oh my God, he gets my vision. And like, I saw it, like I saw it come up. I mean, it's it's, it's very different from that first class of this last pet, but he have been true to me and my vision and he has the patience of a Saint. Yeah. And we, so we work together from 2019 to 2021, just over zoom editing.

[00:33:24] Going through cut after cut after cut and editing and editing and editing. And then I finally got to meet him in 2021 in July, he flew out to Los Angeles to be in the studio with me to, to finish the film. And I, I wouldn't have wanted to share that with anyone, but him and Matt who'd been on the journey with me.

[00:33:46] Yeah. It was incredible. Like I had no idea. I had people were like, do you have a line producer? And I was like, I don't know what that is. What is common to do your budget? Well, I never had any money to do a budget. Now

[00:33:59] **Cat:** I have some money for, I guess I'm hiring a line producer. Like thank you, Sonia, you need a, what were they called?

[00:34:06] A post-production supervisor. I have no idea what that was. Let me figure that, like, it was all these little weird connections. You need to hire someone to score the film and I'm like, fuck, like, yeah, it was. Literally baptism by fire, I guess, or I love it.

[00:34:25] **Allie:** I'm I mean, I am always so impressed. I've interviewed several filmmakers and I'm always so impressed by just like, say like the balls, because you'd like, throw yourself in there. You kind of like pour yourself into this project. And you know, sometimes it takes years. Sometimes it's like, oh, we have two weeks to shoot an entire movie. Like, let's go. And then you have to, like you said, it's like trial by fire. Like you have to figure out like, okay, so I've got this smell. I'm not going to edit it.

[00:35:01] The score. Now I've got to try to like get distribution, which is like a huge issue for indie filmmaker. That's probably like the number one thing with talking to filmmakers, like are all like, yeah, it's great. We're doing the festival circuit, but now. It's distribution. And that's something that like, not a lot of people talk about and they don't really like teach you about when it comes to filmmaking is get it out there now.

[00:35:30] So I imagine you were coming up on that

[00:35:33] **Cat:** again from your lips to the university ears. Right? My whole goal when I started this. So like I said, I've been a teacher for 22 years. I've been an adjunct teacher for 22 years. There's a big difference here, which means I'm part-time I don't get the same pay as my full-time counterparts, even though I teach the exact same thing in the exact same load.

[00:36:01] I'm not bitter at all. I'm just pointing out some of the disparities. Right. I don't, I have to pay for my benefits if I get them, if I'm given enough classes to teach I don't really get the same kind of pension. So why did I bring that up? Because you were saying distribution, right? So my goal was that I wanted to take this film on a tour of my, my first thought was like, I want to go to different college campuses, show the film and talk about.

[00:36:37] Accessibility issues. And I want to do this, not, not just me because this isn't my experience. Right. My experience is creating the film, but I want to bring my friend, Matt with me and I want to bring an interpreter with me and I want to bring, you know, another deaf person for my film. My friend, Julie, like I just want to tour with us and teach, right?

[00:37:01] Like that's what, like, this was just another opportunity, a different platform for me to continue my passion of teaching and educating. I mean, that's really, you know, and if I could make some money along the way of, of like, oh, I know that people will provide a stipend for someone to say, like, go speak or whatever.

[00:37:21] Like, okay, well it's gotta be

[00:37:23] **Cat:** more money than you know, making the teacher right now. And so, I mean, literally right now I have. Jobs. I have like five part-time jobs. I'm a bartender. Part-time I teach fitness classes part time I teach part-time. I do the film. Yeah. Like, you know, and I love it. I love it all.

[00:37:49] But yeah, so distribution is like maybe a one in a million shot. I it's kind of how I look at it. So if I get it, I'll be thrilled, but if I don't get it, I'm not going to be devastated. Eventually it'll get out there to the masses, whether I have to release it on YouTube, which I'm fine doing, but I can't do that until I'm off the festival circuit.

[00:38:13] So, festivals are very proprietary. Like it can't be viewed for public consumption, you know, I can't stream it on YouTube. And be accepted into a film festival. They're like, no, no, no, the masses have already seen it. We're not going to accept it into the film festival. Some festivals are like, it has to be a world premiere or it has to be a premiere in this specific state or in this region.

[00:38:38] So yeah. So sometimes you're disqualified from festivals. If you premiered elsewhere, that's been also really kind of tricky and, and a learning experience for me. So yeah, I mean the goal, yes. I would love to get distribution on Netflix, Hulu, you know, apple, Hey, apple keeping a lifetime user. It went really well with Coda.

[00:39:06] Right.

[00:39:06] **Cat:** So yeah, but I'm not going to let that deter me if a big platform or streaming platform service, doesn't pick it up off. I'll figure it out. Like I've been doing for the last eight years. I'll figure. Wonderful.

[00:39:19] **Allie:** And, and speaking of the festival circuit ha how has the initial kind of response to the film?

[00:39:28] Yeah, so it's screened at two festivals so far, it premiered in Santa Fe, New Mexico. And it was really interesting contrasting that experience with the second festival, which was Athens, Ohio just a few weeks ago. Santa Fe it's screened one time the audience was predominantly deaf and hard of hearing and it was received really well.

[00:39:53] It was like, thank you for telling our story. It, it was an interesting experience at that festival in the respect that there were some deaf attendees who asked the festival, if any of the films were captioned so that they could go and watch other films. And they were told no. We didn't have interpreters at some of the other events.

[00:40:15] So I chose not to go to the red carpet. I chose not to go to the filmmaker luncheon because it wasn't fully accessible the building, the building that they screened it in, actually wasn't wheelchair accessible. So, I had a conversation with the festival producer about the whole kind of experience, and I'm going to be really honest.

[00:40:38] So Stephanie, if you are listening to this, you know, I thought that during that initial conversation, like, she's like, oh, we're going to make some changes. This has been a learning experience. And I'm just, this woman is telling me what she thinks. I want to hear to get me out of her office. And five days after the festival close, maybe less than that, she sent me an email and she was like, Hey, just wanted to let you know, we're gonna make some changes, you know, to the, the 20, 23 festivals.

[00:41:05] And I, I looked at the email and there was a link and I didn't click on it. Five hours later. I finally got the chance I clicked on it and I read this press release that they sent out. And I just started balling because the press release talks about the fact that my film brought awareness to the producer at the festival and that they were going to that they were going to request that all filmmakers provide a caption file for their films, so that if there were deaf attendees at next year's festival, that they would have films accessible for them to watch. And I was just like blown away. I was like, okay, like, I didn't even think about this kind of impact that my film could have.

[00:41:51] But it made one. And that was incredible. Athens Ohio festival was also incredible it's screen twice. And it was all a hearing audience, no deaf people. And so the hearing audience was like, wow, we've learned so much,

never thought, never thought of this before. This was amazing. And I was like, oh my God.

[00:42:13] So it's interesting to see how the two different audiences react to it. Yeah. And I'll be, it's going to be in the heart and the Harlem film festival coming up in, or it will have screened at the Harlem film festival in may, the first weekend of may. And I have Dallas international film festival coming up in October and.

[00:42:38] I'm waiting to hear back from like 42 more

[00:42:41] **Allie:** so amazing. Now, like I've literally I and my arms are just covered in this entire conversation. Cause it's just so amazing, like so inspiring and like, I don't even have words

[00:42:58] **Cat:** to describe it. Thanks. So I'm also really excited about having my film screened on Capitol hill. In Washington, DC, Senator Cory Booker is going to host a screening and then moderate a Q and a afterwards at the end.

[00:43:17] And I like, I couldn't have dreamt of this happening, but I, but it's happening. We're, you know, we're working on the date and, you know, I'll definitely be announcing that just not only on social media, but through my email list that people can sign up for on my website on sign the show.com, but I'm really hoping.

[00:43:45] That brings even more awareness and that there's more attendees because there's Gallaudet university in Washington, DC, which is a deaf university. And I would just be like thrilled if students and faculty and administration from that college came to the screening on Capitol hill and so thankful and grateful to Senator Booker for, for doing that.

[00:44:09] And it'll be, yeah, it'll be in September for deaf awareness month. Oh my gosh.

[00:44:14] **Allie:** That's huge. That's huge. That's so amazing. I cannot wait to, like I said, just follow along with the journey of a sinus because it's, I do, I can definitely see how you, I don't know, like words belong to this, I guess is maybe the way to say that.

[00:44:34] Like it's such an amazing cause and something again that like a lot of people don't. Consider. So it's wonderful to have someone who is getting it out

there and sharing with an audience, no matter how big or small, like it's, it's absolutely.

[00:44:55] You're talking about this forever. Like it's, it's just amazing. And you mentioned your social media and your website. And if so, if people want to come follow along and keep up with like you, the festivals where you're showing and just updates for the show, Where can they do that?

Cat: So they can go to sign the show.com.

[00:45:15] It has links to all the social media, Instagram. Facebook Twitter. I'm not on pick, talk. I, I am, but I'm not really on tech. I have a page, but I don't.

[00:45:27] But definitely my website find the show.com links to all the social media handles there. And there is a place that you can sign up to get a monthly update if that barely once a month. But I try to send out the updates for all the festivals coming up and the dates were where people can see it. I'm in a movie theater, you know, not, not yet theatrically released for worldwide consumption, but at film festivals.

[00:45:56] So, yeah,

[00:45:57] **Allie:** and I'll be sure to include sign show.com and any other links in the episode description. And. I will also say that you can, there's a trailer on cynosure.com as well. And it is if you're not already pumped about this movie, about this documentary, go and watch that trailer. Because like I said, it literally gave me his thoughts and I was like, oh my God, this is going to be absolutely amazing.

[00:46:23] So definitely go to find the show.com and check it out. Cat's,

[00:46:28] **Allie:** documentary, and follow social media, all of that. And I can't thank you enough for being on today, this conversation. And I am again, just so excited to follow along on your journey.

[00:46:47] Listeners, thank you so much for tuning in today. If you have questions or comments for any of my guests, including Cat, you can text or call us and leaving voicemail at our hotline. She's 5, 2, 4, 1 9, 6 zeros or four. And we will weird answers to those questions, obviously your episode of the podcast.

[00:47:07] So like I said, if you have questions for Kat, definitely give us a call, leave a voicemail, send us a text and we will put together some answers to those questions and be sure to like, Review subscribe, all that good stuff to the podcast and we will see you next week!

[00:47:27] End of Podcast