

# on tour with

**Nicole Conn**  
*She Walks in Beauty*  
(Naiad Press)

Nicole Conn wrote, directed, and produced (with Pam Kuri) the dramatic coming-out film, *Claire of the Moon* (1992), financing the entire project with credit cards and personal loans. Naiad Press later published her novelization of the film. Her subsequent novels about personal emotional journeys, *Passion's Shadow* and *Angel Wings*, were published by Simon and Schuster. The forty-one-year-old currently lives in Los Angeles with her partner Gwen and their daughter Gabrielle. She divides her day between developing film projects and playing the stock market to secure their financing.



Nicole Conn, the force behind *Claire of the Moon*.

**Girlfriends:** Has it been necessary to water down the lesbian aspects of your writing to gain mainstream acceptance?

**Nicole Conn:** I don't water things down for the lesbian community and I wouldn't dream of doing so for the straight or mainstream world, which is far more gentle and fair-minded. Readers and critics in the mainstream do not have the same emotional investment in their writers' works. If they don't like your work, they yawn and forget it. In our community, you get tarred and feathered.

**Girlfriends:** Why did you choose a lesbian publisher for *She Walks in Beauty*?

**Conn:** Mainstream publishing houses cannot market to the lesbian community in the same way smaller niche presses can. Interestingly, *She Walks in Beauty* probably has more crossover appeal than my previous books. There is straight and gay male sex—and lots of woman-on-woman interaction. So a gentle caution to the reader: if she expects a purist lesbian read, that's not what *She Walks in Beauty* is about.

**Girlfriends:** *Claire of the Moon* has been called one of the ten worst lesbian films. How do you respond to that?

**Conn:** *Claire* received negative press in the lesbian community, but it had incredible reviews in the *L.A. Times*, the *Seattle Post Intelligencer*, the *New York Times*, and the *Boston Globe*. It became cool to trash it in the lesbian press. —Joy Parks

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