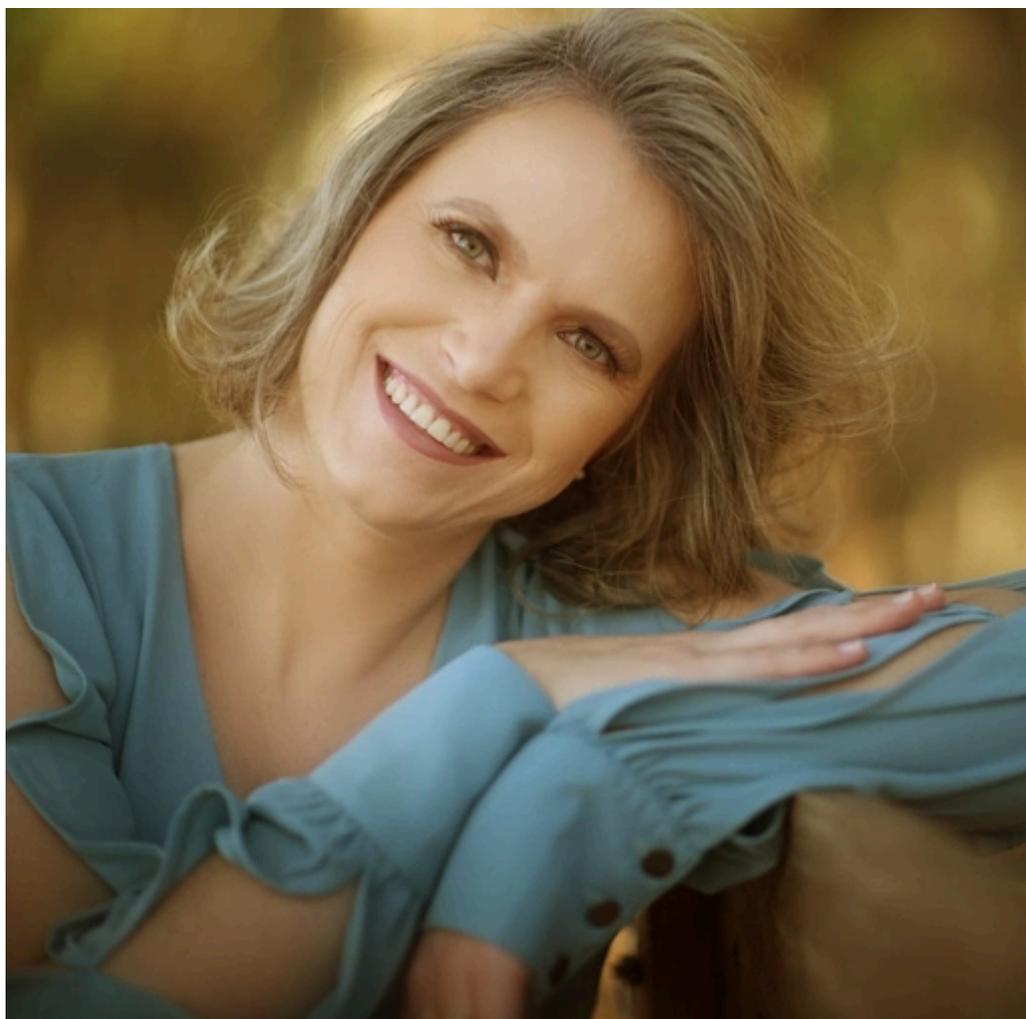


Is it worth being awarded by the Outstanding Maternity Award?



Cris Menon

Overcoming, determination, and dreams: Cris Menon, family photographer specializing in newborns and honored with the Outstanding Maternity Award, moved us all with her story.

My story begins in Ibema, a very small town in the interior of Paraná. I was born into a very humble family of 8 siblings, where I always had to fight hard to achieve my dreams. I left home at 18. I moved to Ponta Grossa, where I had been accepted into the Accounting program at the State University, as my parents couldn't afford a private university in the region.

There I was with my suitcase in hand and a dream.

Sharing a small apartment with three friends, I kept my things in cardboard boxes and slept on a mattress my father gave me. It was tough years, but very important in my life.

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While exploring the area, I met my husband. We later moved to São Paulo. In the capital, I pursued another degree in Marketing and an MBA in Financial Management, Auditing, and Controlling. I started as an intern and eventually became a manager in the financial sector.

My professional life changed due to this incident: On December 31, 2012, I had a stroke.

The left side of my body was completely paralyzed, affecting my speech. So I had to take time off work; recovery was not easy. However, with intense physical therapy and determination, gradually my movements returned and my speech improved.

Finance was a very stressful area, which made me reconsider my values. I had already taken up photography courses (as a hobby), as it had always attracted me. In the countryside, we didn't take photos often; we didn't have a camera, and the few family pictures were taken by passing photographers who took pictures from their carts. I have only one photo of myself as a baby in my parents' arms, with my siblings and grandmother, which is a treasure to me, despite its poor quality and definition, it holds invaluable sentimental value.

So, I decided to completely change fields, and this passion that had been dormant blossomed. That's when I began to specialize in photography, investing more and more in courses.

Among these, I want to highlight the course by the Australian photographer Erin Elizabeth. Many other courses followed; I photographed a lot for free to gain experience and build a portfolio. I started with an entry-level camera, which helped me a lot at the beginning, then I bought a full-frame camera, which is now my favorite!

I love studying and improving my art; I'm always in constant refinement. I love photographing families, children, and pregnant women (who, to me, are always at their most beautiful). Capturing the first days of a newborn is something phenomenal and indescribable.

Now my new beloved project is Fine Art photography. As I mentioned earlier, I'm constantly improving and now seeking something new and impactful. I never gave up on my dreams; today I do what I love and I am very happy!

I can't forget to mention the importance of being awarded the Outstanding Maternity Award. As the name suggests, it's an award for excellence.

I received my first seal in December 2020; it was so emotional and indescribable. For a few moments, it felt like a movie in my head about all the efforts, mistakes, and successes, of so many courses, dedication, and love to achieve this result. Knowing that my photograph was chosen in this internationally renowned competition and that my photography is

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among the best in the world is priceless.

The Outstanding Maternity Award closed my year on a high note, gave me more strength to pursue my goals, and continue to improve and refine my art. It also made me believe more in my work; it was a major turning point.



I won my second badge in Season 17. It's not just the badge, but recognition of this work done with great care and passion. Being awarded for moments that pass by so quickly is very rewarding, it uplifts the soul and renews energies.

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