

Speaker 1 ([00:12](#)):

You're listening to the journey on podcast with Warwick Schiller. Warwick is a horseman trainer, international clinician and author, whose mission is to help people achieve a deeper connection with their horses through his transformational training program.

Warwick Schiller ([00:35](#)):

G'day everyone. Welcome back to the journey on podcast. I'm your host Warwick Schiller. And today I have a very special guest who I randomly met at a horse show in LA a few weeks ago with my wife, Robin was competing at a running show down there and where we were stolen. There was a lovely lady stalled right next to us, and I got to chat to her, her name's Jeanne and we're chatting. It turns out that Jeanne is a screenwriter in Hollywood and turns out she was the screenwriter for the original 1979 movie, the black stallion that started Mickey Rooney. And we got to chatting about that and she told me all sorts of amazing stories. And so suddenly I, I just blurted out other podcasts. Would you like to be on it? She said, I'm sure I'd love to be on your podcast. And so today's podcast. I get to a chat with Jeanne Rosenberg about being a screen being a screenwriter in LA the black stallion and a number of other films she's been involved in. So such a lovely lady. I hope you enjoy this podcast as much as I did a recording.

Warwick Schiller ([01:53](#)):

Jeanne Rosenberg. Welcome to the journey on podcast.

Jeanne Rosenberg ([01:57](#)):

Thank you. Thank you so much for having me.

Warwick Schiller ([01:59](#)):

This is gonna be fun. So, you know, when I was talking to you at the, at the horse show you kind of we were talking about, you know, what you do and how you got there. And you kind of mentioned that you, you fell in by accident. And I did a bit of research on you. And I just read an article this morning by film clinic, leaded molt. And he said that you were an accidental screenwriter. Do you want to, where you want to walk us through how you, how one becomes an accidental screenwriter? Yes.

Jeanne Rosenberg ([02:31](#)):

It's, it's like out of a joy telling the story. It's a fun story for me. I was in film school, graduate film school at USC. I knew that I was a documentary filmmaker. I wanted to tell very important political stories about world events. I knew that I would never do dramatic narrative stories. So I really paid no attention in school to kind of that side filmmaking, but I was forced to take a script analysis class. And in the script analysis class, one of our assignments was to bring in a book as an intellectual property and do an analysis. And I re-read my favorite childhood book, which was the black stallion. And I loved it just as much as I loved it. When I was a 10 year old kid, it still spoke to me. It was alive. It was vital. The analysis went very well.

Jeanne Rosenberg ([03:29](#)):

He, it was, it, it, it was accepted well. I will also in film school and making these small documentaries, I bumped into an incredible filmmaker or the work of an incredible filmmaker, Carol Ballard, who had done a lot of lyrical, interesting, fascinating documentaries. And I'd even incorporated some of his footage into a documentary that we made as a group at a C I'm out of school. I'm teaching I'm teaching.

And my husband tells me they are making the black stallion. Carol Ballard is directing Francis Coppola's producing. These names are like, you know, they're, they're huge. They resonated me. These are just, you know, really talented people. I write a letter to Carol. I send them the script analysis. I tell them I'm a big fan of his basically. And I love the book and I just take a shot and I get a phone call and it's Carroll Ballard.

Jeanne Rosenburg (04:33):

And I'm like, what? And he says, I really liked what you wrote. We'll have to get together. I'm thrilled. Great time goes by. I don't hear from him. I call the production office there in Canada in preproduction. I call Carol. He says, oh yeah, sorry, sorry. I meant to get back to you, ran out of time. And I say, I'm sort of heading that way. Do you mind if I drop in there in Toronto, Canada, I'm kind of going to visit family in Peoria, Illinois. It's sort of on the way. And I hear this man sort of backup on the phone thinking, oh no, a doorway opened here, but he says, okay. And I fly to Canada and I spend three days and I meet Carolyn the horse and I'm thrilled. And he's crazed everyone. There is crazy. There are hundreds of people waiting to make a movie and he has not committed to a screenplay.

Jeanne Rosenburg (05:26):

There are actors that have been hired and no part is ever been written for them. There were previous drafts of screenplays, but nothing sort of solidified. They can't find locations. They can't do anything. This is making everyone super crazy. I meet Carol for coffee one morning. He's a little late. I'm making some notes on a napkin. He comes streaming in, grabs the napkin. Out of my hand, I said, it's so simple. It's a love story. It's a cure-all Bellet film. Just make it Carol. Bella love story, film, the boy and the horse. It's going to be beautiful. I go home totally thrilled. And there's another phone call. Can you come back? We don't have a screenplay. Carol would like you to be here. Okay. I say, fly back. I meet Melissa Mathison. Who's getting off. Another plane. Francis Coppola had sent her. She had been in the Philippines where they're working on apocalypse now, and we become this writing team.

Jeanne Rosenburg (06:26):

She is amazing and a great storyteller. She went on to write among other things ITI, and we are, it's crazy. We're writing on the set kind of handwriting pages, ripping them out of the notebook, handing them to Mickey Rooney so that he has a new dialogue. It was thrilling and mad and you just, you don't make movies that way. But I didn't really know that because I hadn't, as I said, paid attention to narrative filmmaking at SC. And it was kind of the launch of of the journey. And then I had to go learn about all this stuff I hadn't paid attention to and became a script writer. I was script supervisor on a lot of very funky, fun, Roger Corman movies, like the fog and the Beastmaster, and just bunches of movies like that at any rate, that was the launch of the journey, unexpected,

Warwick Schiller (07:23):

You know, interviewing people on these podcasts. It's been interesting about people's journeys and there seems to be one of the common threads, I think is the ability to say yes to things to say yes to the, the opportunities that arise and not go, oh, well, I can't do that right now or whatever. And it sounds like you were a bit of a yes. Sayer when, when Carol Bell had called you and you're like, yeah, I can, I can do that. That's that's I think that's a real common thread with people that, that have amazing journeys is yeah. It's their ability to say yes,

Jeanne Rosenburg (08:03):

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Do you have to grab the opportunities and, and just enjoy it? The ride could be really bumpy. But if you don't take it, it just it's, it's just a waste. You have to go for it.

Warwick Schiller ([08:16](#)):

Yeah. So you were saying that you, you weren't, your, your whole journey was not going to be about making that kind of film. And you said you wanted to make political films and I was reading your bio. And so you have a degree in is it philosophy,

Jeanne Rosenberg ([08:31](#)):

Philosophy and psychology as an undergraduate? Yes.

Warwick Schiller ([08:35](#)):

And so that's kind of what you would think, and you're going to do something along those lines.

Jeanne Rosenberg ([08:40](#)):

Well, I, actually, again, it was, it was accidental my S my pivot to film at this school that I went to, which is a very interesting avant-garde kind of progressive college. A physics professor was very interested in movies and started a kind of a film club. We were, I was in the very first class, so there weren't many of us, and we would, we formed, he led us to exploring European cinema, which I had never experienced. And I was enthralled. I just, I met oh, Bergman Antonioni British documentary filmmakers. I was just awed by the power and the magic of cinema, but it never occurred to me that one could go on and kind of pursue that as a career until post-college when I spent many months sort of circling around, trying to find out, well, what do you do after college?

Jeanne Rosenberg ([09:46](#)):

I think I went to graduate school in, in clinical psychology for a short while. And that was not, that was not a good fit. I don't know if it was a school at any rate. It wasn't a great fit and I left and traveled around America and Europe, and just sort of vagabond that and fell into, again, quite by accident, a job on the first AFI grant film, a filmmaker had come out from New York and was shooting his film in California, where I was living at the time. And I signed on as a production assistant, basically an intern, and it was thrilling and fun and wonderful. And that's when I thought I'm going to go to film school. And so I didn't make the, what would have been a smart move to kind of stay in California. I went to Boston and went to film school there and was, and went to that. There was a big March in Washington and a bunch of us went and shot a kind of documentary that was just chaotic and unplanned and exciting. And yeah, thought yes, thought that was my path. I'm going to make documentaries.

Jeanne Rosenberg ([11:03](#)):

And it was the March. It was, it was probably 1968. There was a huge March an anti-Vietnam more March on Washington, which went as, as they did them when darkness fell. The March got a little Rawkus and there was lots of rocks being thrown through store windows and fires and police and sirens. And it was incredibly dramatic and powerful and overwhelming. And there must've been about five or six of us with cameras from the school. I was at the, I had switched from Boston university to the museum school and everyone else, they were artists basically, and everyone was shooting kind of wildly and running from police and trying not to be trampled. There were wild days heady exciting. We never got the film made needless to say.

Warwick Schiller ([12:10](#)):

So from, from there, where, where do you, where does your life turn to, where does it go from there?

Jeanne Rosenberg ([12:16](#)):

Well, I, I there was a film being shot in Boston. I saw an ad and I became a script supervisor and then assistant editor on this very independent kind of goofy feature film and learned a lot and have made friendships from those days that continue to these days. And, and it was, it was fun. It was good. And then I was trying to figure out how do I make film here in Boston and do photography, which I was doing. And it was also during a back to the land phase. So I moved from Boston to belt your town, Massachusetts and imagine myself living on a farm and making movies. It wasn't a very practical dream, but it was fun. We almost bought some land where there was an old chicken farm and we were going to transform it into this amazing kind of organic Shangri-La, but none of us had any skills.

Jeanne Rosenberg ([13:25](#)):

So that was kind of a problem. At any rate at a certain point in the course of that year, everyone else was in graduate school in Western, Massachusetts. They all kind of finished the year and I realized I have to get serious. I have to go to California, I'm going to film school, I'm going to do this right. And so I packed my van and my three dogs, and we drove across country and I arrived at USC one semester early, but I knocked on the Dean's door and said, hi, I'm here. I am really old. I've got to start right now. I cannot wait another few months. I'm twenty-five years old. It's I just have to get going. And this is back.

Warwick Schiller ([14:13](#)):

This is back when 25 was really old, isn't it,

Jeanne Rosenberg ([14:15](#)):

It felt really old to me at 25. Yeah. So he said, okay. And so I started at USC and learned so much there. There were so many interesting people, friends, professors, people that you work with it w they kept saying at USC things like you will get launch your career from here. And I thought what they meant was you were going to ask some brilliant question in class, and that would be it. You would be then picked and off. You would go, and doors would open in life would be grand. And it actually wasn't that at all part of it was meeting people, fellow students, who you would go through life with, and who would call you up and say, Hey, there's this movie starting, you know, you can get a job call so-and-so and so-and-so, and you can get a job as a PA a production assistant which is great because you would learn a lot. And that's, that's kind of what happened right out of school.

Warwick Schiller ([15:21](#)):

So that's why, so right. At a film school, you was still, you were still thinking that you're going to do the documentary stuff. Is that, is that right? Well,

Jeanne Rosenberg ([15:29](#)):

And the, I did, while I was in film school, I wrote a proposal for a documentary I'd heard they were doing that. The bureau of land management was about to do a wild horse Roundup. And then they were going to do their first adoption program in which they were going to let people adopt these wild horses. They couldn't ever, in those days, they couldn't ever sell them. They had to take care of them the rest of their lives, but they would be caretakers of these horses. And I thought, because I had been a horse kid had

kind of left it in my late teenage years. But it just, the story appealed to me so much. I thought I just want to be there long story, sort of short. I got a grant from the national endowment of the humanities and went out and shot this documentary about the BLM first wild horse Roundup on adoption.

Jeanne Rosenberg ([16:26](#)):

I got to meet wild horse, Annie. She invited us into her office for an interview. She was so charming. It was quite a delight. She had been the voice of the wild horses, had rallied children all across America to write letters and to Congress, people in support of the wild horses. And I only found out later that she was actually let kind of, she was very sedate. She seemed, you know, kind of very controlled, very charming. And she really led this kind of wildlife with her husband, and they would drink scotch on the porch every night. And if they heard about a wild, wild horses being rounded up, they would climb on their horses and Gallop off and open the gates and turn the horses loose again, which was quite fun. But anyway, got it, got to meet and interview wild horse, Annie shot the documentary and find it fascinating that the issues from those days, this was 1976. I think the issues from those days are very much the same issues we're dealing with today in terms of the wild horses.

Warwick Schiller ([17:39](#)):

Yeah. We talked about this a little bit at the horse show and I met you, you kind of, you know, we kind of said that the, the problems that, you know, it's still, it's still, it's almost like the political situation in the U S it's still very polarized, like there's, you know, support for one side of the argument as there is for the other side.

Jeanne Rosenberg ([17:59](#)):

Yes. Yes. Very polarized the sides. Can't seem to quite talk to each other in ways that make sense in ways that make the other side listen very well. They're just competing interests on, on this land. And finger pointing and legislation is kind of always coming back before Congress. I think there's some legislation pending right now. Yeah, it's, it's it's frustrating. It's a little sad. It's wonderful to see the wild horses out there. And it's good that people are involved. There are more organizations now than there used to be. Yeah, something to watch.

Warwick Schiller ([18:52](#)):

You're in a couple of weeks, I'm going up to Northern California to a 2000 acre, private Lee owned a Mustang sanctuary. And I went up there late last year. I think they wanted me to come in and help them with the horses just a little bit, but they have a herd of 200 Mustangs on this place. Like I said, it's privately owned. And these 200 Mustangs permanently they're there. They're never going to go anywhere. They're not going to rehome them. What they do is they do get some Mustangs in, from different places and the trainers there train them and make them hummable and then they try to find homes for them. So those were the ones I was hoping them with, but they, this hurt. What I wanted to say was this herd of 200 Mustangs there. It's just so amazing to watch them moving from, like, from one place to the other and, and, and travel as a herd.

Warwick Schiller ([19:47](#)):

There was one day there that they, they all come, there's a big Creek, right? In the middle of this thing. They all came along as a, be heard. Well, quite a few of them didn't at least came along, was a big herd. Then, you know, they all slowed down at the, exactly the same time. Like they feel each other so much, and they all slow down at the same time. And then they turn into single file and getting a truck through

this steep ton of a bank Creek. And then up the other side, then they, they all form back out into another, into a herd again. And it was just beautiful to watch us so much fun.

Jeanne Rosenberg ([20:17](#)):

Yeah, I was, I was fascinated. I'm thrilled. You have sort of driving down the roads in Nevada and oh my gosh, there they are. Absolutely thrilling. And, and to watch, you have to watch the interactions with them is, is just terrific. And to see them, you know, to kind of turn to you and be attuned to you because they see you across the distance and they'll stop and they'll look, and they'll sort of suss it out. Are you friend, are you full? What should we do here? And if you're really quiet and just they're, they're fine. They, they, they sort of figure it out quickly in our documentary it was, it was pretty hard and pretty harsh. And these horses sort of throw themselves against the pens when they're, when they're trapped. They, these horses were trapped at a waterhole and then transported to the holding pens and they're so upset and so unsettled.

Jeanne Rosenberg ([21:23](#)):

And then these people come to adopt the horses and the one family I sort of followed most closely. The woman was in soul far over her head. I don't think she had any horse experience at all. And the horse that was picked out for her is sort of thrown into this trailer, sort of dragged and pushed and pulled in there, ropes and whips and shoulders. And the scores is just crashing its head against the bars of the trailer. And the noise is so loud and this poor woman is holding her head kind of shaking it, thinking, oh no, what in the world have I done? And you just, I mean, you're just watching it and you can't imagine how they could possibly make it together. But I don't know.

Warwick Schiller ([22:16](#)):

Yeah. It's moments like that, that the, you know, the, that really well-meaning people like that go from the, from the romantic notion of I'm going to rescue this Mustang to, oh my goodness, what have I got into? Because, you know, I mean, you're a lifelong horse woman and getting along with horses takes quite a bit of knowledge. And then, you know, getting along with a wild horse you know, that's another kettle of fish. And then especially when they, you know, the trauma that they kind of suffer, excuse me, when they rounded up, put in those pens and then chased into a horse trailer and then you get them home, you know, there's a lot of undoing from that to, that takes quite a bit of skill, time and patience, you know,

Jeanne Rosenberg ([23:00](#)):

And the family units that you see out there in the wild when you see them kind of together, and then you see it just kind of, you know, split us under there, just ripped apart and everything they've known is different suddenly. I mean, they're in a, you know, kind of moving vehicles and any rate I do, like what, they're, what they're trying to do lately with the kind of rehab and horses and the PTSD and, and, and prison population and wild horses. I mean, these sort of attempts, I think are very interesting. And I think, I think some good is coming out of it, which is nice.

Warwick Schiller ([23:45](#)):

Yeah. I think a lot of good comes out of all those sorts of things, but, you know, there's always a, there's always a downside because you know, the best place for them would be out there on the range with their families, but, you know, yeah. It's, it's it's really hard to come up with the, the right solution. So

after your, after your your Mustang documentary, what happens, what happens then? Is that, is that about when you run into Carol or what happened after

Jeanne Rosenberg ([24:13](#)):

That? That was before I ran into Carol and I did in my initial outreach tell him that AI had used some of his footage in, in, in our USC film, thanked him again. And I told them about the documentary and it, I think it gave probably a little more credibility to me. I think he appreciated because of who he is and the kinds of films he made. The fact that I was out there making the movie, shooting the movie, editing the movie, flying up there in the airplane, you know, looking down through the camera lens getting a little nauseous, but I think, I think, I think it, it helped him kind of say, yeah, I can open the door to this, to this gal, whoever she is. So

Warwick Schiller ([25:00](#)):

I'm not that familiar with Carol. What, what type of films did he make? What

Jeanne Rosenberg ([25:05](#)):

The black stallion was his first feature film he had gone to school with, with Francis Coppola and Francis who did godfather apocalypse now these huge movies, huge talent had always thought that Carol was the really talented one from what I understand. And so he was helpful in trying to get Carol his first feature. Carol had made a short film called rodeo about rodeo. He had done a short film called harvest about farm harvest in America. They're incredibly visual, incredibly lyrical, not a lot of dialogue but very emotional really talented guy with an amazing eye. And he was a kind of filmmaker who shot his own footage and edited his own footage. He was, you know a filmmaker, that's what he did, but, but Francis was instrumental in getting him this first feature, the black stallion and Francis was also very busy in kind of the Philippines with apocalypse now, which was quite an extraordinary film and very complicated and was costing a lot of money in the studio was also focused there.

Jeanne Rosenberg ([26:27](#)):

And so it was leaving Carol and the black stallion alone which is how it got to the point where they're in pre-production and have not committed to a screenplay. After black stallion, Carol went on to do never cry Wolf. Another story kind of very well suited to his talents wilderness landscape a man and an animal kind of alone together. He did another film called wind which is spoke to one of his passions, which is sailing, but he's a very he's, he's, he's a wonderfully grumpy guy and never really liked the whole studio system and could get in his own way a lot. So other people may have taken, you know, the opportunities that those other films presented and just run with them and made dozens of films, but not Carol he's very particular. He is, he's an artist.

Warwick Schiller ([27:33](#)):

Wow. So let's, let's look at the black stallion a bit more. So you end up the ends up flying you up there the second time, like he says, can you come back? And then you're your script writing? So you said before you were like writing notes and tearing them off and handed them to, to oh, what's the guy's name? Mickey Rooney?

Jeanne Rosenberg ([27:52](#)):

We were writing for, but Mickey Rooney was especially. Yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([27:56](#)):

And so that's not, I guess that's not normally how it's done. Normally you've got a screenplay written before you assembled the cast.

Jeanne Rosenberg ([28:04](#)):

Correct. And everything, every department, and there are just, you know, dozens of people in every department, they usually have to have this blueprint in order to get their work done. You have to secure a location, find it. I mean, as a, as a screenwriter, you may describe this idyllic wonderful farm and farmhouse in green and white fences. And then the location people have to go out and actually find that place. And then they have to get the okay and make a deal with the people who own that place. And they may have to paint the grass green and paint the fences white, and it takes sometimes weeks to get ready to shoot. So if you don't have a blueprint and you can't go find those locations, you're tearing your hair out of basically, you're just like, what, what are we supposed to do here? So it was madness.

Warwick Schiller ([29:01](#)):

So how long were you? So were you there for the whole, the filming of the whole thing

Jeanne Rosenberg ([29:06](#)):

Who was there for the filming of the whole thing in Toronto, which basically was after the fact, it was, the stories starts, starts on this great ship and there is a shipwreck. And then the boy and the horse are on this island together, which is the first 30 minutes of the film. And it's, there's very little dialogue. It's very visual. It's beautiful. It's a Carol Ballard film, the love story between the boy and the horse. And then they come back to the United States and it becomes a much more traditional story. So that's what we were shooting in Toronto, the more traditional part of the story. And I didn't know how long I was going to be there. It was never spelled out when I got the next, the second phone call. Can you come back? I didn't know if it was three days or whatever at any rate, it turned out to be weeks.

Jeanne Rosenberg ([29:58](#)):

The whole time we were shooting, it just, we became Melissa and I became kind of a more integral, a more important part of the whole process than anyone had expected. Evidently the producers on the film assumed this would be another disaster that these two women were going to come together and they would hate each other. And it would just be, I don't know, some sort of horrible catfight fight or something, which of course was not the case at all. And I think slowly, they began to appreciate us. And at certain points we may have been the only people on the crew for a day or two that Carol was talking to or would be talking to Carol. It was yeah, it was not, not the usual way people make movies.

Warwick Schiller ([30:53](#)):

You had you had told me that when you're on the set there, that was the first time you'd seen any like Liberty work and stuff done. Who was the, who was the guy doing all the horse work on the black stallion, Corky

Jeanne Rosenberg ([31:07](#)):

Randall was the head trainer. His dad had been a horse trainer in the movie business. His dad had trained the Ben, her horses, the chariot horses, and quirky was wonderful at had this great, well, now



I'm making visual signs. You can't see, but he had this great handlebar kind of, you know, twisty mustache. And

Warwick Schiller ([31:27](#)):

I've seen pictures of him in Western horseman. And so when you said Corky Randall, I pictured the guy with the twisty handlebar mustache. Yeah.

Jeanne Rosenberg ([31:34](#)):

Yeah. Just, I mean, just a fun, knowledgeable heartfelt guy, I mean really cared about the work and the horses. And yes, I had never seen this kind of Liberty work. They would put a horse, you know, at one point a and send it to its mark, you know, at, at point B and the horse would just go there, galloping free, go to the mark. They would use, you know, kind of lunge whips, not to, not to hit the horses, but as visual cues, because a and B might be very far apart. They would use clickers. They would use, I can't remember if they were food treats or not. I don't remember that, but it was just amazing and remarkable. I saw this connection with this man and this, this horse that was just, you know, kind of beyond my understanding beyond my experience.

Jeanne Rosenberg ([32:35](#)):

Certainly it was awesome. I, I wanted to know how they did that. And they had the, you know, the kind of rearing on cue the bowing on cue the, do a horse, laugh on cue when they lift their upper lip. It was, it was just so fun. I wasn't there in Italy. There was a whole tag and send a cheetah where they shot the ocean stuff at the beginning of the movie. And there was an incredibly dramatic oh, shipwreck. I mean the boat sinks and in shooting in this huge tank where they were big airplane engines, kind of making raucous noise to kind of create the waves inside the tank. The horse was in the water and there was a lead rope trailing the horse. And in real life, the lead rope got caught in one of the motors and the horse right.

Jeanne Rosenberg ([33:36](#)):

Is being sucked underneath the movie. Horse is being sucked underneath the water and Corky is screaming and screaming to cut and cut. No one can hear him. Carol's looking elsewhere. Can't hear him because the noise is so loud and Corky dives into the water. Like a hero as a hero with a knife and slices through the lead rope to free the horse in the movie. There's some of those scenes because they were filming the whole time, not kind of only Corky realizing what danger they were in filming the whole time. You can, you can see the moments when, oh my gosh, this horse has being pulled underwater by this lead rope. And he's going to drown, but Corky saved him. Which is pretty remarkable. So

Warwick Schiller ([34:23](#)):

That wasn't planned, but that, that some of that accident where it was included in the movie.

Jeanne Rosenberg ([34:28](#)):

Exactly. Exactly. Yeah. yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([34:34](#)):

Now did they use, cause I know I've got some friends in Australia who have done a bit of movie stuff and sometimes they'll have multiple horses for the one for the one horse to only use one horse for that.

Jeanne Rosenberg ([34:46](#)):

No many, many horses, the main horse, the hero horse, the star was castle Lee, who was a very handsome, very beautiful Arab stallion who had been a show horse. And the young girl who had been showing him and her family agreed to let castle a, become the black stallion for the movie. But then there were many other horses, some were thoroughbreds, some would do a stunt. There was a stunt where a horse jumps over a car that was one particular horse. The horses in the, in the race sequences, on the track or various thoroughbreds, dyed black to look like the black and a lot of the island sequence Carol wanted castle was the hero horse was very sweet, very kind. Couldn't have been a nicer, calmer kind of salient, but Carol something feisty and wild. And so he found a much younger Arab stallion who was great, I think, and had to be dyed black, but he did a lot of the the kind of island wild running around stuff. So yeah, there are many, there were many horses, but the main horse was castle. Oops, my dog. Sorry. That's all

Warwick Schiller ([36:02](#)):

Right. I'm surprised that you haven't heard mine yet.

Jeanne Rosenberg ([36:06](#)):

So what else? Oh, he didn't Carol didn't didn't want us to write the island sequence. I knew he had that in his head. That was typical Carol Bell or wonderful stuff. It was just going to be beautiful. I knew from the beginning, but we couldn't resist. And so we wrote the island sequence anyway and there were some, oh, I mean, Carol, it was Carol's idea to have the underwater, let's see the horse swim, which was brilliant. And when the boy gets on for the first time, that was absolutely brilliant. And the, the way he shot the sequence with the snake, the boys sort of threatened by a Cobra on the beach, surprised by it. And the horse comes and saves him. Oh no, I should have said spoiler alerts probably. Well,

Warwick Schiller ([36:55](#)):

That was when it was made in 1979. If people haven't seen it yet, you know?

Jeanne Rosenberg ([36:59](#)):

Right. They can still see it it's out there. But but that was brilliant. We had a couple of other wonderful sequences there just wasn't time for it all, but there was the boy builds a mud man. He's so lonely kind of before he makes the connection with the horse. He builds this friend out of mud to sit with him, you know, kind of on the top of the hill as he's freezing and lonely. And then he connects with the black and, you know, it's, it's a lifelong connection. Anyway, Carol wouldn't didn't want us to write any of that sequence, but we did anyway. And fortunately Melissa was, was able to go with the crew to to Italy, to Sardinia where they shot. So she was there to represent us.

Warwick Schiller ([37:50](#)):

So they filmed. So you filmed it. The, the Toronto part was filmed before the Italy part.

Jeanne Rosenberg ([37:55](#)):

It was. And, and then again, because the studio was distracted with apocalypse, they left Carol alone and he edited force. He had so much footage and he edited and edited and edited. And then we reshot in America, in New York, much of the racetrack stuff, some of the stuff was done here in Los Angeles racetrack. They had no idea what this film was about, how they were going to sell the film who was

going to come watch it. They just didn't have a clue. There hadn't been any kids films at this point in a long time, it was before Melissa wrote E T and they thought, what is the audience here? But they were clever enough to kind of hand it over to some people who came up with this great marketing scheme, how to open this movie and let word of mouth build, which is what happened. And, and it, it, it did very well.

Warwick Schiller ([38:52](#)):

It did. So it did well in the box office and its original release in 79. Yes,

Jeanne Rosenberg ([38:57](#)):

It did. It was a surprise cause it hadn't cost much of anything. Another reason why they weren't paying much attention to it, why the studio wasn't terribly bothered by it by their standards. It was very inexpensive movie.

Warwick Schiller ([39:11](#)):

And you were telling me that the boy in the movie, wasn't an actor before the movie

Jeanne Rosenberg ([39:18](#)):

Where's is a ranch kid from Colorado with this wonderful family. Somehow he got in his head that they, they saw an advertisement. There was a big wide search for who the kid was going to be. Carol's taste again. Wasn't going to be a typical, oh yeah, let's get a little toe headed Disney kind of kid. So he couldn't settle on, on who the kid was going to be. And they were searching everywhere. And this Colorado family sees the ad and the boy says, yeah, I want to try for that. And he doesn't audition and there's a tape and he has freckles all over his face. He's adorable, dark hair. He has a stutter. It's like, there's no way this kid can be the kid. But of course that's the kid. Carol says, that's him. And he became, he's terrific. He is expressive he's game for absolutely anything.

Jeanne Rosenberg ([40:13](#)):

Sure. I can ride that horse, bear back galloping across the sands. Sure. So I fell off five times. I'll try it again. He was just game for absolutely everything. And there were shooting far away and it was early in, you know, it was in the seventies, people weren't watching as closely. And so at one point I remember in, we were in Toronto and we're filming and it's a night sequence and they're driving to the racetrack and the dark of night, the boy and, and Henry the trainer and he supposed to look sleepy. And in fact, in real life, as we're shooting, he's falling asleep during the scene because it's so late and he'd been working so long. But he was adorable and it worked out really well.

Warwick Schiller ([41:03](#)):

Oh, that's, that's your introduction into the whole film thing. Where did you, where'd you go from there? Cause you've, you've done some films and worked with well, I imagine you, I don't know if you, I don't know how the rest of it works, whether you write the screenplay and you have nothing to do with the actual filming, but this one, you were actually on set right in the screenplay that there are the other movies, like the fog and the howling and things like that. We do you, are you on set for any of that or are you just this? You just read the screenplay and then hand it off.

Jeanne Rosenberg ([41:35](#)):

I didn't write those screenplays on the Roger Corman movies. I was doing a job called script supervisor. And I was doing that to learn about narrative drama film. And in that job, you sit next to the camera camera between the camera and the director, and you're keeping track of every shot and you're reminding actors kind of what their lines are or what the scene's about. It's a great spot to learn things when you're on a movie set, there's a lot of downtime for most departments. You'd get the set ready, and then you're just waiting as the scene will get shot for maybe the next hour or two or you do the lighting and then you're waiting while they're shooting the scene. But as a script supervisor, you're right there. So I was learning a lot at the same time. I'm script supervising on those movies.

Jeanne Rosenberg ([42:25](#)):

I'm starting to write while I develop my own story, what I want to write next. And it is called the journey of Maddie GaN. And what you do in, in the movie world often is you go pitch your story first to try to get someone, to pay you, to write the screenplay. And my agent said, set me up with meetings all around town and I would go, and I would tell the story and I love this story. It's about it's set in the thirties. It's a girl, it's a Wolf dog. They're traveling cross country for her to find her dad. I mean, I'm really invested in the story and I tell it well, and people have tears in their eyes at the end of the story, as they're telling me, oh, I'm so sorry. We can't do this one. You're like, oh and that was, I was getting that over and over and over again, I knew they were emotionally moved by the story, but no one would make the story.

Jeanne Rosenberg ([43:21](#)):

And so I wrote the screenplay and that movie, which was now, okay, this is my first solo movie. I was also associate producer, I think. And I was there every day on the set. And again, my job on the set was to watch out for the animal in a sense, I mean, among other things. But that's what I took as my job. I was, again, I kind of found the Wolf dog who was the co-star of the movie and this trainer Clint Raul, who was like Corky Randall, had this amazing connection with his animal. By this time I had worked on as a script supervisor, other animal movies that were horrifying, the trainers would be screaming at the animals. There wouldn't be a performance. It was just hard to watch this. It was disheartening, but Clint and Jed Wolf dog were alter egos. They had a communication that was extraordinary. Jed knew what Clint was thinking just as Clinton knew what Jed was thinking and it needed respect from the crew. And quiet on the set so that they could do their extraordinary work things that I hadn't seen in, you know, in these other movies where it was like, oh no, here comes the animal. Well, this is going to be a waste of time. But with Jed and Clint, it was magic. It was beautiful. It was, you know, kind of art.

Warwick Schiller ([44:56](#)):

Was he a moot dog movie trainer or he was a dog trainer who you bought in for a movie?

Jeanne Rosenberg ([45:03](#)):

He did. He was doing movies at the time. He's, he, he's not doing many movies now. And he told me one horror story. When he was working for someone else, I think they sent him to Africa and it was a movie that had, were they baboons or chimpanzees now? I can't quite remember, but he was pulled aside by the, the previous trainer or whoever was coaching him on how to step into this role. And the trainer said, here's what you do. Get all these chimps together and line them up and then pull out the biggest baddest one and bring them to the front and just beat the crap out of him. And Clint's eyes went like, your eyes just did kind of like widened, you know what, but that was what they were doing in those days. You've got to show all these other chimps that you are bigger and better than their biggest

baddest guy. And he didn't do that and was pretty horrified. But there were, there were, so there were, there was a lot going on in that animal training world for the movies that was really bad.

Warwick Schiller ([46:20](#)):

Even then you've worked on quite a few animal movies. What did you do? What did you, what was your part in white Fang? What were you doing? The white thing,

Jeanne Rosenberg ([46:27](#)):

White Fang after we did the journey of Nettie GaN and Jed was such an amazing star, the producer Michael Bell. And I thought, listen, he's, he's just fantastic. We have to have a movie for him. And so we went to to white Fang and basically wrote that movie for Jed Wolf dog to star in yeah. But I wasn't on set for that. I, I kind of, wasn't involved now. I'm my memory is getting a little fuzzy about kind of what went on. Exactly. but I, yes, I drafted the original adaptation for that movie for Jed. Yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([47:16](#)):

And it was the, I can't remember what, sorry, I can't remember what the, the role you had th th the thing where you halfway between the actor and the, and the director, what was that one

Jeanne Rosenberg ([47:26](#)):

It's called script supervisor. You're basically taking a lot of notes about the scenes and reminding people of things like continuity reminding I worked with a lot of first time directors. So I learned about, okay, when you're shooting a scene, you're going to shoot a master shot, a big wide shot, and then you might come in for closeups. And if he is talking to she, he is looking left to right. So she has to be looking right to left. So when you come in to do a single on the actors, if the director doesn't remember that you kind of a reminding the director if the actor was drinking a cup of coffee, when they said that line in the master shot, they have to remember that, oh yeah, I was drinking that I was taking a sip during that line, the dialogue.

Warwick Schiller ([48:17](#)):

And it was with my left hand and the coffee weave was facing this way and all that sort of stuff. Oh, wow.

Jeanne Rosenberg ([48:22](#)):

I had my sweater button, not unbuttoned. That was not my strong suit continuity actually. But we had, yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([48:30](#)):

Are those like the fog and the howling, like at the time you were working with some, I'd say some of those act as you're working within were like pretty big time at the time, like say Jamie Lee Curtis, she was, which one of those machine in the hailing was it?

Jeanne Rosenberg ([48:45](#)):

I think it was the fog now. But oh, I can't remember. I was pregnant for many of those movies. And so, so all of those memories are maybe a little confusing.

Warwick Schiller ([49:04](#)):

So let's talk about you, you and your horses. And so I, you know, I met you at a raining show in, in Los Angeles a couple of weeks ago. How long have you been competing in the raining?

Jeanne Rosenberg ([49:18](#)):

It's been a really long time. Oh, it was so long that I probably should be much better than I am, but that's okay. I'm having a great time. Probably started in the eighties I'm thinking maybe middle eighties or so. And I was breeding my own horses here, just kind of one at a time having fun projects, starting them. In fact, the horse I'm riding now is the first one that wasn't one of mine. He's also probably the, one of the best horses I've ever had. Not sure that that's related or not, but he's a sweetheart.

Warwick Schiller ([50:02](#)):

That's the big several gilding you had down there. Yeah. so over the year, have you done it all yourself over the years or have you ridden with trainers? Because I mean, in the raining, most people have a have a trainer, but there are some quite talented people who compete in the non-pro and do it themselves. Have you mostly done your own training?

Jeanne Rosenberg ([50:24](#)):

No. Well, when I started, I had no idea what it was about, and I started with a trainer and was with him for years. He moved away. It is funny when your trainer that you've been with for years moves away, you feel abandoned, lost, oh, no. Now what do I do? But there were other people that were around that I, that I moved to. And everyone has been really helpful, I think at a certain point, cause I live on a horse ranch, everyone else at this horse, ranch rides, English, hunter, jumpers, dressage people have a woman or two women, several people that run their businesses out of our place. And I am the lone Rainer here. But at any rate at, at a certain point I just started right, doing it myself, or I would send the young one out for whatever, you know, four months, six months to get started and then bring them back and kind of finish them here on my own. I've I mean, I love going to clinics, you know, I'll I'll trailer out to someone's place and take lessons. But yeah, I'm kinda mostly on my own making a lot of my own mistakes. So

Warwick Schiller ([51:49](#)):

Apart from the writing, what else have you competed in with horses?

Jeanne Rosenberg ([51:54](#)):

Well, I never competed as a kid and I actually haven't competed in anything else besides the raining. Oh, maybe some gym kind of stuff as a little kid, some pole bending or some balloon busting. And even then I was, oh, I guess I'm always the odd one out because when I was in Peoria and got my first horse, it was a 17 and a half hand. Hi American Saddlebred, which was basically my cow pony. Cause I always had Western fantasies and rode Western. And now I met the all English barn and still ride Western. I'm always kind of the odd one out somehow, but yes, this was it. I fished around a little bit when I got into the raining cause I was thinking of cow horse kind of stuff, cutting. But where I live, it's a kind of steep canyon. It would be very hard to have cows here and it just didn't seem practical. We have arenas, but no, no real room for cows and, and the raining seemed very, very appealing to me and I, I, I love it. I mean, you never get it. So you always have things to work on.

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Warwick Schiller ([53:08](#)):

Yes, it is one of those things that is it's it's trying to like trying to catch bubbles. It's it's it's it's something you never ever get. Right. There's always something you can improve on.

Jeanne Rosenberg ([53:22](#)):

Yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([53:24](#)):

So when we're down at that OSHA, you were telling me about, and we can cut this bit out if we need to, but you, can you tell me about a project you are currently working on? Can you tell me about that or not?

Jeanne Rosenberg ([53:35](#)):

That's a good question. I, not sure if I get okay. That one,

Warwick Schiller ([53:41](#)):

I mean, I know what it is and we'll have to wait and see what happens,

Jeanne Rosenberg ([53:45](#)):

But I did just last week have a visit with Monte Roberts at his incredibly beautiful place in solving. And that was completely fascinating. Yeah, shoot. Sorry. I just don't know was I think maybe I'm probably overstepping if I go on about it.

Warwick Schiller ([54:07](#)):

Okay. No big deal. Yeah. I've got to present it this weekend. I've got to present at a horse expo in Sacramento and, and Monty's presenting there too. So I guess I'll catch up with him. Great with him there. Well, Jenny, this has been absolutely fascinating hearing about your, your journey from I'm going to be a documentary filmmaker to becoming a screenwriter and being involved in some pretty amazing, amazing movies. So thank you so much for joining on the podcast. It's been such a pleasure to talk to you.

Jeanne Rosenberg ([54:38](#)):

Well, it, it's always fun to talk to you and thank you for inviting me. Yes, it's been wonderful.

Warwick Schiller ([54:44](#)):

Okay. Well thank you so much. And if you guys at home listening, thanks for joining us. And I'm, I'm sure you got as much out of genie stories as I did and we'll catch you on the next episode of the journey on folk.

Speaker 1 ([54:58](#)):

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