

# MEDIA MATTERS

Guzman Law Group navigates the entertainment industry's ever-changing landscape.

Guzman Law Group has represented clients in the entertainment industry for more than 25 years. Headed by industry veteran Carol T. Contes, the firm's entertainment department serves the needs of people and companies whose job is to exploit intellectual property throughout the world in all media.

Carol has practiced entertainment law for 20+ years, first as an in-house business affairs and legal counsel to production companies, studios and networks, and now in private practice. She focuses on negotiating agreements for the development, production and distribution of independent films, television and streaming productions. She is also experienced with intellectual property licensing agreements, endorsements, product branding, Broadway stage agreements and celebrity estates.

"I enjoy helping creative people see their projects come to fruition," she says. "I also appreciate being part of the legal process that aids our clients in protecting their rights and the rights of future generations."

"Our clients have been well served by the high level of expertise Carol brings to the firm," says attorney Denise M. Guzman, founder of Guzman Law Group. "Because she has had a varied career, she can view an issue from many sides. She knows how a studio is going to look at a deal from the creative side as well as the production side."

Denise and Carol have worked together on many projects over the last 20 years, complementing each other's talents when representing clients. They proudly represent the estate of comedian and author Richard "Dick" C. Gregory, as well as the estate of Jonathan Larson, who created the Broadway mega-hit *Rent* and *Tick, Tick... Boom!*—a stage musical



Above: The 2019 Emmy Awards—Julie Larson, Jonathan Larson's sister and producer; Jonathan Mills of Paradigm Talent Agency; Carol Contes  
Below: Comedian Dick Gregory and his son Christian Gregory (photo by Jefry Andres Wright)  
Bottom: Denise Guzman and Allan Larson, Jonathan Larson's father



that was transformed into a 2021 film directed by Lin-Manuel Miranda.

Carol describes the entertainment industry as ever-changing. Working in Silicon Valley during its early years, she realized that the technological revolution would greatly impact Hollywood. "The availability of information on the internet has been a wonderful thing for lawyers too," she says. "It enables us to continuously research and learn from our colleagues around the world."

Whether negotiating financing and distribution for a filmmaker or a licensing agreement for a podcast company, the knowledge Carol gained through her seasoned career helps her provide clients with a high level of service.

"Carol's expertise and ability to handle complex deal-making are second to none, especially in the digital landscape. Her extensive production background and innate ability to identify and solve problems before they come up have been enormous assets to Wonkybot," says Stewart St. John, cofounder and CEO of Wonkybot Studios—a content company and podcast studio known for their scripted, cinematic audio shows for kids and families around the world.

Carol hopes the legacy she leaves is in the knowledge she passes on to the next generation. She enjoys sharing her entertainment industry expertise and has recently lectured for California Lawyers for the Arts as well as the L.A. Greek Film Festival. She also teaches as an adjunct professor at Southwestern Law School.

GUZMAN LAW GROUP, PC  
1230 ROSECRANS AVENUE, SUITE 650,  
MANHATTAN BEACH  
310-321-6640  
GUZMANLG.COM

PHOTOGRAPHED BY MARISA GUZMÁN-ALOJA



Carol T. Contes