

# Top Ten Reasons We Love Ellen Huang



Ellen Huang (left), Barclay Butera and Daniela Sea

Ellen Huang, founder of the Queer Lounge — one of the coolest, queerest hangouts at the Sundance Film Festival — is changing the way people see LGBT cinema. Through Queer Lounge, a magnet for power dykes like Guinevere Turner as well as cute young starlets, Huang connects queer filmmakers to Hollywood hotshots, forcing the studio bigwigs to take queer cinema seriously. Here's why we love her for it. — *Lauren Marie Fleming*

**1. She has always been honest about herself.**

Huang made her way into the film industry as an openly queer, Asian-American woman, working as a producer with industry powerhouses such as Helen Hunt and Hans Zimmer.

**2. She created the Queer Lounge,** “a nonprofit organization, [that] creates a physical venue supporting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and other queer-identified film professionals and festival-goers at major, mainstream film festivals.” So far, Queer Lounge is only present at the Sundance Film Festival, but Huang soon hopes to branch out to both the Cannes and Toronto film festivals in the very near future.

**3. She's dedicated.** Queer Lounge was started with Huang's own money, and at peak times she spends 100 hours a week working for the organization.

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**4. She shines the spotlight on queer cinema.**

Queer Lounge tracked and promoted over 40 films at the 2006 Park City film festivals. Queer Lounge's panel discussions and parties, including the resurrected and no longer queer-exclusive Homos Away From Home bash, bring much-needed international buzz to films that might otherwise get lost in the Sundance shuffle.

**5. She bridges the gap between the straight and gay worlds.**

Through Queer Lounge, Huang says, she is trying to “create a dialogue between those communities where one wouldn't have necessarily existed before.” That dialogue has led to collaborations between queer filmmakers and studios such as Miramax, Focus Features and Disney.

**6. She's well-connected.**

Queer Lounge events have drawn celebrities such as Nick Nolte, Toni Collette, Liz Phair, Gus Van Sant and Jenny Shimizu, as well as top industry professionals.

**7. She shapes the future of LGBT cinema.**

“More than anything, some of these gay and lesbian film festivals tend to ghettoize [the films], and they need to be in a place where they can meet ... the talent that can make a difference in GLBT film.”

**8. She has advice for queer filmmakers.**

“Stop writing movies about the same thing — the biggest surprise shouldn't be that the person is gay.”

**9. She knows how you can support queer films.**

“Go see them,” she says, emphasizing that the films will be made only if they have an audience who will watch them.

**10. She's single** — a fact she was happy to reveal to *CURVE* readers. And if there's anything we can tell you for sure, Huang can certainly pick a great date movie. ■

Visit the Queer Lounge at [queerloungeonline.com](http://queerloungeonline.com).