

Dorri Olds Lesbians Obsessed with *Women Who Kill*



*Ingrid Jungermann (Writer, Director, Performer),
WOMEN WHO KILL.
Photo: Diane Russo*

Women Who Kill is a feature film written and directed by Ingrid Jungermann who also stars as main character Morgan, a commitment-phobe.

While screening the film, I fell in love with Jungermann's striking face. Angular and piercing, it grabs you and becomes more and more intriguing via her black-as-soot humor and deadpan delivery. Her long, lean model build is perfect for a movie screen but it's her wit and quirks that stand out most of all.

I was thrilled to land an exclusive interview with Jungermann. It was right after the July 4 holiday when she returned to New York. Despite exhaustion—and directly due to my pleading—the rising star made time for the interview. It did not take any convincing for my editors to say she was perfect for this *HERS* issue of Honeysuckle.

Women Who Kill debuted at Tribeca Film Festival in 2016 and received the jury award for Best Screenplay. Indiewire described it as the “Best Lesbian Horror-Comedy Ever.” I have to agree. The film racked up a slew of awards at film festivals: Best Screenplay at Outfest; and Weekend. It won Best Narrative Feature at Indie Street; Seattle TWIST Queer; Melbourne Queer; and Oslo Fusion International. It also received Honorable Mention for Outstanding First Feature at Frameline.

It is a love triangle between two ex-girlfriends, Morgan and Jean (Ann Carr), who still live and work together. They're true crime podcasters with a show about female serial killers. The exes spend so much time together, it has impeded letting go of the relationship. The heat dial turns way up when Morgan meets beautiful new love interest, Simone (Sheila Vand). Soon the high drama kicks in when the podcasting lesbians obsessed with murderers begin to fear that Simone may be one. Now, let's get to the interview!



Dorri Olds: Want to tell if she is a murderer?

Ingrid Jungermann: I can't. [Laughs]

What planted the seed for this story?

It's funny, when I first watched the film at Tribeca, and throughout the whole finishing process, and then over the months of screening at festivals, I saw that the movie was clearly a personal film about my own struggles with relationships. It was my version of a romantic comedy in a twisted way. The new script that I'm working on right now is a romantic comedy, but it's a satire about the genre.

It's like a queer person's first experience with love, especially with a religious background, which is not a positive experience because you're working through feeling all these dark emotions, when you really should just be feeling the pure emotions.

What religion were you brought up with? Jehovah's Witness.

I've heard the followers are judgmental. Yeah, exactly. I came out as soon as I left home at 17, when I went to college. That year I realized I was gay, or at least became more comfortable with it. I was probably one of the last people who realized I was gay. I don't think it was a big surprise to many people. I grew up in Florida and there is no language for it. No allowance for the feelings. You walk around with a secret. I worked at Blockbuster Video and I remember seeing the queer section and that was one of the ways I could put language to how I was feeling, but I still didn't realize at that time that I was gay.

Did you experience any self-loathing? People in the arts can be more sensitive and are naturally gonna question things about themselves, where other people might not. Certainly, self-loathing was part of it. Internalizing some of those views, yeah. That's something that takes many years to get at and hopefully unravel. Then you come out on the other side, understanding that self-loathing was really unfortunate. I feel we're trained to be that way. It takes a long time to get out of that. Then years of therapy.

How do you feel about the vitriol in America right now, thanks to Trump?

I definitely feel the hatred. He's given people a free pass on that kind of language. The vitriolic language and darkness everybody is feeling is at an all-time high. We are experiencing a collective depression.

Anything new and exciting on the horizon?

Yes, I'm in development for my next feature with QC Entertainment, who worked with Blumhouse on *Get Out*.

Great movie! Yeah. So, I'm writing this satirical romcom. It's formulaic except it's a commentary on formula. I like formula and structure and playing with the genre, and shaking it up and making a joke of itself.

Any nod to classic movies?

This was inspired by *Tootsie*. That idea of dressing up as someone you're not. I'm also studying films from the 40s and 50s—going back to see how romantic comedies started and what they became. It's fun.

Women Who Kill next screens in New York, July 26–August 1 at IFC (wwkmovie.com).

Sheila Vand and Ingrid Jungermann in *WOMEN WHO KILL*.
Photo: Diane Russo