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Critics Choice Awards: ‘One Battle After Another’ Wins Best Picture As Anderson Takes Best Director; Top Acting Prizes To Chalamet & Buckley; ‘Adolescence’ Tops TV

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Chelsea Handler Pays Tribute To Rob Reiner, Goes After David Zaslav & Shouts Out ‘Heated Rivalry’ In Critics Choice Opening Monologue



By [Natalie Oganessian](#)
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Host Chelsea Handler onstage during the 31st Annual Critics Choice Awards at Barker Hangar on Jan. 4 in Santa Monica, Calif.

Kevin Winter/Getty Images for Critics Choice Association

After multiple successful hosting stints at the [Critics Choice Awards](#), comedian [Chelsea Handler](#) took the stage at Barker Hangar for the fourth time — paying tribute to the late Rob Reiner, not holding back on shots at Warner Bros. Discovery CEO David Zaslav and



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“*Sinners* is the story of brothers who start this really fun place for entertainment and then vampires show up, suck the life out of everybody and burn it all to the ground. Fun fact: The original name of the main vampire was David Zaslav,” she quipped, as the camera panned to star Michael B. Jordan, who could be seen ruefully shaking his head at the joke.

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Touting the period drama’s near-\$368 million worldwide box office gross, Handler called out a piece from our sister publication, which readers and celebrities alike slammed for minimizing the critically acclaimed film’s financial performance. “White Hollywood was so shook after seeing the box office numbers, *Variety* ran the headline: ‘Do box office numbers really matter?’”



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In another biz-related joke, Handler went after the C-suite in general: “Seth Rogen is here tonight. Years of playing stoners, slackers and underachievers who do next to nothing all day prepared Seth for his latest role of someone who does even less — a studio head.”

The comic also went after *One Battle After Another* star DiCaprio, who just last night missed an appearance at the Palm Springs Film Festival (where he was set to accept a Desert Palm Achievement Award), due to travel restrictions. The Oscar winner was vacationing on a yacht off the coast of St. Barts at the time. “It was just like the *Titanic* but worse because Jeff Bezos was there,” Handler said.

Showering praise on the year’s original series, Handler gave a warm shoutout to one of most dominant shows in the zeitgeist: “You guys made amazing, original shows that everyone couldn’t stop talking about — until that gay hockey show from Canada came along,” she said. “Shoutout to *Heated Rivalry*; everyone loves it: Gay men love it, women love it, straight men who say they aren’t gay but work out at Equinox love it!”

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In more TV-related material, Handler said: “The cast of *Landman* is here. Spoiler alert: In a recent episode, Billy Bob Thornton went full frontal. Taylor Sheridan said it was nice to have a dick on set that wasn’t Kevin Costner.”

Closing out her opener, after Handler highlighted *Jay Kelly*’s Adam Sandler as “the nicest guy in Hollywood,” she launched into a sweet remembrance of Rob Reiner and Michele Singer Reiner, who were found dead mid-December after being allegedly stabbed by



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“Actually, you’re the second nicest guy in Hollywood, because everyone in this room knows that the nicest guy in Hollywood was Rob Reiner,” she began. “Anyone who ever spent time with Rob Reiner knows that the minute you met him, he felt like an old friend. When you were in a conversation with him, he was present, he was focused and he was funny, and he would ask you tons of questions, whether you were discussing politics or film or the latest beauty trends — he was all in. After I sent him a text thanking him for dinner a few months ago, he texted me back and said, ‘We had so much fun with you last night. Thanks for explaining so much about plastic surgery. It was very edifying.’”

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She concluded, “Rob and Michele were tireless in their efforts to so many important causes, all stemming from one basic idea: decency and that we should all look out for each other. I think we can all agree that we definitely need more of that. So, let’s use tonight as a reminder of that decency and as a reminder of everything Rob and Michele represented and fought so hard for.”

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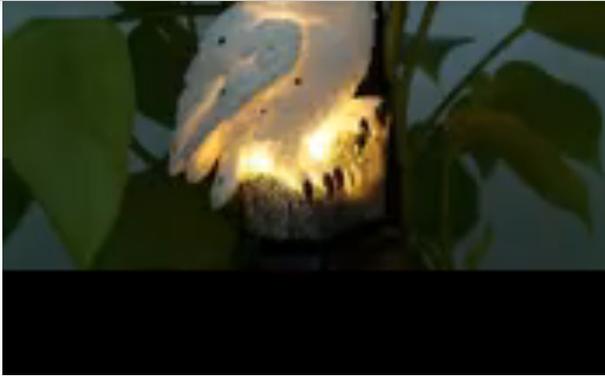
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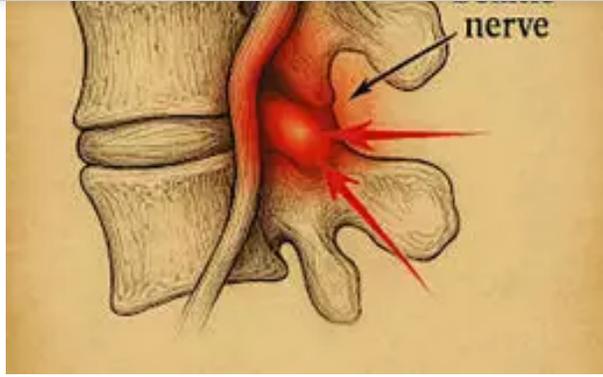


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