

## Interview: Chicago's Asian Pop-up Cinema Features 'Out of Paradise' on Mar. 19, 2019

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on March 19, 2019 - 10:50am

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CHICAGO – It's week two of Season Eight of Chicago's Asian Pop-Up Cinema (APUC) and the theme is "collaboration." The three films screened this week all have co-production credits from outside countries. On Tuesday, March 19th, 2019, the Mongolia/Switzerland co-op is "Out of Paradise," a basic country mouse in the city tale with extreme twists. Director Batbayar Chogsom will appear on behalf of the film at AMC River East 21 in the city. For more details and tickets, [click here](#). [22]

The film is a wild journey, beginning with the simplicity of a Mongolian "steppe," the nomadic home of a native married couple expected a child. When the wife finds she needs a Caesarian procedure, her and her husband travel to the big city (Ulaanbaatar) to get it done. When a payment is due, the husband goes out into the night and lives an adventure to procure the necessary funds. The film never moves away from the personality or solid determination of the man, whose very existence allows the city to reach out and help him. This gripping, thematic film – which also expresses the modern world onto ancient traditions – is basically a common assertion of the survival instinct.



'Out of Paradise,' Directed by Batbayar Chogsom

Photo credit: [AsianPopUpCinema.org](#)

This North American Premiere is part of the program-packed Season Eight of APUC, as their new format (multiple films per week) will spotlight a different Asian country or theme every week. APUC is facilitated by founder and veteran film programmer Sophia Wong Bocchio, and



Season Eight has an amazing line up of films from Japan, Mongolia, Singapore, Cambodia, Hong Kong, Taiwan, China, Indonesia and South Korea. Films mainly screen at Chicago's AMC River East 21, with various other locations throughout the season (click link below at the end of the article for more details).

In the following interview with HollywoodChicago.com, director Batbayar Chogsom of "Out of Paradise" talks about his own journey making the film, all the way to the point of winning Best Feature at the 2018 Shanghai International Film Festival.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** What in your background forged a sense of identity with the characters that led you to write this story and follow through to get it made as a feature film?

**Batbayar Chogsom:** The idea came to me when I became a father, now nine years ago. At the same time, my father-in-law died before the birth of my son, so I was thinking of the 'circle of life' ... that's when the film came to me. My parents grew up in the countryside, and both had a nomadic family background, but moved to the city for their education, and stayed there.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** So you had roots in the story.

**Chogsom:** Yes. I thought it could be interesting. The story of the countryside versus the city, and the culture shock of it.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** Since this is collaboration week at the Asian Pop-Up Cinema, describe your collaboration with the Switzerland production team that helped get you filming?

**Chogsom:** First, this is a low budget film, so much of the initial work on it came from my roots knowledge of Mongolia. I studied at University of Zurich in Switzerland, so it made sense to combine the two. I took the Swiss crew to Mongolia, and had all Mongolian actors, and it became a great adventure ... especially for the crew. I think it worked out pretty well.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** So did you cast in Mongolia?

**Chogsom:** Exactly. Again, while I was doing the leg work there for the locations, I thought I might as well do casting, since I was already there.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** You shot a shorter version of the film at first. Did you use that to help pitch the feature film?

**Chogsom:** We did a 20 minute 'teaser' film in 2015, which was longer than normal for teasers, but we tried to make it as complete as possible with sound design and music. That's why the feature film has a high quality, we were prepared because of how we did the teaser. The idea was I wanted to show that I was ready – as a new filmmaker – to do a feature film. When I showed the teaser to my Swiss producers, they gave me the go ahead for the feature after three meetings.



Director Batbayar Chogsom of 'Out of Paradise'

*Photo credit: AsianPopUpCinema.org*

**HollywoodChicago.com:** What were some of the challenges of working with your two main Mongolian actors?

**Chogsom:** Because I was a beginning filmmaker, and didn't have name recognition, I knew that I'd be working with a younger and less experienced actor and actress. I tried make sure their performances were down to earth, with less dialogue and more emotional content. That was important to me.

The story wasn't complicated, so the excitement became 'these actors are really good.' Maybe in my mind I was just trying to avoid mistakes, so I collaborated with the actors in a very classic sense.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** There is a sense of the modern world invading the nomadic traditions in the film. What will the Mongolian people lose if their nomadic culture is lost to the mists of modern life?

**Chogsom:** It's such a different way of life, that they would lose many things. The people in the city live very similarly to Chicago or Shanghai or Moscow, but in the countryside they have their own unique way of living. But, there also are similarities to the country and city life in the modern life. So the film becomes a mirror ... and my message was in the modern world life moves very quickly, and we don't think about what is worth most in our journey.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** What do think it says about the survival instinct of the Dorj character, when he literally never gives up and is able to have the city embrace and help him?

**Chogsom:** He's a simple man, doesn't like to talk, and even doesn't like to communicate with his wife. But as an example of how he thinks and survives, there is a scene in the movie where he hides some money in his boot. The audience reaction to this scene was exciting for me, because they were surprised when pulled the money out of the boot ... he gave them a different impression of who he was at that moment.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** Since you mentioned you lived with this story for nine years, what was the most satisfying moment that you experience during the entire process, from initial idea to sitting here right now?

**Chogsom:** The recognition of Best Film at the Shanghai International Film Festival in 2018. First, getting into it ... there were 3000 films submitted, and we were part of the final 30 in competition. We were hoping to get something, and we were sitting there as all the other awards were given without a mention for us. I was happy the film was selected for the fest, but it would be nice to get recognition. And then we were named Best Feature Film. It was amazing.

*Season Eight of the Asian Pop-Up Cinema continues with "Out of Paradise" on March 19th, 2019 (7pm), at the AMC River East 21, 322 East Illinois Street, Chicago. Director Batbayar Chogsom will make an appearance on behalf of the film. For a complete overview on Chicago's Asian Pop-Up Cinema Season Eight, [click here](#). [23]*



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