

# How they made the opulent sets of 'Crazy Rich Asians'

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August 16, 2018 | 6:31pm



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In the big-screen adaptation of Kevin Kwan's best-selling novel "Crazy Rich Asians," **now in theaters**, moviegoers get the chance to experience the lifestyles of the rich and the famous. When Rachel (Constance Wu) jets off to Singapore with her boyfriend Nick (Henry Golding) to meet his family, she's unexpectedly thrown into his world of overwhelming excess played out in fabulous locations.

Here, the rom-com's production designer Nelson Coates and set decorator Andrew Baseman break down the opulent sets.

### The party ship



Courtesy Warner Bros. Pictures

This wild set — which is about the size of a football field — is the location of the bachelor party for Nick's best friend. It was built on a parking lot, but digital magic makes it appear to be on a massive boat. "It was like, what if we make the ultimate man cave ... inside a container ship?" says Coates.

A climbing wall was among the amenities built, as were a basketball court, casino and arcade. "In the final cut of the movie, you don't see every bit of it," says Coates, "but you still feel the huge scale."

The team cut the top off a fancy car and turned it into a pool table, and the front of a Rolls-Royce was chopped off to become a DJ booth.

Jacuzzis welcome revelers on the party floor.

"The furniture was custom-made," says Baseman. "We used all local talent in Malaysia."

"If you have that level of wealth, what would you do that would top any other party you'd ever been to?" Coates says he asked himself. One answer: a stunt pit that allows partygoers to jump into a sea of foam blocks.

### The wedding



Courtesy Warner Bros. Pictures

Nick's friend ties the knot at the iconic Chijmes Hall, a 19th century chapel that's now a highly coveted wedding spot in Singapore. "We wanted you to see the stained glass so that you know you're inside," says Coates. "But at the same time, it's like, 'Oh my gosh, who would do all this and take it to this level?'"

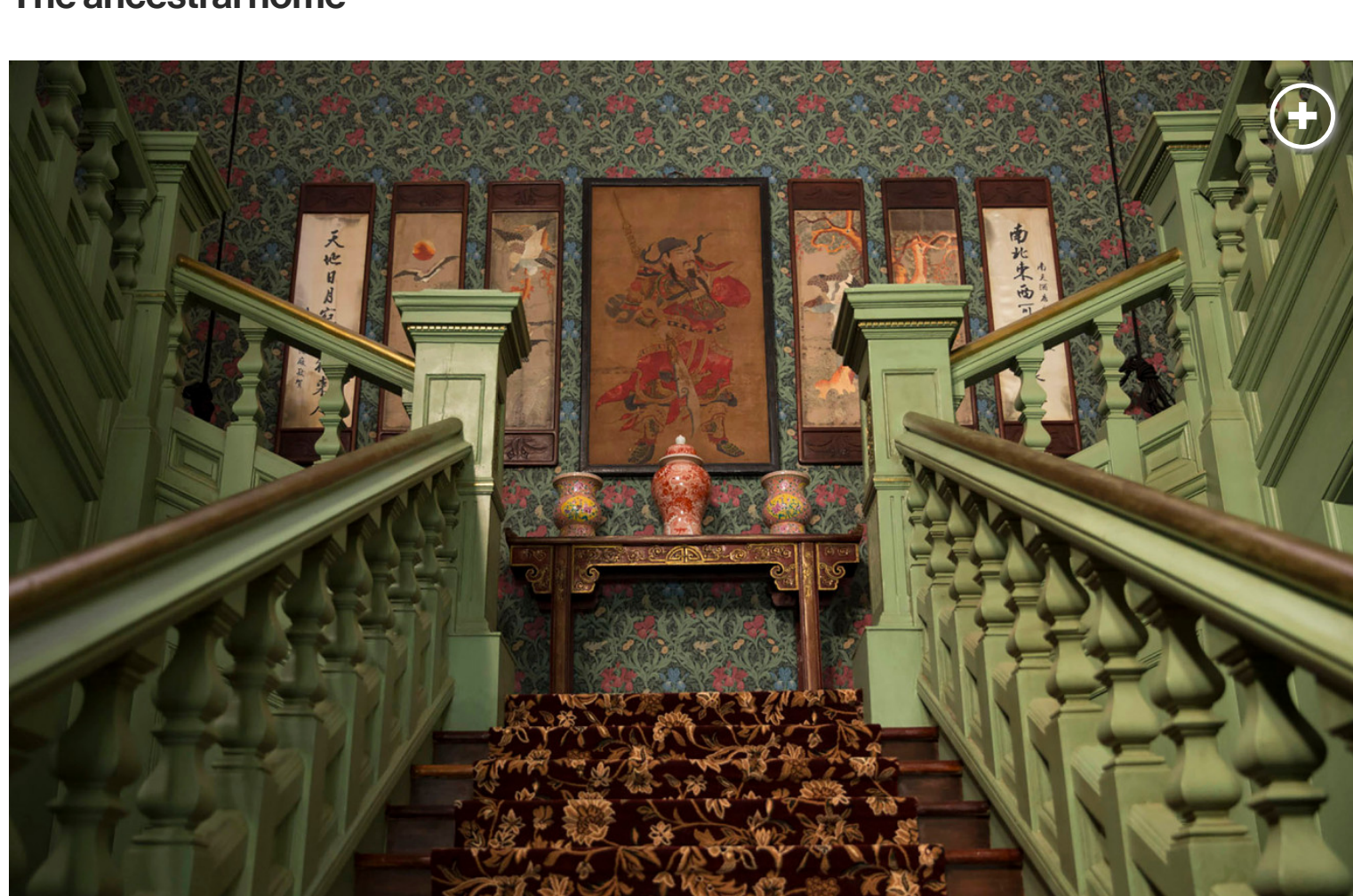
The concept was to create a garden within the venue, so Coates' team covered the floor with a pegboard that allowed 3-foot-tall artificial grass to stand upright, making the area look like a meadow. Attendees sit on green velvet benches in oblong and kidney shapes amid the grasses to create what Coates calls a more "organic" feel than straight rows.

Coates brought in two-story-tall travelers palm plants after he and director Jon M. Chu saw them in water in an atrium while scouting in Bangkok.

Baseman's assistant Lauren Richards hooked the production up with custom-made, hand-painted Chinese lanterns. They feature the family names of the bride and groom, as well as blessings for fertility and prosperity.

The wedding party is framed by a stone moon gate, which are common in traditional Chinese gardens.

### The ancestral home



Sanja Bucko

Nick's grandmother's estate is a "Gatsby"-esque beauty called Tyersall Park. The bones of the staircase existed inside a vacant mansion in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, that was in disrepair, so Coates had them — and the rest of the place — refurbished. He chose a striking Chinese jade for the paint to tie into a plot point about an emerald ring.

The home was decorated in Peranakan style, which Coates says stems from the early Chinese and Malay families in the Singapore Strait who curated collections from travels all around the world. "A lot of it is all about symmetry," says Baseman, who found props at antique shops in Malacca City and Penang in Malaysia.

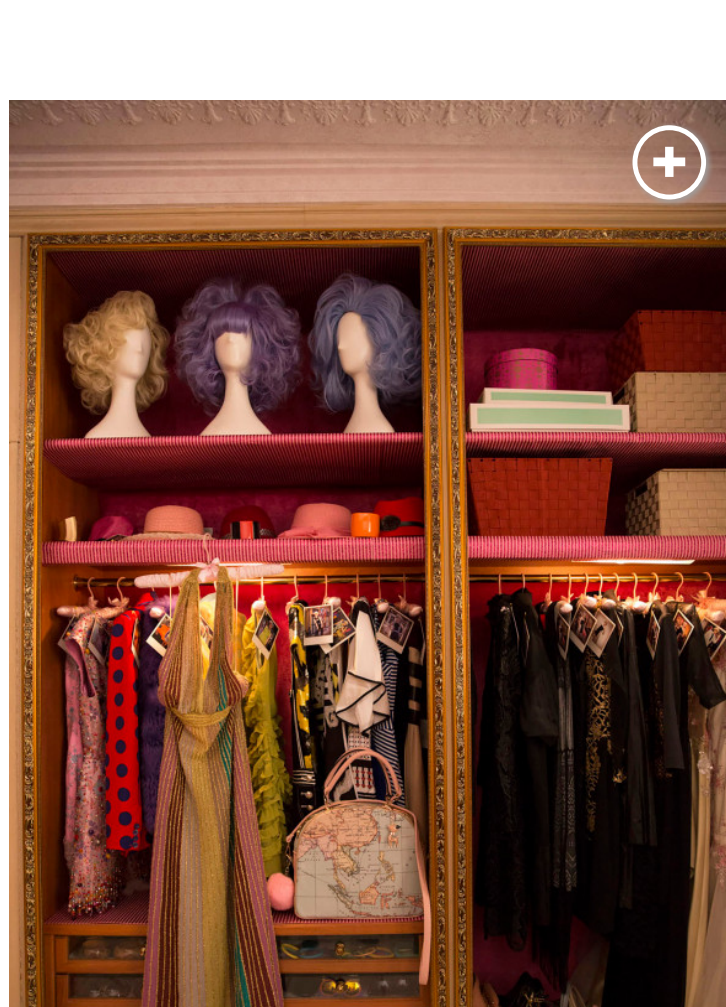
The warrior was hand-painted; the other six pieces of art were a set of hand-embroidered silk. "There'd be a great focal piece of ancestral art in a particular organization," says Coates of the style.

### The closet

A scene starring the flashy closet of Rachel's friend Peik Lin Goh (Awkwafina) was shot in the master bedroom closet of an actual palace in Kuala Lumpur, but the team added all the pink. "We didn't want it to be child-like," says Baseman, "but we wanted it to be sort of a sophisticated whimsical."

The wigs are for wear, not just display. Peik Lin is the "type who would wear her natural hair during the day and then she would go out and wear something outrageous to go dancing," says Baseman.

Rachel eventually borrows this dress for a glam evening.



Sanja Bucko

Each garment is hung with a Polaroid of Awkwafina actually wearing the look. "We did maybe 25 or 50 shots of her in different outfits and then the ones you wouldn't see in close-up, we just repeated," says Baseman. "So the secret's out!"