

R.I.P. Cecilia Gentili, Beloved Trans Advocate, Actress and Author

Latina activist Cecilia Gentili appeared in the TV series “Pose” and her own off-Broadway shows. She also worked at Apicha and GMHC.

February 9, 2024 By Trent Straube

[Transgender](#) activist and [POZ 100 honoree](#) Cecilia Gentili died February 6, 2024, according to a statement posted on her Instagram page. Originally from Argentina, the New York City-based [advocate](#), actress and author had recently celebrated her 52nd birthday. A cause of death was not listed. A [virtual gathering](#) in her honor will be held Sunday, February 11, at 5 p.m. ET.



[View this post on Instagram](#)

A post shared by Cecilia Gentili (@ceciliagentili72)

“Our beloved Cecilia Gentili passed away this morning to continue watching over us in spirit,” read the post from Tuesday. “Please be gentle with each other and love one another with ferocity. We

will be sharing more updates about services and what is to come in the following days. At this time, we're asking for privacy, time, and space to grieve."

In announcing the virtual memorial, the post on her Instagram page read:

"Cecilia was a refuge and a home. To those of us who have been pushed out of our homes, not shown love loudly, Cecilia's love was overwhelming, vociferous and tender. Her motherhood and power extended beyond borders, time zones and language. This Sunday the 11th we will gather virtually in honor of the expansiveness of her reach, and of her commitment to caring for her community's safety. Please join us from 5-8pm EST to share stories, memories, poems, for our mother Cecilia. There will be Spanish><English interpretation."



[View this post on Instagram](#)

A post shared by Cecilia Gentili (@ceciliagentili72)

[Gentili was included in the 2019 POZ 100](#), which celebrated transgender, gender-nonconforming and nonbinary advocates. In 2022, Gentili was highlighted again when the POZ 100 honored Latino HIV advocates. [The write-up about her read:](#)

"Born in Argentina, Cecilia Gentili came to the United States in search of a safer life. She began earning a living through sex work, which led to drug use and made her a target of the police and immigration officers. In time, she was able to access recovery services and gain asylum. Her work in the community began at The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center in New York City. She went on to develop a transgender health program at the Apicha Community Health Center. In 2016, she started working on policy issues for GMHC,

where she focused on the decriminalization, decarceration and destigmatization of sex work. In 2019, she founded Trans Equity Consulting, a nonprofit that works to establish equity in the workplace. Cecilia also founded DecrimNY, which seeks to improve the lives of people engaged in sex work, and recently released her memoir, *Faltas: Letters to Everyone in My Hometown Who Isn't My Rapist.*"

As an actress, she appeared in the TV series *Pose* as Miss Orlando, a character who performs cosmetic surgery on the cheap. Her *Pose* costar Dominique Jackson posted a memorial on Instagram, praising Gentili as "AN ACTIVIST, AN ICON, A TRAILBLAZER, A MOTHER, A WIFE, AN ACTRESS AND COMEDIAN, AN AMAZING SISTER AND A PHENOMENAL HUMAN BEING!"



[View this post on Instagram](#)

A post shared by Dominique T.A.R Jackson (@dominiquet.a.r.jackson)

Last year, Gentili performed her autobiographical off-Broadway show *Red Ink*, which explored the harsh realities of trans life, [according to an obituary in them.us](#). In a previous interview about the show, she told *them.com* that "I wanted [the audience] to laugh, but also to wonder why we have to make trans people's lives so hard."