



# Philip Wuntch

AUG 2, 1945 - OCT 12, 2015



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# Philip Wuntch

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Philip Wuntch, dean emeritus of local film critics, who saw film-making transition from its golden studio age to Netflix, died Monday afternoon after a long illness. He was 70. Wuntch turned his lifelong passion for film and entertainment into a profession, serving as film critic for the Dallas Times Herald and Dallas Morning News for over 40 years, combined. He contributed film reviews to the Times Herald even before graduating from Highland Park High School. Wuntch was the Dallas Morning News' first full-time film critic. Wuntch's greatest passion in life was his wife of over 25 years, Mimi, who he first met in a driver's education class in high school. She shared Philip's love of film, books, friendship and laughter. Throughout their life together, Wuntch often said that Mimi was his wife, best friend, secret-sharer, and muse. In addition to thousands of movie reviews, Wuntch wrote *Seein' Stars: A Show Biz Odyssey*, a book about the life of Martin Jurow, a central figure in the golden years of studio film-making in Hollywood. As a critic, Wuntch was considered fair and balanced in his writing; but he was also the rare journalist who could be trusted with a secret. Over his career, Wuntch interviewed hundreds of major celebrities, including Natalie Wood, Jack Nicholson, Faye Dunaway, and Julia Roberts. He was even able to get two notoriously media-wary actors –Richard Gere and Warren Beatty– to open up to him in interviews. Wuntch joked in an interview with Dave Leflowitz in 2010, "I like to say that I taught Warren Beatty all he knows about women." A graduate of Highland Park schools, Wuntch attended SMU, from which he graduated in 1967. Wuntch would later teach film criticism at his alma mater as an adjunct professor. He began his journalistic career as a teen, first starting his own newspaper and then writing on his high school newspaper before having his own column, "The Wuntch Over," in *The Daily Campus*, SMU's student newspaper. In 2007, Wuntch began an online presence after his retirement from the Morning News, writing movie reviews for a website created



by Pete Oppel, the former Dallas Morning News editor who named Wuntch the paper's film critic in 1974. His social media sites have been flooded with expressions of both sorrow and gratitude from a Who's Who of local media and individuals whom he touched in his lifetime. While many offered heartfelt thanks for his professional mentoring, his partnership with Mimi also dominated the posts, their love affair being hailed as an inspiration for so many. One post said, "No matter where she was and no matter how much time had passed since she last saw him, Mimi always made it a Big deal that she was seeing him again. She'd rush to him and give him a big hug and kiss. And make him (and everyone around them!) know that he was the most important person in the world." Wuntch's wry sense of humor, which put those around him at ease, was evident at the end, when he called his nurses "his girlfriends." When asked if he wanted or needed anything, Wuntch would often reply with a smile, "Surprise me." In addition to his beloved Mimi, he is survived by his sister, Nancy Wuntch Rosen and her husband, Bob, of Pine Bluff, Arkansas, and his niece, Missy Rosen, of Austin. Funeral services will be at 11:00 Friday, October 16, 2015 at the Memorial Chapel at Restland Funeral Home, 13005 Greenville Avenue, Dallas, Texas 75243. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the American Diabetes Association.



## Tribute Wall

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JG

**Jeannine Gibbs** posted:

Gary worked with movie theaters and film companies in Dallas from 1979 to 2010 (including General Cinema and New Line Cinema, and considered Philip a friend. They had great times discussing film, theaters and personalities. Both of us enjoyed Philip's writing, which, even when didn't agree with a critique, was always excellent. He loved film and he knew film! We both were lucky enough to meet Mimi and if one ever spent a few minutes chatting with Philip, one was sure to realize his complete devotion to her. Our hearts go out to the family and we are saddened at the loss of such a talented and interesting man. The world is just a little lonelier place today. — Gary & Jeannine Gibbs

August 24 at 3:08 PM

RD

**Restland Of Dallas** posted:

Pink Tribute Spray was purchased for the family of Philip Wuntch.

August 24 at 10:20 AM

SS

**Susan Shanks** posted:

I was so sad to read this. I never met Philip, but I loved reading his work. I'm praying for the family.

August 24 at 4:19 AM

KJ

**Karen Jordan** posted:

I adored Philip. What a sweet, kind man. Loved and appreciated his insightful reviews. He never came across as jaded to me, though he had every reason to be. He knew so many celebs but never bragged about it. Can't believe I can't bug him anymore when Oscar noms come out to see what he agreed with and who and what got snubbed. Rest in peace, friend. See you again one day on the other side!

October 11 at 7:00 PM

RD

**Restland Of Dallas** posted:

Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Philip Wuntch.

October 11 at 7:00 PM



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RS

**Robin Schofield** posted:

Philip was one of the kindest men I have ever met. He could always make me laugh! He will be missed. My sincere condolences to Mimi. I am thinking of you at this time. Much love, Robin Motley Schofield

October 11 at 7:00 PM

TP

**Tom Prejean** posted:

Tom Prejean purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Philip Wuntch.

October 11 at 7:00 PM

JS

**Jane Sumner** posted:

Jane Sumner purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Philip Wuntch.

October 11 at 7:00 PM



## **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring Philip by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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