

Interview: Filmmaker Anna Jung on 'Women in Film Chicago' 2015 Kick-Off

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on February 10, 2015 - 5:36pm

- [Anna Jung](#) [2]
- [Chicago](#) [3]
- [Erin Sarofsky](#) [4]
- [Focus Awards](#) [5]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [6]
- [Interview](#) [7]
- [Kick Off Party](#) [8]
- [Museum of Broadcast Communications](#) [9]
- [Off Into Space](#) [10]
- [Patrick McDonald](#) [11]
- [Sarofsky Corporation](#) [12]
- [Women in Film Chicago](#) [13]

CHICAGO – While the new year is still fresh, the Women in Film Chicago (WIFC) will have their Kick-Off Party on February 12, 2015. The networking event will take place at the Sarofsky Corporation in the Fulton Market District in Chicago – which is run by the 2014 WIFC Focus Award Honoree, Erin Sarofsky. Filmmaker Anna Jung is the Creative Director for the WIFC, and spoke to HollywoodChicago.com about the event.

Anna Jung is a commercial director and filmmaker who owns silentRebel, a boutique production company. She began her career in advertising, and has written and directed content for McDonald's, Dell, Frito-Lay and Toyota. She is also a notable short filmmaker, with an award-winning 2011 documentary, "Off Into Space."



Members of Women in Film Chicago Pose at the 2014 Focus Awards last November

Photo credit: Women in Film Chicago

Anna Jung talked to HollywoodChicago.com about the upcoming Kick-Off Party for WIFC, and her perspective on Women in Film, both the Chicago chapter of the nationwide organization, and gender issues in the profession.

HollywoodChicago.com: Women in Film Chicago is the local arm of a nationwide organization. What are the origins of the organization and how did it develop in Chicago?

Anna Jung: Women in Film began as a movement in Los Angeles in 1973, when Hollywood Reporter Publisher Tichi Wilkerson-Kassels got women producers and writers together in her office for a "brown bag lunch" – a conversation regarding issues having to do with the female presence in the movie, TV and media industries. The gathering was so well attended, that Women in Film was born out of it. There are now 13,000 members, with 40 chapters worldwide, including Chicago.

The Chicago chapter has had some stops and starts, after beginning shortly after the founding in the 1970s. It re-emerged significantly early

last decade, and evolved in earnest about three years ago – during which it’s had a notable impact on the community and the organization has recruited a more far-reaching network of members.

HollywoodChicago.com: What are the specific goals of the Chicago chapter of the group, and how have those goals been met at the board level and the membership level?

Jung: One of our goals was to get to 200 members, and right now we’re about 50 away from that mark. I really do think we’ll meet that goal in 2015, and the Kick-Off Party is a big event for driving membership. We also in the last couple of years have reached out to the student filmmaking and advertising community, and have a division for them within the membership.

We also want to highlight the roles and professions that aren’t as high profile, but are just as important to the film, television, advertising and media arts industries.

HollywoodChicago.com: Since women are raised and viewed in the American culture differently then their male counterparts, how do you think it reflects on the approach to filmmaking, from producer all the way down to other jobs in the industry?

Jung: I have observed a couple of different approaches, which includes all the media industries that represent our membership. First, there are women who work within it, know that they will create change by working as hard as they can, and being the example that women do belong in those professions. They are kicking ass, and that’s how they inspire everyone. It may not be inherently fair sometimes, but they’re going to do it.

There is another camp that are more activist. They are vocal about it, less through example and more by speaking up about the inequities. I don’t see them working as much in the industry, as trying to create change by challenging the industry. They feel as if these positions should be owned to the gender, and their should be an entitlement to them. I see it across the board in advertising, TV and film, in all positions, and both approaches have their merit.

HollywoodChicago.com: In your opinion, if the same film was shown to different groups of people, but one had an obvious male director on it, and the other had an obvious female name on it, do you think an audience would react or feel differently about the film immediately?

Jung: Yes, I think there would be some pre-judgement, however it would depend on the type of film genre that’s shown. Obviously a romantic comedy may be viewed differently if the audience felt it was a man versus a woman directing, and the same could be said regarding an action movie. There are too many factors in such a situation to have a clear opinion, including for example, who would make up that theoretical audience.

HollywoodChicago.com: What, in your opinion, is an example of a truthful film about the female experience in society, and what elements within that film create that truth?

Jung: One that comes to mind is ‘Blue Jasmine’ by Woody Allen. I think it explores the multitude of emotions and experiences she goes through, including her relationship to children. It was so multi-dimensional, even though Jasmine’s character came from a traditional role. Cate Blanchett portrayed Jasmine as fleshed out, with a full range of reactions and humanity. within a female context.

HollywoodChicago.com: Part of male aggression, in any industry, is ambition for power in my-way-or-the-highway type of decision making. Do you think that women, because they don’t necessarily have that characteristic, are at a disadvantage in the filmmaking industry?

Jung: I don’t necessarily agree with the scenario of the question. I think each individual can develop their own style as they work their through the industry. But I do think that women in general tend to be more sympathetic and ask for things less. It’s what you make of it as an individual, in the end. In advertising, I did observe that men were more willing to take risks, and were more willing to even take on jobs they didn’t know anything about. We need more female risk takers, that’s for sure.

HollywoodChicago.com: There was a recent article regarding the dearth of women directors as Oscar nominees, that even proposed a separate category for women directors. What are the merits of those assertions and what do you ultimately feel about that proposal?



Filmmaker Anna Jung of Women in Film Chicago

Photo credit: Women in Film Chicago

Jung: The proposal is not a good one, it's not positive. There are positive elements about it, of course, and we do need to recognize more female directors. And if a separate woman director category existed, there would be more exposure – and more potential audience for the films – but I think in general it's a bad idea. I think it pigeonholes women further and puts them in a box. And if they added such a category, would there be pandering to it? It wouldn't be true progress, it's better to naturally evolve more women filmmakers and industry positions in the creative arts. And if the category existed, I wouldn't want to get that Oscar. I would give it back. [laughs]

HollywoodChicago.com: What is your earliest film memory, and what was the film or experience that propelled you in to the sense that you would pursue the media arts as a career?

Jung: My first exposure wasn't necessarily films, but reading books and writing. I started reading at a very early age, and I could see and feel what I read so acutely, that it was the roots of my visual journey. But if I had to choose a couple of film examples, the cartoons of 'Beany and Cecil' were so fascinating to me. I fell in love with animation because of them. In the movie category, it was Elvis Presley in 'Jailhouse Rock.' I loved the musical elements of that film and I loved Elvis, and I wanted to create something like that.

HollywoodChicago.com: You created an award-winning mini-documentary, 'Off Into Space,' about three years ago. What circumstance in that film most represents your style and way of thinking about filmmaking?

Jung: I would say that it is in regards to showing all sides of the subject in that film. He seemed like maybe he was a crazy fool, but there are moments where his regrets come out. Everybody feels that way about something, and finding the unexpected pieces of a person or subject that someone can connect to, and in that connection allows you to see yourself in that story.

HollywoodChicago.com: You've also been a performer in the Chicago improv scene. How has that helped you as a filmmaker and how does being a performer make you a better director?

Jung: It gives me empathy for people when we get stuck. So much of creative work is about trying to get to the heart of the matter, and that is what improvisation trained me to do. It was about creating something very real in the moment, which parallels what I'm trying to do behind the camera as a director. I like messiness in creation, and improv taught me how to deal with that messiness. It's an evolution, and it's human, and it helps me as a director.

HollywoodChicago.com: What would be your pitch to encourage membership in Women in Film Chicago, especially to beginning and potential filmmakers or creative leaders out there?

Jung: The most direct pitch is that we will help you get where you need to be. It's that simple. If you want to meet somebody in the range of businesses our membership represents, then we'll find a way to get you in front of that person. If you want more knowledge in rigging up lighting, fine, we'll get you on a set so you can watch the pros do it. We have a network, so what do you want to do? We'll empower you, and that's what it's all about.

Women in Film Chicago will have their 2015 Kick-Off Party on Thursday, February 12th, 2015 – from 7pm to 10pm – at Sarofsky Corporation

at 1506 W. Fulton Street, Chicago. For more details and to order tickets, [click here](#). [14]



[15]

By [PATRICK McDONALD](#) [16]
Writer, Editorial Coordinator
HollywoodChicago.com
pat@hollywoodchicago.com [15]

© 2015 Patrick McDonald, HollywoodChicago.com

Source URL (retrieved on *Mar 29 2024 - 6:54am*):
<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/25155/interview-filmmaker-anna-jung-on-women-in-film-chicago-2015-kick-off>

Links:

- [1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/hankq>
- [2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/anna-jung>
- [3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/chicago>
- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/erin-sarofsky>
- [5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/focus-awards>
- [6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hollywoodchicagodotcom-content>
- [7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/labels/interview.html>
- [8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/kick-off-party-0>
- [9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/museum-of-broadcast-communications>
- [10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/off-into-space>
- [11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/patrick-mcdonald>
- [12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/sarofsky-corporation>
- [13] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/women-in-film-chicago>
- [14] <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/wifc-kick-off-party-tickets-15537561264>
- [15] <mailto:pat@hollywoodchicago.com>
- [16] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/about#PAT>