

## Interview: Chicago's Asian Pop-Up Cinema Features South Korea's 'Juror 8' on Sept. 12, 2019

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on September 11, 2019 - 5:44pm

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CHICAGO – Season Nine of Chicago's Asian Pop-Up Cinema (APUC), continues on Thursday, September 12th, 2019, with the Chicago Premiere of South Korea's "Juror 8." Director Hong Seung-Wan will appear on behalf of the film, moderated by Korean film writer Darcy Paquet. at AMC River East 21 in downtown Chicago. For more details and tickets, [click here](#). [19]

"Juror 8" is the story of South Korea's first trial by jury in 2008. It follows the case of a man who brutally murders his mother, with all factors pointing toward a guilty verdict. However, the trial does not go as smoothly as expected. Juror Number Eight questions the defendant's self-declaration of guilt. As a result, the presiding judge calls for a new debate to establish a guilty or not guilty verdict. The jury consists of eight ordinary people with different ages and personality, but, after they become jurors, they seek out the truth of the case.



APUC Season Nine Continues with 'Juror 8' from South Korea

Photo credit: [AsianPopUpCinema.org](#)

This Chicago Premiere will be part of the program-packed Season Nine of APUC, as their new format (multiple films per week) highlights a different Asian country or theme every week. Next week, China will be in the spotlight. APUC is facilitated by founder and veteran film programmer Sophia Wong Boccio, and Season Nine features films from South Korea, China, Japan, Thailand, the Phillippines, and Hong Kong, among others. The 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).

Patrick McDonald of HollywoodChicago.com talked to director Hong Seung-Wan of "Juror 8," through an interpreter, for a preview of the September 12th screening.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** There is a famous American jury film called "12 Angry Men" that has a similar plot line to 'Juror 8.' How much of the film was based on truth and how much was fictionalized, similar to '12 Angry Men'?

**Hong Seung-Wan:** When I was first planning the film, I had seen '12 Angry Men,' and I couldn't help but think of that story. However, this film has the element of real history, since it is based on the first jury trial in South Korea in 2008. My premise was how can commoners come in to judge what was previously the expertise of the legal system? I collected 540 depositions from jury trials to come up with my story.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** How did the system of having a jury in South Korea develop, and why did it take until 2008 to establish it as part of the legal system?



Darcy Paquet & Director Hong Seung-Wan in Chicago  
Photo credit: AsianPopUpCinema.org

**Hong Seung-Wan:** In the past, South Korea had military-based governments, which I believe was part of the reason. In 2003, Roh Moo-hyun became president, and he wanted to revamp the legal system, including importing trial by jury. It took until 2008 to finally happen, mainly because I think the previous system and their judges were considered an elite group, who considered the trial their domain. Bringing in the common citizen was a difficult transition for them.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** Although the trial is serious business, the film itself has many moments of comedy. What nature of the human condition is funny to you, and how did you want to make sure it stood out in the story?

**Hong Seung-Wan:** Obviously when people think of trial films, they'll always think serious and heavy. With the concept of common citizens going to the court, I thought that situation was ripe for crumbling down authority and creating a ruckus. That seemed like a comedy to me.

Our lives are not always serious and not always comedic. The type of emotions in a story I like is when something is very serious, but something funny happens. For example, somebody farts at a funeral. [laughs] It's a situation where you shouldn't laugh, but that is what makes it funny. I made 'Juror 8' to have the same kind of feeling.

**In Part Two, a Podtalk, Patrick McDonald talks to Darcy Paquet, a Korean film expert who happened upon his profession studying languages while in South Korea. He was originally from Massachusetts, and studied linguistics at Carleton University and Indiana University for his graduate work. He talks about the particulars of Korean film versus mainstream movies, and his journey.**

*Season Nine of Asian Pop-Up Cinema continues with "Juror 8" on Thursday September 12th, 2019 (7pm), at the AMC River East 21, 322 East Illinois Street, Chicago. Director Hong Seung-Wan will make an appearance on behalf of the film, moderated by Korean film critic Darcy Paquet. For a complete overview on Chicago's Asian Pop-Up Cinema [click here](#). [20]*



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By [PATRICK McDONALD](#) [22]  
Editor and Film Writer  
HollywoodChicago.com  
[pat@hollywoodchicago.com](mailto:pat@hollywoodchicago.com) [21]

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