



JAN LISA HUTTNER

A bio of an award-winning film critic, author and feminist activist whose goal is to mobilize audience support for creative women in all media

Jan has been a consistently dynamic and exemplary voice in the film world, championing and empowering women both on and off-screen against formidable odds. Her forceful and insightful contributions to feminist conversation— including as Chicago correspondent for The Women’s Desk – are immeasurable.

Prairie Miller, New York multimedia film journalist and movie critic, coordinator of the Women Film Critics Circle and host of The Women’s Desk (which airs weekly on WBAI Radio in NY).

Jan’s educational experience has given her distinctive insights into how people react to films. Jan received her B.A. from St. John’s College in Annapolis, Maryland (the “Great Books” school), and Masters Degrees in Psychology from both Harvard University and the University of Chicago. “Many of the subjects I studied as a graduate student – What is a self? How does a self develop? How do we grow? How do we learn? Those are the things I look for in movies – things that I find personally and intellectually satisfying. The advantage I have, that most male critics don’t have, is that I actually discuss all this with groups of women – hundreds of them a year. My reviews talk to them, I don’t demean them – or the female characters in the films I review.”

“What I’ve learned is that women are very interested in narrative. They’re interested in human stories, and stories about character and development. In my lectures, I sometimes joke with my audience: I tell them that no matter how bleak a film might seem at first, if there is a tiny glimmer of light, if you can show a woman there’s a light at the end of the tunnel, she’ll go for it. Most women don’t like the sardonic, bitter, world ends, blow-it-all-kind of thing.”

Women around the world have gained new insights about women filmmakers through Jan and her very focused reviews. In 2004, Jan was asked to coordinate a new AAUW-Illinois project called WITASWAN (wit-uh-swan): Women in the Audience Supporting Women Artists Now! In 2007, these activities lead to the creation of International SWAN Day, now celebrated annually on the last Saturday of every March all around the world.

More than 700 International SWAN Day events have been held since 2008, including Argentina, Australia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Croatia, France, Germany, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Kenya, Philippines, Romania, Uruguay, Wales/U.K., and, of course, the USA.

There were 600 people at the SWAN Day Kenya event in Nairobi last year – and they’re already planning a bigger program this year in Mombasa. In Sofia, Bulgaria, they’re planning a five-day theater festival. It’s amazing how it’s taking off.

Jan is a prolific writer and award-winner. Since the inception of FF2, Jan’s reviews have been on an award-winning fast track. In 2010, Jan earned a Silver Feather Award from the Illinois Woman’s Press Association (IWPA), for writing the most award-winning articles in IWPA’s annual Mate E. Palmer Communications Contest. She won two first place awards, a pair of seconds, a trio of thirds and an honorable mention – for 14

articles that included reviews and interviews she wrote for a variety of national and international newspapers, as well as an award for her own specialized movie website *Films for Two: The Online Guide for Busy Couples* and her Blog *The Hot Pink Pen*.

Jan also earned a Silver Feather Award from IWPA in 2006. She received 13 awards: three 1st place awards, four 2nd, two 3rd and four honorable mentions for her entries in the categories of Speeches, Column Writing, Web Writing, Web Site Development and Special Articles.

Jan’s first Silver Feather Award came in 2005, and included nine awards: Five 1st place awards, one 2nd place, two 3rd places, and two honorable mentions for her feature articles, film reviews, columns, and interviews for national and international print and online publications. First Place winners in the IWPA contest are entered into the national awards competition sponsored by the National Federation of Press Women (the parent of IWPA). Jan received a first place certificate for “Best News Writing for the Internet” in 2005 and a third place certificate in 2010 in the “Website Development” category. The 2005 award from

NFPW was for her Women’s eNews article on the 2004 Oscar nominations (“Works of 11 Female Artists Are Oscar Nominees”); the 2010 award recognized her campaign on behalf of Loveleen Tandan (the credited co-director of *Slumdog Millionaire*) during the 2009 Awards season.



Jan Lisa Huttner

Jan is a journalistic force of nature. She has proven time and time again to be a tireless advocate for women in the arts, and the impressive awards she has received attest to her never-say-die approach to writing.

Dann Gire, President, Chicago Film Critics Association

Jan is recognized as an outspoken activist in support of women filmmakers. In 2009, Jan made international news when she questioned why Loveleen Tandan (the credited co-director of *Slumdog Millionaire*) became an “invisible woman” just as *Slumdog* began generating serious Oscar buzz. “Knowing that Loveleen Tandan was a critical part of *Slumdog*’s filmmaking and marketing phases, how can we all sit by and watch while she’s totally ignored in the awards phase,” Jan asked (in a blog post dated January 23, 2009). Jan’s question attracted worldwide attention (from the *Wall Street Journal* to the *London Evening Standard* to the *South China Morning News*) and set the

Continued...

stage for March 7, 2010, when Kathryn Bigelow became the first woman in history to win an Oscar in the Best Director category.

Jan has interviewed numerous filmmakers for a variety of print and online publications. Jan is the author of interviews with female filmmakers such as directors Jane Campion (*The Piano*), Gurinder Chadha (*Bend It Like Beckham*), Valerie Faris (*Little Miss Sunshine*), Lisa France (*Anne B. Real*), Larysa Kondracki (*The Whistleblower*), Ivy Meeropol (*Heir to an Execution*), Mira Nair (*Monsoon Wedding*), Sally Potter (*The Tango Lesson*), and Alice Wu (*Saving Face*). She also has interviewed screenwriters, including Pamela Gray (*Conviction*), Pamela Katz (*Rosenstrasse*), Aline Brosh McKenna (*The Devil Wears Prada*), Barbara Turner (*Pollock*), and Lizzy Weiss (*Blue Crush*).

A regular contributor to the *JUF News* (published monthly in Chicago), Jan's film-related articles have also been published in the *Forward*, *Jewish Film World*, and the *World Jewish Digest*, and posted on various websites including *Critic Doctor*, *Digital Filmmaker*, *DVDWolf*, *Picklebird*, *Really Good Films*, *Reel Chicago*, *WomenArts*, and *Women's eNews*.

In addition to being an excellent film critic, Jan is a powerful advocate for women in the film industry. She is truly a pioneer, and her refreshing feminist perspective on Hollywood is appreciated by WomenArts readers around the world.

Martha Richards, Executive Director, WomenArts

So, who is Penny? A female swan is referred to as a pen, so Jan named her Blog "*The Hot Pink Pen*"—and began using the name "Penny" for her Feminist persona. "*Penny expresses ardent Feminist views not appropriate on FF2, which I write in collaboration with my husband Rich.*"

And why is Penny PINK? *As a kid, I was a tomboy and NEVER wore pink. But as an adult, I realize that I happen to look good in pink. I began to fully embrace my "pinkitude" the first time I saw Yentl. Thanks to Barbra Streisand, I now understand: I refuse to cut out my heart just because I want to use my mind!*

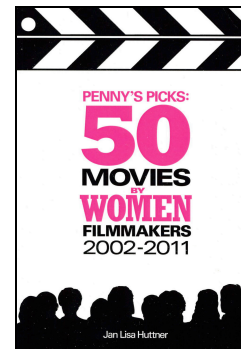
The great thing about being interviewed by Jan is her ability to ask unique and varied questions that really delve into the soul of where your art originated from and why it's poignant to you.

Independent Spirit Award nominee Lisa France

Jan doesn't just follow the headlining filmmakers; she seeks out talented women working below the critics' radar. Gaylen Ross, director of the controversial 2009 documentary *Killing Kasztner: The Jew Who Dealt with Nazis*, described her interview experience as follows: "It was one of the most intensive, cogent and professional interviews I was to experience and enjoy during the theatrical release of my film. Jan had done her homework, and I was never misquoted!" Ross said. Jan's interview with Ross for *FF2* won second place in the IWPA category "Web Content Written for a Special Interest Site."

Working within a variety of local and national organizations, Jan reaches out to colleagues and moviegoers through her leadership. In addition to IWPA, the Chicago Film Critics Association, and the Women Film Critics Circle, Jan is a member of the Association for Women Journalists – Chicago, the American Association of University Women (AAUW-Chicago Branch), and International Women Associates (IWA).

How is this New Jersey Gal, living in Chicago, making great strides in a field dominated - especially in Hollywood - by men's opinions of women? *The best advice I ever got came from my Dad. He told me to just keep on keepin' on. We don't hear about the people who drop out, move on, or just give up. But history says if you keep fighting for something you believe in, it generally comes to pass, even if it isn't in your own lifetime. I believe in what I'm doing. My Dad was right, and his voice is in my ear every day of my life, so I'm just going to keep on keepin' on.*



Binding: Paperback
Pages: 230
Price: \$12.99
Publisher: FF2 Media
Date: 1st edition, December 2011
Language: English
ISBN: 978-0615564890

Available NOW at amazon.com

For more information and to interview Jan,
Contact Marion E. Gold Marketing & Communications
480-247-2621 or gold@powercom.net