

# Publicists, Still Photographers Honored at 56th Annual ICG Publicists Awards

Jon M. Chu, Jamie Lee Curtis and Greg Berlanti recognized, along with “Crazy Rich Asians” team

By Evan Henerson

During its 56th ICG Publicists Awards, Local 600 honored both game-changing artists and the behind-the-scenes teams who help bring their work to enthusiastic audiences. The annual event sponsored by ICG flips the script on publicists whose roll is typically to bring attention to their clients while they remain in the background.

“Today we are here to celebrate who we are and what we do,” said Sheryl Main, a Local 600 Senior Publicist and the co-chair – with Tim Menke – of the Publicists Awards Committee.

Jon M. Chu, whose 2018 film “Crazy Rich Asians” became a sleeper blockbuster hit, was recognized as the Motion Picture Showman of the Year. Writer/Producer/Director Greg Berlanti earned the Television Showman of the Year honor; and actress, producer and author Jamie Lee Curtis was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award. Guild National President Steven Poster presented the inaugural Henri Bollinger Award to Bollinger’s widow Sandy Bollinger (see story, pg. 7). Actor and director Dennis Dugan served as event host.

During the February 22 luncheon at the Beverly Hilton Hotel, the recognized artists paid homage to the often-unheralded work conducted by the publicists and still photographers on behalf of their movies and TV shows.

In a career that started when she was a teenager and has spanned five decades, Curtis noted that she has had “one and only one publicist. And her name is Heidi Schaeffer.”



“Crazy Rich Asians” director and Motion Picture Showman of the Year honoree Jon M. Chu (far left) and actress Michelle Yeoh (far right) celebrate with members of the film’s publicity team.

“Heidi Schaeffer threw me my wedding shower. Heidi Schaeffer got engaged at my wedding. Heidi Schaeffer has held my hand through really hard things,” said Curtis who gave her “Sound of Music-” loving friend a photograph signed by the film’s star, Christopher Plummer. “She is an enthusiastic participant in my life, and it has been a privilege for me to walk this with her.”

Addressing the crowd, Television Showman of the Year Berlanti – who has 15 scripted shows currently in production – said that publicists in the room were “the real showmen and women.”

“I do love telling stories and everything that goes into that part of the job, but not the

selling of stories to the world. That’s never been my forte,” said Berlanti. “Some shows come with their own hype and expectation, but I think some of the best ones are the ones that are quieter and need the most love and care during their introduction.”

“You don’t get the thank yous, but we do, and they would never happen without you,” Berlanti continued. “And let me just say as someone who writes for superheroes, what I’ve seen publicists do in this new era of social media and the hours I watch you guys work is truly super heroic.”

Unit Publicist Ernie Malik earned the Les Mason Award, the highest honor that publicists bestow on one of their own members. Malik

Photo by: Craiq Mathew



Event host Dennis Dugan

Photo by: Craiq Mathew



The Warner Brothers team whose campaign for “Crazy Rich Asians” won the Maxwell Weinberg Publicist Showmanship of the Year Award for Motion Pictures.

Photo by: Craiq Mathew



ICG Publicists Awards Co-Chairs Tim Menke and

Photo by: Craiq Mathew



Lifetime Achievement Award winner Jamie Lee Curtis and Publicist Heidi Schaeffer.

said that although he had been married to his wife for 42 years, he had only lived with her for 20 of those years. “You guys put me on the road for the other 22 years,” he joked.

“I feel very privileged to be part of this organization and part of this business,” Malik added. “It’s been a privilege to know and work with many of you in this room.”

Chu harkened back to his initial embarrassment he felt when his parents were asked to come to his school to present Chinese New

Year to his second grade class. His embarrassment turned to delight when the Chu family’s opulent display made him the envy of his class.

“When you show them, they can’t un-see you,” said Chu. “That’s what my parents have done every day for 50 years at their restaurant. They do it with swagger and style. They’re funny, glamorous and all those things. It took courage for my parents to be the showmen throughout my life. I learned a lot.”

Shortly after accepting his award, Chu was followed to the stage by the Warner Brothers’ team behind “Crazy Rich Asians,” which was selected as the Maxwell Weinberg Publicist Showmanship of the Year Award-winner while CBSTV’s Ryan Aguirre of “The Late Show with Stephen Colbert” took the same award in the television category.

The event also paid tribute to several organizations within the motion picture and television industry that were observing milestone anniversaries including the IATSE (125 years), the American Society of Cinematographers (ASC) (100 years) and the Screen Actors Guild Awards (25 years).

In addition, the Guild paid tribute to Still Photographer Steven Vaughan and Publicist Paul Bloch, both of whom passed away in 2018.

## Full list of winners:

**“Crazy Rich Asians”** (Maxwell Weinberg Publicist Showmanship of the Year Award for Motion Picture)

**Ryan Aguirre**, “The Late Show with Stephen Colbert” (Maxwell Weinberg Publicist Showmanship of the Year Award for Television)

**Henri Bollinger** (The Henri Bollinger Award, awarded posthumously)

**Murray Close** (Excellence in Unit Still Photography for Motion Pictures)

**Macall Polay** (Excellence in Unit Still Photography for Television)

**Ernie Malik**, Unit Publicist (Les Mason Award)

**Justin Chang**, “Los Angeles Times” (Press Award)

**Kirsten Anderson** (Bob Yeager Award for Community Service)

**Jami Philbrick**, Mtime China (International Media Award)

**Jamie Lee Curtis** (Lifetime Achievement Award)

**Jon M. Chu** (Motion Picture Showman of the Year Award)

**Greg Berlanti** (TV Showman of the Year Award)



### Greg Berlanti

Television Showman of the Year

*“What publicists do matters, and it matters now more than ever.”*



### Jami Philbrick

International Media Award winner

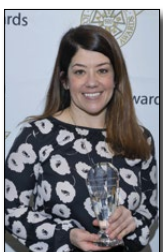
*“I didn’t think you’d give an award to two Jamis in the same ceremony, so thank you so much for that.”*



### Rebecca Rhine

ICG National Executive Director

*“As our country has become even more polarized, unions and their members are not immune from that polarization. We must resist this attempt to divide us and dilute our collective strength.”*



### Kirsten Anderson

Bob Yeager Award winner

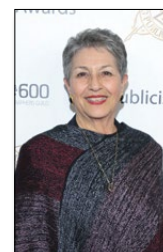
*“You don’t do things for awards. To me, I feel like I do a little here, I do a little there. I guess my little things here and there have added up.”*



### Ernie Malik

Les Mason Award winner

*“[I’ve spent] 45 years in the business, and with this here today folks, you make me feel like a baseball player who has just been inducted into the Hall of Fame.”*



### Sandy Bollinger

Accepting Henri Bollinger Award

*“Family takes care of family. On Henri’s behalf, thank you for this well-deserved honor.”*



### Ryan Aguirre

Publicist Showmanship of the Year Award for Television winner

*“In these trying times, Stephen Colbert has emerged as a very important voice and to be able to amplify that voice in any way possible has been an incredible achievement for all of us.”*



### Macall Polay

TV Unit Still Photography winner

*“Publicists are a fantastic link between what still photographers do and the actors because sometimes the actors don’t want their photos taken.”*

All photos by Craig Mathew