

kia
hightower

tisha
bradford

lindsay
bills

joshua
pineda

A STEPHANIE ALECIA ROSE SHORT FILM

brown sugar[©]

staying clean is hard.

STEPHANIE ALECIA ROSE PRESENTS
A STEPHANIE ALECIA ROSE FILM KIA HIGHTOWER TISHA BRADFORD "BROWN SUGAR" LINDSAY BILLS
JOSHUA PINEDA DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY STEPHANIE ALECIA ROSE WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY STEPHANIE ALECIA ROSE ST.A.R. Productions
MAKE-UP PRINCIE PATEL THANKS TO STUDIO, ETC. EDITED BY STEPHANIE ALECIA ROSE MUSIC BY THE REALIST • KEV • CHELSEA MCGOUGH



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Logline:

While a young dancer deals with the bitterness of a strained relationship, she's found a way around staying clean.

Synopsis:

Monica has been clean for a while. Grace, her mother, wants it to stay that way but the daily strain of her relationship with Monica starts to take a toll. Add in a sketchy character and a college student, is Monica really clean as she lets on?



about the film

BROWN SUGAR is a film that showcases the struggles that encompass addiction. Since addiction affects the user as well as those involved in the user's life, **BROWN SUGAR** illuminates the issues brought on by addiction such as family relationships, and academic stresses.

With a 100% female crew, and largely female cast, this film is a testament that women have stories to share from their lens.

A close-up portrait of Stephanie Alecia Rose, a Black woman with glasses and a white headband, looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a bookshelf or a similar indoor setting.

**about
stephanie
alecia rose**

Stephanie is a born and raised Tulsa, Oklahoman, based in Los Angeles, CA. She is a director/filmmaker/writer/actor.

Directing theatre shows since 2009, Stephanie transitioned into directing for film in 2017. Graduating with a B.A. in English, Stephanie's love for writing continues through several produced short films. Stephanie continues her journey as a filmmaker with goals to write/direct feature films in the future.

DIRECTOR STATEMENT

BROWN SUGAR is a film that illuminates the complexities of familial relationships; a mother and daughter verbally and spiritually battling to be heard and loved. **BROWN SUGAR** breaks the stereotypes of the textbook drug addict with a character like Monica. Although she is still connected with her past, with another druggie by the name of Gloria, Monica has flipped her addiction into a means to pay for dance school. Monica is not your everyday addict or dealer which she too expresses towards the young man who was sent by Gloria. This story peels back the flaws and causes anyone watching to really look at these characters with a fresh lens.

Although **BROWN SUGAR** is titled after one of the many street names for heroin, I wanted the ambiguity of the title to reflect how one can perceive someone or something as good or bad without any knowledge other than the stereotypes ingrained by society.

Though not always justifiable, **BROWN SUGAR** is an eye opener about why people are the way they are. I created this film to draw the focus away from the substance itself and focus on the people. Real people.

cast





**kia
hightower**

Kia Hightower as Monica. Monica is a young dancer who has been accepted into dance school. Tuition is due and there's only one way to get the money fast.



tisha
bradford

Tisha Bradford as Grace. Grace is Monica's very religious mother who is reaching the end of her rope with Monica. After Monica reveals how she freaks about her father's infidelity and her mother's religious attitude on the matter, Grace doesn't think she can take anymore.



Lindsay Bills as Gloria. Gloria looks like a typical druggie. However, Gloria is actually a huge help for Monica. When she shows up unexpectedly, Monica has no choice but to kick her out.



Joshua Pineda as Young Man. This young man enters after a blowup between Monica and Grace. This character is unique because it's the cliffhanger that leaves everyone guessing is he really a new potential client or someone else?

A close-up, profile shot of a woman with dark hair, looking off-camera to the left. She has a visible bruise on her right cheek. The lighting is soft and natural, highlighting her facial features and the texture of her skin. The background is blurred, suggesting an indoor setting.

reviews/awards

*pending

A close-up, profile view of a woman with dark hair pulled back, looking towards the right. She has a serious expression. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be an indoor setting with a light fixture.

links

TRAILER 1: <https://youtu.be/g3pjHyQwoeU>

TRAILER 2: <https://youtu.be/DuxYvd0TzPM>

AUDIENCE REVIEWS: <https://youtu.be/6GHjEISJoyE>

What led you to write this film?

I believe in showing real life through my craft. There are so many sides to a story and I wanted to showcase a few sides to addiction that are affected just as much as the person who is using.

What's it like filming during the pandemic?

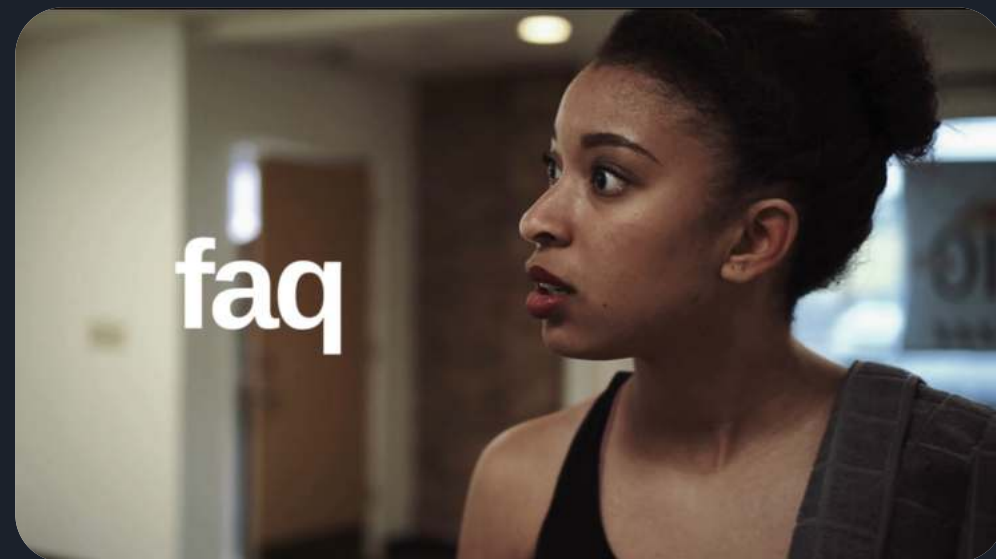
Fortunately, the only difference is CDC regulations. Since the beginning of my filmmaking journey, my cast and crew have always been small. In some cases, it's quite beneficial and in other cases, not so much.

Did you encounter any issues in pre-production or post?

Thankfully, pre-production is always the smoothest. But post? There's always something in post. One major issue I encountered in post was realizing that my shutter speed on my camera (I used my Sony a6100 for this film) wasn't changed to adjust to the fluorescent lighting (yes I know, I know). Thankfully, some color correction in post helped to resolve most of the problem.

Why do you wear so many hats?

When I said small crews can be beneficial and in some cases not so much, this is why not so much. Because I am a one woman production company, some films only required myself. However, as I am growing in my work, more help is needed. So for now, I wear all the hats from casting to producing to sound to editing until I have a solid team.





Stephanie Alecia Rose

Writer, Director, Director of Photography,
Executive Producer, Editor,
Sound, Sound Editing & Mixing

Princie Patel

Hair and Makeup

Music

“Gonna Get Better” Written by Jessie Marie
Villa & Thomas Geiger, Performed by KEV

“Retreat” Composed by Chelsea McGough

“Gentle Moon” Composed by The Realist

credits